

POLS 3600 Essay 2 Prompts

Directions: Among the following essay prompts, choose one to answer. Recall that your essay must be no fewer than 1,500 words (including the title page, notes, tables/figures, and references). Your essays must be typed, written according to the *Chicago Style Guide* (I'm indifferent to parenthetical or note-style citations), and turned in via email no later than 11:59:59 pm on October 20, 2021. For additional information about my expectations for this assignment, see the handout I posted on Blackboard. For the grading rubric I use, you can review the course syllabus.

1. What kinds of qualities do presidents consider when selecting nominees to Article III courts? What kinds of uncertainty do they face when making their selections, and what strategies might they employ to minimize this uncertainty? What factors do the Senate consider when evaluating a nominee, and what prompts it either to support or oppose confirmation? That is, when is a president's nominee likely either to be confirmed or denied, and what kinds of strategies may they employ to help their nominees win confirmation?
2. What are the different types of methods states use to select judges? In states that use elections, how engaged are voters in these contests? What are some of the ways that voters can become more informed such that they may rationally participate in a judicial election? What are some of the risks that judicial elections pose to the dispensation of justice? What are some of the benefits that judicial elections pose to democracy? On balance, are judicial elections a good or bad idea?
3. How do judges time their departures from the bench? Explain the different types of departures we discussed in class (e.g., qualified, full retirement, or resignation), how these options color a judge's decisional calculus, and how these institutions have changed departures over time. What are the other considerations judges consider when choosing to either leave or stay on a court? Which among these factors play an outsized role in affecting departures? Finally, how does electoral accountability influence a judge's decision to retire?