



## Faculty Lunches with the Dean (Shea Denning)(#12)

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This is another installment in the ever-popular series of posts about Faculty Lunches with the Dean. I've already blogged about the information that Jill Moore and Jessie Smith shared about their work at the last lunch on February 14. This post describes something interesting that Shea Denning shared with the group—a seminar on the US Supreme Court for North Carolina district court judges.



Shea Denning

Shea has been working with Jeff Welty on planning a Supreme Court seminar for North Carolina district court judges, which will take place later this month in Washington. It is modeled on a very successful seminar that Jessie Smith led a few years ago for superior court judges. The twenty



district court judges will begin their seminar by having dinner with former US Solicitor General, [Walter Dellinger](#). He is the perfect person to prepare them for hearing oral arguments and for touring the US Supreme Court the next day. Walter is an emeritus faculty member at Duke Law School, and he argued nine cases before the Court as Solicitor General. As head of the Office of Legal Counsel during part of the Clinton Administration, Walter was the principal legal advisor to the Attorney General and the President. He also clerked for Justice Hugo Black at the Supreme Court. Walter's range of experience and his engaging style will make this kick-off dinner an unforgettable opportunity for the judges to gain insights into the Supreme Court. (Plus his wife, Anne, was a long-time faculty member at the School).



Walter Dellinger

On their second day the judges will begin with a docent-led tour of the National Archives and the Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom, the permanent home of the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. The opportunity for judges to see and discuss our founding legal documents will be inspiring. The judges will meet [Senator Richard Burr](#) in his offices, which should be especially interesting given his role as Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee and the pending investigation into Russia's possible interference in the Presidential election. On the last day, the group will attend a lecture at the United States Holocaust Museum by Dr. William Meinecke, the museum's historian. He will be talking about the role of German courts during the Holocaust, which should be fascinating.



Fifty-eight district court judges applied for the seminar. That level of interest is especially impressive when you consider that this is the first time we have asked individual judges to pay out-of-pocket for a School program. Each judge must pay for his or her own travel to Washington, as well as a \$500 registration fee. Typically, the Administrative Office of the Courts covers travel expenses for judges attending our programs, as well as the School's overhead and expenses. Shea considered years of service and geographic diversity in selecting the twenty participants for the course. The group will include judges averaging sixteen years on the bench from nineteen different judicial districts.

This seminar is unlike most of the work we do with judges, which focuses on providing them with information about law and procedure. [A 2002 study report](#) involving faculty and court officials led to the creation of the North Carolina Judicial College at the School. The report noted that “[e]ducation is not always associated with the ability to immediately perform a task, but it is often thought of as a way to inform a person’s intellect, attitude, and worldview.” The US Supreme Court seminar promotes this more holistic approach to educating judges. It illustrates the report’s conclusion that continuing professional education for judicial officials must include learning opportunities that “enhance them intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, improve the execution of their job responsibilities, and acculturate them in the profession and organization.” Kudos to Shea (and to Jessie earlier) for her willingness to put together a terrific learning opportunity for the district court judges. It is interesting to think about how we might serve our other clients by thinking about their continuing education in broader terms.