Supreme Court

- You must first find a case that has been heard by the Supreme Court, not a federal circuit court or a state Supreme Court.

- One way to insure you have a Supreme Court case is to look at the names of the judges writing the opinions. The Justices of the current court are Roberts, Scalia, Thomas, Sotomayor, Kagan, Alito, Kennedy, Ginsburg and Breyer.

- The Supreme Court hears only a few cases each year so they may not hear cases on every topic in a given year.

- Once you choose your case you need to read the syllabus, the opinion, and all concurrences and dissents written on the case.

How to Find a Case

Go to the Maple Woods Library Page. http://mwlibrary.mcckc.edu

1. Click on the Web Links tab, then scroll down to Political Science: U. S. Government. The Cornell Law School: Supreme Court site allows you to browse Supreme Court cases by topic, date or case name/party. http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/

   Check out the link to “Supreme Court Term Highlights” which provides summaries of some of the most important or interesting cases of that court term that are written in easier language than the cases themselves.

2. Or click on Databases, then scroll down to Articles, and select Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe.

   To find those cases truly heard and decided by the Supreme Court, click on “US Legal” in the left column of the search screen.

   In the next screen click on “Federal and State Cases.”

   In the next screen pick “US Supreme Court” from the drop down box under “Jurisdiction.”

   In the “Search for” area you can use the drop down box to specify your search terms by legal topic or party/case name.

   Your result will include the lawyer’s arguments first and you must scroll to near the end of the entry to find the syllabus and opinions.

Some Suggested Cases

2011-2012

Arizona et al. v. United States
Arizona’s immigration law is in part unconstitutional.

Astrue v. Capato
Are children born after their father’s death eligible to receive Social Security survivor benefits?

Freeman v. Quicken Loans, Inc.
Mortgage lenders and service fees.

Hall v. United States and Ransom v. FIA Card Services
Bankruptcy and income taxes.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act v. Sebelius
Constitutionality of parts of the 2010 healthcare act.
2010-2011

*American Electric Power Company v. Connecticut*
Abatement of greenhouse gases.

*Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association*
Is restricting the sale or rental of violent video games to minors a violation of the First Amendment?

*Christian Legal Society Chapter v. Martinez*
Student groups on a college campus and membership restrictions.

*Kasten v. Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics*
Protection of employees who file oral as well as written complaints.

*NASA v. Nelson*
Does a background check violate the constitutional right to informational privacy?

*Ontario v. Quon*
The privacy of messages received on an employer-owned pager by an employee.

*PPL Montana v. Montana*
State compensation for a company’s use of riverbeds.

*Snyder v. Phelps*
Picketing at military funerals.

2009

*AT&T v. Noreen Hulteen et al.*
Maternity leave and pension plans.

*District Attorney’s Office for Third Judicial Dist. v. Osborne, William G.*
Use of DNA evidence in criminal cases.

*Jones v. Harris Associates*
Investment advisor violation of the law by charging fees disproportionate to the services rendered.

*Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber*
Time period for filing discrimination charges against an employer.

*Ricci v. DeStefano*
Discrimination against white and Hispanic firefighters for job promotions.

*Safford Unified School District #1 v. Redding*
Legality of a strip search of a 13-year-old student.

2008

*District of Columbia v. Heller*
Is possession of a usable handgun in the home a violation of the Second Amendment?

*United States v. Williams*
Child pornography and free speech.

2005

*Kelo v. New London*
Taking of private property for public use.

2003

*Lawrence et al. v. Texas*
States may not ban private consensual homosexual conduct.