Welcome back to week 3 of the online portion of our US Judiciary class!

To those of you who have finished their video lectures: Congratulations. I think you have done an amazing job—creative, disciplined, and concise. Have you noticed how long and rambling most video lectures are? I don’t blame professors for this—many of my own lectures on Youtube are too long as well, plus, people really don’t have time to perfect their lectures right now. But you did a great job: to the point, short and sweet. Good job!

I look forward to a few more lectures. I’ll post them on Canvas.

OK, plans for this week. We’ll finish our focus on the Supreme Court process. On Monday, I recommend that you watch the video lectures on the Supreme Court process and do one of two things: Either join me on Monday at 2:30 online (I’ll post the link on Canvas) to ask questions about the topic; or ask those questions on the comment links that are connected to the videos themselves.

Then we’ll move on to the next topic: How does the Supreme Court set its agenda? In other words, how does the Supreme Court decide whether to grant or deny cert, and what types of things matter for that decision? We’ve already heard about jurisdiction—there is the video lecture created by Team Scalia, after all. That’s not our focus for the rest of the week. Our focus is on the Supreme Court’s discretionary jurisdiction—where it can pick and choose which cases it decides. The basics for this were nicely covered by Team Breyer, and we will go a bit more into the process and into a deeper discussion of what influences the Supreme Court is subject to.

I am currently working on a series of short video lectures about this, and by the time you watch this, several of them will be online. Some more will follow on Wednesday. Watch them! Then, participate in two discussion boards: One asks whether the Supreme Court should hear an appeal by the mayor of Allentown, PA, who wants to be released from prison because he fears that he might get infected by the Corona virus if he is not released. This board will be a debate with assigned sides. Second, there will be a Ask Me Anything board for any questions associated with the Supreme Court process and the writ of certiorari.

I look forward to our conversations and discussions this week, on discussion boards as well as on video calls.