

LOCAL NEWS

[Go Back](#)

Friday, February 3, 2006

UA sensation: Sandra Day O'Connor on campus

Ex-member of Supremes teaching class

BLAKE MORLOCK

Tucson Citizen

Sandra Day O'Connor swept through the James E. Rogers College of Law yesterday, about 48 hours after leaving the U.S. Supreme Court.

She was starting a new gig: teacher.

O'Connor, 75, who provided a moderating voice on an often-divided court for 24 years, began teaching a one-credit University of Arizona course simply called "The Supreme Court."

And she was a hit.

"She's so cute," second-year law student Christina Wu said as O'Connor left class through a courtyard.



GARY GAYNOR/Tucson Citizen

Walking to her first day of school, just-retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Ronnell Andersen-Jones enter a University of Arizona classroom. O'Connor is teaching four days of a two-week, one-credit class after leaving the Supreme Court. Andersen-Jones is a distinguished visiting faculty fellow.

[Click thumbnail for additional photos](#)



Related news from the Web

Latest headlines by topic:

- [US Supreme Court](#)
- [US News](#)

Powered by [Topic.net](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

Northwest Medical Center Northwest Medical Center One Valley

For a one-of-a-kind person like you

[Click here for our employment opportunities](#)

"I don't really have idols," Wu said. "But she's up there."

Wu watched the class on a television feed in another building because she was not one of the 178 students (a third of the law school's enrollment) who landed a spot in O'Connor's class.

Nicholle Harris, another second-year student, was.

"I was mesmerized the whole time," Harris said. "I was nervous before class. I was thinking, why am I so nervous?"

O'Connor, who could probably teach anywhere in the country, gives insights that can't be found in textbooks, UA Law School Dean Toni Massaro said.

"At 8:15, students can be reading about a Supreme Court case, and at noon they are in the class with a real, live Supreme Court justice," Massaro said.

O'Connor will help teach the two-week class with UA law professor Ronnell Andersen Jones, a former clerk for the former justice.

The course is designed to discuss how the Supreme Court works, rather than the court's rulings and effect on law.

"I realized when I got out of school how little I knew about the Supreme Court as an institution," Jones said.

O'Connor follows a tradition of the late Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, who for most of the past 11 years taught a two-week course at UA each February.

Getting her was easier than Jones thought it would be.

"I knew her real well," Jones said. "I worked the better part of 16 hours a day for her for a full year. Getting to know her as a justice and as a person, I had no reservations. I knew the students would love her."

O'Connor's entry caused a fuss, with the media surrounding her on her first day of school and a college newspaper reporter scribbling down her words as she made for her classroom.

"I'm very happy to be able to do it and be back in Arizona," she said as camera lenses followed her.

Asked if she was ready for this new turn, she held out her arms and said "Well, ... I don't know."

ADVERTISEMENT

The Carpet Store

Your Floor Covering Center

[Click here to watch our video](#)

TOP JOBS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| RECEPTIONIST ORDER TAKER FT. Apply in... | ▶ |
| AMBER LIGHTS Tucson's premier luxury senior... | ▶ |
| BARBER WANTED FOR busy Central shop. Exp'd... | ▶ |
| HAIR STLYISTS for busy full service mall... | ▶ |
| St. Michael's Parish Day School Tucson, AZ... | ▶ |
| RECEPTIONIST ORDER TAKER FT. Apply in... | ▶ |
| PLUMBERS HELPER Good Driving Record, Benefits... | ▶ |