Recent headlines, The New York Times: “Supreme Court Okays Refugee Ban;” “Court Won’t Touch Gerrymandering;” “First Amendment Prohibits Limitations on Campaign Spending;” For better or worse, and to an extent unparalleled in any other country, almost every important social and political conflict in the United States ultimately reaches the Supreme Court for resolution.

In this class we shall “brief” cases involving our civil liberties, and discuss a number of issues: Are the courts the proper tribunals for resolving our most explosive issues? In this tension-infused post 9-11 world will the Supreme Court be able to balance the sometimes competing claims of freedom and security? In a civilization increasingly characterized by global tensions and technological “revolutions,” is our Constitution still a viable document?

Required Reading:

Constitutional Law for a Changing America, Rights, Liberties, and Justice 10th Ed; Lee Epstein and Thomas Walker, eds. 2019. (Recommended but not required: Cases can be accessed on the Internet)

A Mighty Long Way: The Journey to Justice at Little Rock Central High School, Carlotta Walls Lanier, 2010, One World Books


The Forgotten Men, Margaret E. Leigey, 2015, Rutgers University Press

Course Requirements:

There will be two mid-term exams (the second one is optional), a final exam, and one short in-class talk on a particular Supreme Court case. It is crucial that you attend class regularly, and students will be docked one grade point for every three absences. Please arrive on time and come to class prepared. And---WARNING: keep your electrical gadgets turned-off and out of sight (I'll dock you a full letter grade and throw your gadget down the stairwell!) GRRrrrr

Grading: (a) two mid-term exams (one optional): 25%; (b) presentations: 25 %; participation and preparedness: 15%; (d) final exam: 35%. 
How to Track me down: I'm usually in my office—Hill Hall, Room 725. You can also e-mail me: eahull47@hotmail.com. Please come see me—I'll enjoy getting to know you.

SCHEDULE:

ONE: CIVIL RIGHTS: DISCRIMINATION


Class Presentations

TWO: Rights of Women; and Immigrants:


Class Presentations

MID-TERM EXAM

THREE: RELIGIOUS EXERCISE AND ESTABLISHMENT

FOUR: FREEDOM OF SPEECH, ASSEMBLY, AND ASSOCIATION


FIVE: FREEDOM OF THE PRESS


OPTIONAL MID-TERM EXAM

FIVE: THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY


SIX: THE RIGHTS OF THE CRIMINALLY ACCUSED:


Read: The Forgotten Men, Margaret E. Leigey, 2015, Rutgers University Press

SEVEN: VOTING AND REPRESENTATION

FINAL EXAMINATION