

7.3

The Inferior Courts & Special Courts



As a Young Political Scientist, I will be able to...

- **Describe the structure and jurisdiction of the federal district courts, the federal courts of appeals, and other constitutional courts.**
- **Contrast the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.**
- **Explain how a citizen may sue the United States government in the Court of Federal Claims.**
- **Examine the roles of the territorial courts and those of the District of Columbia courts.**
- **Explain what types of cases are brought to the Tax Court.**

Structure & Role of the Courts

The background of the entire slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a warm, painterly style.

There are 94 district courts across the United States

Often there are many judges in a district to hear all the case loads

Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court oversees spy activities & secret warrants for those

Alien Terrorist Removal Court- Examine if “alien terrorists” should be expelled from the country

The background of the entire slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, golden tones.

District Courts

Criminal Cases- a Defendant is tried for committing some actions that Congress has defined as a federal crime

Civil Case- noncriminal cases such as a breach of contract or money damages

U.S. is always a party to a federal criminal case

Most decisions made in district courts are final & are not appealed

Structure & Role of Court of Appeals

These courts serve as “gatekeepers” to the Supreme Court

Docket- List of cases to be heard

We have 13 appeals courts in the U.S. Members of the Supreme court used to have to travel to hear cases

Courts review **records- the transcript of the proceedings made in the trial court**

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, golden tones.

Court of International Trade

**The Trade court tries all civil cases based around
nation's customs & other trade-related laws**

**Panel of 3 judges & juries in major ports such as
New York**

The background of the entire slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, muted tones.

Military Justice-Special Courts & Commissions

Military Courts make rules & regulations for military services

Courts-martial- Courts that serve discipline needs for military. 2/3 of jury make decisions

Civilian Tribunal- Appeal court for the Armed Forces

There is a court for appeals for veterans. Military commissions created for terrorists (controversial)

The background of the entire slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, golden tones.

Special Courts

Court of Federal Claims- Court to take U.S. to case,
must be approved by Congress

Redress- Satisfaction of a claim, payment-only by an
act of Congress

Territorial Courts- Make rules for U.S. territories

District of Columbia Courts- Nations judicial
branch for the capital

U.S. Tax Court- hears cases over the application
of tax laws