Your Name

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Date

Unit 5: The Judicial Branch Project

In the US, the federal court system is categorized into three categories (Cross 1457). These categories are District Court, Circuit Court, and the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court interprets federal law, not state laws. Federal cases involve questions of state law interpretation but the resolution that is made based upon resolution as would have been made by the state. For federal laws and regulations, the district court will hear the case and appeals are made to the federal circuit courts while the Supreme Court will act as a reviewing court (Caldeira 1109). Supreme Court is the final conciliator of the question of constitutionality. Supreme Court only acts in concrete controversies and does not have a responding function. This means that the Supreme Court only goes into action in connection with concrete cases that make it to the Supreme Court, and decides those cases. But their decisions will have ramifications for similar cases or cases with similar legal questions posed.

The district courts are also known as the general trial courts. The district Court comprises of at least one district judge. The Judge is selected by the president of the US. However, they are confirmed by the Senate for a life long term (Mishkin 157). Both civil and criminal trials under federal jurisdiction are handled by district courts. It is the responsibility of the district court judges to not only manage the courts but also administering the employees of the court. District courts assign some of their tasks to federal magistrates that are appointed by the majority of votes given by the judges of district courts (Currie 1). They serve for eight years if they are working full time but serve for only four years if they work part-time. Unlike the Supreme Court, the decisions made by the district courts regarding a case can be challenged in the circuit and the Supreme Court respectively.

Cases that are decided by a federal court can be appealed in the circuit courts. Each court consists of multiple judges and is appointed by the president of the US and confirmed by the Senate. Unlike district court judges, circuit court judges are appointed for life. Unlike the Supreme Court where there is no need to hear an appeal, circuit court judges first hear the appeal and then will re-schedule the oral argument. Typically, in an oral argument, attorneys come and answer the questions of the judges. Unlike, Supreme Court, the decisions made by the circuit courts regarding a case can be challenged in the Supreme Court (Segal 158).

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