Classroom Law Project

Judicial Precedent

Vocabulary

Directions: Frontload (introduce and review) these vocabulary words with your students to facilitate their understanding of the topic and coinciding resources:

1. **Judicial system** (n.) - the system of law courts that administer justice

2. **Precedent** (n.) - A court decision in an earlier case with facts and legal issues similar to a dispute currently before a court.

3. *Stare decisis* (n.) - a foundational concept in the American legal system and a Latin term that means "let the decision stand" or "to stand by things decided"

4. **Vacatur** (n.) - to set aside a judgment; a court announcement saying something is canceled

5. **Overrule** (v.) - to make a decision that opposes and changes another decision or suggestion from a position of higher authority

Current Event Essential Questions

Directions: As you read through news and other resources about TOPIC, consider the following questions:

➢ What is judicial precedent?

➢ What are the societal pros and cons of an independent judiciary?

➢ Historically, how have judges, especially Supreme Court Justices, determined their rulings on cases?

➢ What are the advantages and disadvantages of stare decisis?

➢ What is vacatur?

➢ In your opinion, what circumstances should lead to a court abandoning judicial precedent when making a ruling?

➢ In your opinion, when should a court use vacatur?