Exam 4 Review

Chapter 9, The Judiciary

Chapter 10, Local Government in Texas

**County Commissioner Courts**

**Primary functions**

**County judge**

**At-large elections**

**Requirements of home-rule cities**

**Home-rule city forms of government**

**Mayor-council**

**Council-manager**

**Commissioner**

**Functions of:**

**County government**

**City government**

**Special districts**

**General-statute cities**

**Statutory probate courts**

**Jurisdiction and function of**

**Texas Supreme Court**

Sets tone in civil cases, statewide, final court of civil appeals

**Court of Criminal Appeals**

Statewide, final court of criminal appeals

**Court of Appeals**

Intermediate court for criminal and civil

**District Courts**

State court, limited jurisdiction

**Municipal courts**

Local trial court

**Justice of the peace**

Local trial court

**Judicial campaigns**

Investors: Lawyers, interest groups and potential litigants

Name Game

**Judicial Campaign Fairness Act of 1995**

Limits on campaign contributions

**Judicial elections process**

**Civil law and criminal law**

**Judicial Selection Methods**

Merit

Judges nominated

Appointed by governor

Re-election later

Appointment

Governor appoints with 2/3 confirmation of senate

Contest election

Re-election later

Appoint-retain-elect

***League of United Latin American Citizens v***

***Mattox* (1989)**

– County-wide (at-large) judicial elections were said to dilute

the minority vote

– Federal courts determined the political party of minority

judicial candidates was the cause of minority candidates not

winning elections

**Factors that support alternative judicial selection**

**Methods**

– the low number of minority judges

– the lack of diversity on the bench

– the role of money in judicial races

– the defeat of incumbents

– the importance of party label

– top-of-the-ticket voting;

– the “name game”

**County courts at law**

**The “name game”**

Voters know little about candidate other than party affiliation

**Retention election**

Appellate judges appointed by governor

Any election with no contest where voters can choose to retain or not

**Ordinance**

Rule specifically enforced at the city level

**State Commission on Judicial Conduct**

Reviews judge’s ability to impartially carry out the law

Relies on citizens’ complaints

**Hidden government**