



The Supreme Court  
Historical Society

*Street Law, Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society  
present the*

## **2025 Supreme Court Summer Institute for Teachers**

June 8–13 @ Georgetown University Law Center (GULC)

600 New Jersey Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001

### **Institute Agenda**

#### **Outcomes**

**As a result of the Supreme Court Summer Institute, you will be able to teach about**

- The procedures for a case to be heard before the Supreme Court (the *certiorari* process) as well as the process the Court follows to decide a case,
- Approaches to constitutional and statutory interpretation taken by the justices to decide cases,
- The importance of principles such as *stare decisis* and checks and balances.
- The process by which Supreme Court justices and other federal judges are nominated and confirmed,
- Selected cases from the 2024–2025 Term: *Barnes v. Felix*, *Bondi v. VanDerStock*, *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, *Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board v. Drummond*, *TikTok v. Garland*, *Trump v. CASA*, *U.S. v. Skrmetti*.

**As a result of this Institute, you will also be able to**

- Use a variety of interactive strategies to teach students about the Supreme Court and its cases including Street Law case study methods, deliberations, and moot courts,
- Use print, online, and video media to research and teach about the Supreme Court,
- Incorporate resource persons into your lessons on the Court,
- Prepare and present professional development activities on the Court for other teachers.

**Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> Georgetown University Law Center (McDonough 200)****3:00–3:30 PM Registration and refreshments**

Get to know the other participants by playing participant BINGO!

**3:30–4:30 PM Welcome to the Institute****TAB 1**

**Lee Arbetman** will open the Institute with an overview and introductions.

**Jennifer Lowe** will provide a welcome from the Supreme Court Historical Society, and we will watch a brief video greeting from Chief Justice John Roberts.

**Cathy Ruffing** will review the Institute’s agenda, outcomes, and community norms, and **Emma Progar** will provide logistical details.

**4:30–5:00 PM How Well Do You Know Your Supreme Court?****TAB 2**

**Lee** will conduct an activity so you can get to know the Supreme Court while getting to know each other better.

**5:00–5:15 PM Break****5:15–6:45 PM Introduction to Supreme Court Practice****TAB 3**

This session will provide an overview of the operation of the Court from deciding to hear cases and the “shadow docket”, through briefing and oral argument, to the process of writing and issuing opinions. There will be ample time for questions. Former Solicitor General of the United States, **Elizabeth Prelogar** will lead this session. **Cathy** will facilitate this session.

**7:00–8:30 PM Dinner at The Dubliner**

We will dine together at The Dubliner and informally get to know each other. After dinner, we will walk back to the Hyatt Regency (0.3 miles/3 blocks). For those not staying at the hotel, the Union Station Metro station is across the intersection from the Dubliner.

Please complete today’s evaluation by going to <https://tinyurl.com/mry8ww8u> or by scanning the QR code below:



**Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup> GULC (McDonough 200)****8:30–9:00 AM Join us for breakfast at GULC****9:00–9:15 AM Reflect on yesterday’s sessions****9:15–10:45 Deciding to Decide: Granting Cert****TAB 4**

The Court grants *certiorari* in very few of the cases for which review is sought. Why does the Court take some cases and not others? What factors are important to the justices in setting the Court’s docket? We will review some research that has been done on these questions and then work as groups of clerks to Supreme Court justices to determine whether to recommend *cert* for several cases. **Cathy** will facilitate this session.

**10:45–11:00 AM Break****11:00–12:15 PM Introduction to Constitutional Interpretation****TAB 5**

In this session we will learn about some of the basic approaches that the justices use to interpret the Constitution. We will define several constitutional interpretation vocabulary terms. We will also screen a video discussion of competing philosophies featuring former Justice Breyer and the late Justice Scalia. **Lee** will facilitate this session.

**12:15–1:00 PM Lunch at GULC****1:00–1:30 PM Walk from GULC to the Supreme Court (0.7 miles/7 ½ blocks)**

The Supreme Court of the United States is located at **1 First Street, NE**. We will walk together as a group from GULC (0.8 miles/7 blocks)

- A list of prohibited items may be found on the Court’s website: <https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/prohibited-items.aspx>. Please note in particular the prohibition regarding food and beverages.
- Members of the party must remain with their guide at all times.
- Photography is prohibited inside the courtroom; however, it is permitted in the public parts of the building.

**1:30–2:30 PM****The Supreme Court Docent Lecture/Gift Shop****TAB 6**

You will have 20 minutes to explore the gift shop and exhibits. We will meet at the John Marshall statue at 1:50 PM to move together to the courtroom. At 2:00 PM we will have a private docent lecture in the courtroom. Photography is prohibited inside the courtroom.

**2:30–3:00 PM****Walk to Capitol Building** (0.2 miles/across street)

We will walk across First Street to the Capitol Visitor Center and go through security.

**3:00 – 4:30 PM****Tour of Spaces the Supreme Court Occupied in the Capitol Building**

The Capitol Historical Society will guide us on a tour of the Old Supreme Court Chamber in the basement of the Capitol where the Court met from 1819 to 1860. We will also visit other spaces within the Capitol where the Court sat before it moved to the current building in 1935.

After the tour, explore the gift shop and exhibits until the building closes at 4:30 PM.

**You are welcome to remain on Capitol Hill to explore on your own after the tour.**

*Please complete today's evaluation by going to <https://tinyurl.com/3kdz4cu> or by scanning the QR code below:*



**Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> GULC (McDonough 200)****8:30–9:00 AM**      **Join us for breakfast at GULC****9:00–9:15 AM**      **Reflect on yesterday’s sessions****9:15–9:30 AM**      **Street Law’s Case Study Methods****TAB 7**

Street Law has developed seven strategies for teaching about U.S. Supreme Court cases. The strategies vary from basic to complex, and authentic student work increases as you move along the spectrum. In this session we will overview the seven strategies and discuss how to choose which is right for your classroom. **Cathy** will facilitate this session.

**9:30–10:45 AM**      **Case Study: *Mahmoud v. Taylor* and *U.S. v. Skrmetti*****TAB 8**

We will explore two of this Term’s blockbuster cases, *Mahmoud v. Taylor* and *U.S. v. Skrmetti* using a method especially well-suited for discussing hotly contested issues. **Cathy** will facilitate this session.

Case Study Method – Classifying Arguments

**10:45–11:00 AM**      **Break****11:00–12:15 PM**      **Case Study: *Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board v. Drummond*****TAB 9**

We will examine one of this Term’s controversial religious freedoms cases, *Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board v. Drummond*. **Lee** will facilitate this session, joined by **Bradley Girard** (Democracy Forward).

Case Study Method – Student Law Firms

**12:15–1:00 PM**      **Lunch at GULC**

**1:00–4:30 PM****Moot Court: *Barnes v. Felix*****TAB 10**

We will prepare for and present a simulated Supreme Court argument for *Barnes v. Felix*. This case asks: Should courts apply the “moment of the threat” doctrine when evaluating an excessive force claim under the Fourth Amendment?

Guest experts will join us to train teams of justices, petitioner’s advocates, and respondent’s advocates. **Morgan Ratner** and summer associate **Navid Kiassat** (Sullivan & Cromwell) will train the justices, **Nathaniel Zelinsky** (Milbank) will train the petitioners, and **Colleen Sinzdak** (Milbank) will train the respondents.

Case Study Method – Moot Court

**4:30–5:45 PM****Planning with Professional Learning Groups****TAB 11**

Enjoy some snacks while you meet in your professional learning groups to discuss applications of the Institute’s materials, resources, and methods to your classrooms. Use this time to prepare Google slides for the Professional Learning Group Showcase on Friday. **Emma** will facilitate this session.

Please complete today’s evaluation by going to <https://tinyurl.com/2nbz9zxx> or scanning the QR code below:



**Wednesday, June 11<sup>th</sup> GULC (McDonough 200)****8:00\*–8:30 AM Join us for an early breakfast at GULC**

\*Note we have an earlier start on Wednesday

**8:30–8:45 AM Reflect on yesterday's sessions****8:45–10:00 AM The Courts and Checks & Balances****TAB 12**

We will begin this session by digging into the checks & balances expressly stated in the Constitution and established in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803). **Cathy** will be joined by **Joseph Mead** and **Bill Powell** (Georgetown University Law Center's Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection) who will help us compare Text vs. Reality. We will explore how the Supreme Court and lower courts check the other branches today using some of this Terms cases such as *Trump v. CASA and TikTok v. Garland* as examples.

**10:00–10:15 AM Break****10:15–11:00 AM Statutory Interpretation— *Bondi v. VanDerStock*****TAB 13**

In this session we will focus on *Bondi v. VanDerStock* which considers whether “ghost guns”(weapons parts kits) fall under the definition of “firearms” in the Gun Control Act of 1968 Most of the cases we study in SCSJ are constitutional cases, but a significant number of the Court’s cases involve interpreting federal statutes and actions by the federal government. We will look at some of the relevant legislative language and learn about some tools that courts use to interpret statutes. **Lee** will facilitate this session.

**11:00–12:15 PM Resources from Street Law and the Supreme Court Historical Society****TAB 14**

We will use stations to explore educational resources to teach about law and the Court from the Supreme Court Historical Society and Street Law. Stations will include Street Law’s Legal Career Pathways Program, LandmarkCases.org (a joint project of SCHS and Street Law), Legaltimelines.org, Street Law’s resources for AP U.S. Government and Politics, middle school resources, and law electives and the Street Law and U.S. Government textbooks. **Jennifer Lowe** (Supreme Court Historical Society) will join us for this session.

**12:15–1:00 PM Lunch at GULC**

**1:00–2:15 PM****Media Coverage of the Supreme Court****TAB 15**

Most Americans learn about the Supreme Court through media coverage including newspaper reporting, television coverage, radio, blogs, social media, and other online forums. However, only a handful of reporters have a full-time beat at the Court. In this session we will analyze the media coverage of a case from this Term from multiple perspectives, benefit from our media resource person's expertise in determining how and why media coverage differs and decide what media literacy skills are imperative to understand news coverage of the Court. We will also hear about how media coverage of the Court differs from other institutions and what special challenges the Court presents for journalists. **Cathy** will co-facilitate this session. We will be joined by **Amy Howe** (SCOTUSblog).

**2:15–2:30 PM****Break****2:30–4:00 PM****Deliberation: *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.*****TAB 16**

We will use the powerful Deliberation teaching strategy to discuss a hot topic in the United States today—students' First Amendment's free speech rights. We will ask: Does the precedent set in *Tinker v. Des Moines* apply to student speech that occurs off campus? **Jen Wheeler** (Street Law, Inc.) will facilitate this session.

Please complete today's evaluation by going to <https://tinyurl.com/y7wnw9ku> or scanning the QR code below:



**Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup> GULC (McDonough 200)****8:00–8:30 AM Meet in the hotel lobby to walk to the Supreme Court (optional)****9:00–10:30 AM Arrive at the Supreme Court Building****TAB 6****Meet outside at the Supreme Court building and go through security\***

The Supreme Court of the United States is located at **1 First Street, NE**.  
(0.6 miles/5 ½ blocks from the Hyatt Regency Hotel)

**A list of prohibited items may be found on the Court’s website:**  
<https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/prohibited-items.aspx>. Please  
**note in particular the prohibition regarding food and beverages.**

- Members of the party must remain with their guide at all times.
- Photography is prohibited inside the courtroom; however, it is permitted in the public parts of the building. Photos taken by guests in public space are approved for personal memento use only and not for publication, and they may not be used in any manner that would convey endorsement by the Supreme Court.
- Do not attend a lecture if you are ill or have tested positive for COVID-19 within 10 days.
- If you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, please test with a self-administered rapid antigen test prior to the event.

**\* See detailed itinerary under SCOTUS Lecture tab.**

**10:00 AM– ? Decisions Handed Down by the Supreme Court****TAB 6****10:30–11:00 AM Walk to GULC (0.7 miles/7 ½ blocks)****11:00–11:45 AM Reflection on morning’s decisions****11:45–12:00 PM Break****12:00–1:15 PM Lunch with a Clerk****TAB 1**

Lawyers who have clerked recently for a Supreme Court justice will join us for lunch, speak informally about their experiences as clerks, and answer your questions. This relaxed session will give you a “behind the scenes” look at how the Court functions from the perspective of the lawyers who work directly for the justices.

**1:15–1:30 PM**      **Break**

**1:30–2:30 PM**      **Judicial Nomination and Confirmation**

**TAB 17**

The former Chief Nominations Counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee will help us understand the process and the politics of judicial nominations. While the primary emphasis of the session will be on nominating a justice to the Supreme Court, we will also discuss the issue of lower federal court nominations. Teachers will participate in a classroom-ready activity to create an ideal SCOTUS nominee.

**Lee** will open the session by providing the constitutional and historical context for judicial nominations. He will then be joined by **Gregg Nunziata** (Society for the Rule of Law).

**2:30–3:45 PM**      **Professional Learning Groups**

**TAB 11**

We will meet in professional learning groups to discuss applications of the Institute's materials, resources, and methods to your classrooms. Use this time to prepare Google slides for the Professional Learning Group Showcase tomorrow morning. **Emma** will facilitate this session.

**3:45–4:00 PM**      **Wrap-Up and Instructions for the evening**

**4:00–5:30 PM**      **Break** (return to hotel/change)

**5:30–5:45 PM**      **Walk from hotel to reception @ the Supreme Court for Group Photo**  
(0.6 miles/5 ½ blocks)

The Supreme Court of the United States is located at **1 First Street, NE**.  
Please review and adhere to the Court visit protocols.

**6:00–7:30 PM**      **Reception @ Supreme Court**

The reception will be held at the Supreme Court of the United States. You must have a government-issued ID to enter. Please wear your Institute name tags

*Please complete today's evaluation by going to <https://tinyurl.com/y9p2unwn> or scanning the QR code below:*



**Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> GULC (McDonough 200)**

**Check out of the hotel and store your luggage with the concierge.**

**8:30–9:00 AM Join us for a hearty breakfast at GULC**

**9:00–9:15 AM Reflect on yesterday’s sessions**

**9:15–10:30 AM Professional Learning Group Showcase**

**TAB 11**

Prepare and present Google slides to share which resources and content your professional learning group plans to integrate into your courses in the coming school year and possible adaptations you will make to differentiate instruction for students. Each group will have five minutes to present their information to the group. **Emma** will facilitate this session.

**10:30–10:45 AM Break**

**10:45–11:15 AM Art of Training Teachers**

**TAB 18**

We will explore a variety of options for conducting effective staff development. **Lee and Cathy** will facilitate this session.

**11:15–11:30 AM Institute Debrief**

We will collect your “likes and wishes” and take suggestions for strengthening the program next year.

**11:30–12:00 PM It’s a Wrap!**

**TAB 18**

We will discuss some final logistics, and **Emma** will explain the process for obtaining your stipend.

**Adjourn. Have a safe trip home!**

*Please complete the closing evaluation of the Supreme Court Summer Institute*

<https://tinyurl.com/574nw434>

