



Government Course Syllabus: 2306

Fall, 2016 CRN #11778, 11782, 11783,

Northline Campus 3 Semester Credit Hours; 48 Contact Hours; 16 Weeks; Face to Face

Calendar: Regular Term, Fall 2016, 8/22/16 to 12/11/16					
Week 1	8/22/16		Week 9	10/17/16	10/19 Pres. Debate 10/28 Fri. Drop Date
Week 2	8/29/16		Week 10	10/24/16	
Week 3	9/5/16	9/5 Mon. Labor Day Holiday; Tues. 9/6 date of record	Week 11	10/31/16	11/8 Tues. Election Day
Week 4	9/12/16	TEST	Week 12	11/7/16	TEST
Week 5	9/19/16		Week 13	11/14/16	Paper/Project due
Week 6	9/26/16	9/26 Pres. Debate	Week 14	11/21/16	11/24 Thanksgiving Day
Week 7	10/3/16	10/4 VP Debate	Week 15	11/28/16	12/4 Last day of face classes
Week 8	10/10/16	10/9 Pres. Debate ~ Mid Term TEST	Week 16	12/5/16	Finals week

Detailed weekly assignments are listed on the last page.

Instructor Name

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Office Hours M – W 11am to 12:30p: and before and after class or by appointments
 Instructor retains the option to alter this syllabus and schedule as needed. Use it as a DRAFT calendar throughout the semester.

The course is organized into a series of 4 modules, each with 4 weeks work covering the major topics of the course as shown in the color coded calendar above. Each module will close out at the end of a test, and a new module will open. The tests are not comprehensive over previous module's material and Test 2 / midterm and Test 4 / final are not comprehensive.

Government Department Chair

Evelyn Ballard

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Note: if you have a problem with your Government course or grade, please contact me before contacting the Dept. Chair.

Course Description

Origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. **2306** covers the major institutions [Governor, Texas Legislature, State Courts, Texas Constitution], prisons/death penalty, local government (cities, counties, ISDs/schools, METRO, regional government), and the Texas election process (Primaries, conventions).

These topics are studied and synchronized within the calendar of actual current events, so students can connect to them in a real world environment, rather than mere abstract concepts from the book without contemporary context. This class is very focused on current events and local affairs, so any effort that you use to plug into the news will help you succeed in this class. This course is focused on real-world examples and practical applications of government as they are occurring. Part of your grade (16%) is based on class participation to watch the news and summarize it.

Prerequisite, Co-requisite

Must have passed or co-enrolled in English 1301 (Composition I) as a co-requisite.

GOVT 2306 2017-2020 HCC Government Program Student Learning Outcomes

- * Identify the structure, functions and nature of the institutions of government in Texas.
- * Understand and describe the development, purpose and attributes of the Texas Constitution
- * Identify the policy making process and comprehend the outcomes of state and local policy in Texas.
- * Understand how political values and ideas are developed and expressed and the means through which one may engage in the political system.
- * Comprehend how interest groups, parties and the structure of the political system influence political participation.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

1. Identify and describe the institutions of American national government. GOVT 2305
2. Identify and describe the institutions of the State of Texas government. GOVT 2306
3. Identify and evaluate information sources for political news, data, and opinion. GOVT 2306
4. Analyze the effects of the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces on politics and government. GOVT 2306
5. Recognize and assume the responsibilities of citizenship by developing one’s critical thinking skills, engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media. GOVT 2305

Core Objectives

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) mandates that the core curriculum must ensure that students will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life. Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. Students enrolled in GOVT 2305/2306 core curriculum courses will complete assessments designed to measure the following core objectives:

- Critical Thinking Skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
 - Communication Skills—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
 - Personal Responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making
 - Social Responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
- Student assessment of proficiencies mandated by THECB may include testing, projects, or assignments.

Make-up Policy

There are no make-ups other than for emergency situations only. Arrangements must be made by calling in advance and taken on the students own time during another class taught by the instructor or in the Testing Center.

Instructor Grading Criteria

Course Grading: 90-100=A; 80-89 =B; 70-79 =C; 60-69 =D; <60 =F, or **FX, which is failure to attend or not participating by failing to log in and perform work on a regular basis.**

4 tests (16% each) covering the reading, news clippings, Power Points/PDFs, & videos	= 66%
Class participation, homework, syllabus test , videos, and <u>weekly news summaries</u>	= 16%
1 of the following items: Paper/Campaign Project/Political Cartoon Journal	= 16%
Total	= 100%

The government department requires that **25% of a student’s grade must be based on written work – which is derived from a combination of the Term Project, news summaries, video summaries, or other written homework.** Objective exams alone are not enough to determine the grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class discussion on government issues is encouraged, expected, and part of your grade. The value of small classes like HCC is the opportunity to learn from your peers and exchange ideas, especially different viewpoints. We learn the most from those who are different from ourselves, not from people who think as we already do. This is the value of diversity in an urban area. Houston and HCC are multicultural communities, so take advantage of the diversity to learn and experience new people and concepts. We must always be respectful of the different ideas of others and their bias.

Purpose of the news stories assignment is to engage you in the real world and make you aware of the events and situations that challenge our society. News summaries can make the difference of a letter grade (higher or lower), so it is a very important assignment. Link the topics of class to the news stories, your project, and “connect the dots” to see the ‘big picture’ of what and how government affects us each day. These are life skills that will serve you throughout your career.

Please take detailed notes during lecture which you can use on the test!! Your job as a student is to look, listen, write, and remember what is presented. This includes proper spelling! Children must learn their spelling words and so do you! It will be impossible for you to remember the videos and discussion for a test without taking notes or making an outline. You can use your notes on the exams. Most materials are posted on the ***Learning Web***.

FINAL GRADE OF FX

Students who stop attending class and do not withdraw themselves prior to the withdrawal deadline, **October 28 at 4:30pm** may either be dropped by their professor for excessive absences or be assigned the final grade of “FX” at the end of the semester. Students who stop attending classes will receive a grade of “FX”, compared to an earned grade of “F” which is due to poor performance.

Please note that HCC will not disperse financial aid funding for students who have never attended class. Students who receive financial aid, but fail to attend class will be reported to the US Department of Education and may have to pay back their aid. A grade of “FX” is treated exactly the same as a grade of “F” in terms of GPA, probation, suspension, and satisfactory academic progress.

F1 Visa students have to show that they are attending their classes. A similar requirement is in place for some of our Veteran awards. This process was set up to deter **Pell runners** - students who stay in class until they receive their financial aid and then they quit participating. This is only fair to other students who work hard and pay their own tuition PLUS the taxpayers who provide the funding for federal financial aid programs. The Republican controlled House of the US Congress is dominated by Tea Party Conservatives who absolutely want to cut spending, so federal aid programs for college tuition is one of their main targets.

Obama’s proposal for free community college tuition is only an idea at this point. The GOP Congress is not willing to fund it, and states must “opt in” to pay ¼ of the cost. Sentiment of the Texas Legislature is equally unwilling to participate in these programs. HCC tuition is amongst the cheapest anywhere, so use it to your advantage before you transfer to expensive universities.

HCC Policies

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy: If you have any special needs which affect your ability to learn in this class, please inform me. Appropriate steps will be taken to assist you with your needs. Any student with a documental disability (physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the ADA counselor at the beginning of each semester. There is a Disability Support Services Office at each campus. To find the name of the ADA counselor at your campus, visit www.hccs.edu, then click future students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information. Faculty members are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires that institutions have policies that protect students’ rights with regard to sex/gender discrimination. Information regarding these rights are in the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly. Know your rights and how to avoid these difficult situations. Log in to www.edurisksolutions.org Sign in using your HCC student e-mail account, then go to the button at the top right that says **Login** and enter your student number.

Scholastic Dishonesty:

HCCS students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by HCC System officials against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

"Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating on a test includes but is not limited to: Copying from another student's test paper; using unauthorized materials during a test, unauthorized collaboration with another student during a test; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test; and bribing another person to obtain a copy of a test. Plagiarism includes the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work. Collusion includes the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work.

Attendance, Tardiness, Leaving the room, Disruptive behavior, and Dropping the class

- Roll is taken each day and you must come PREPARED to class every period. This is college; not grade 13. If you miss a class, you can attend at any other day or time when your class is taught. The amount of material and course workload are determined by the state, so we have to keep on schedule and move forward.
- **You are allowed four absences during the 16-week semester "no questions asked", but this is not recommended.** Excessive absences threaten your performance and with more than 4, you are subject to drop by the Instructor without notice. There is no difference between "excused" or "unexcused absences". We all have other obligations and extenuating circumstances that may occasionally require missing class, but use your discretion. Doctor/dentist appointments are unacceptable excuses and can easily be re-scheduled if you ask them or try. Missing class for children's school or driving others to appointments is also not advised. Make your family aware that your school is just as important as theirs! Always make class a priority; and find out from classmates or me what you missed (lecture, announcements, handouts, etc.) Most materials are posted online, so you can access them if you miss class. Please communicate personal problems via email or phone immediately if you miss multiple classes so that I can be aware of the problem before it festers.
- A rainstorm is not cause to cancel a class, although Houston does have periods of intense rain and occasional flash flooding. **You will be called and texted by HCC emergency services if there is a class cancellation for any reason.** This is why it is important to register your phone and email via PeopleSoft with the college in your private student records.
- **Habitual tardiness will not be tolerated.** It is important to be on time to avoid missing announcements. Houston traffic and weather are always unpredictable, but ask your boss to leave a few minutes early so you can get here on time. Most employers are supportive and cooperative with your school commitment. Possibly you can make-up the worktime during lunch or by coming in early or late. **Multiple tardies (3) will count as an absence** and you are subject to drop without notice if you are habitually late or leave early. Do not schedule class at another campus in immediate sequence any class.
- Phones and texting will not be tolerated in class under any conditions. **Do not display your phone on your desk. It is not needed.**
- Please stay in your seat during the entire class. Use the restroom before or after class unless you absolutely have to leave. If you have an emergency, of course please leave the room, but do not text in class under any circumstances.
- Disruptive behavior and unnecessary fidgeting of any type is not tolerated.
- It is a students' responsibility to drop the course prior to the Drop Date if you are failing. I will advise you of your grades and counsel you beforehand, but you can drop from your PeopleSoft. Likewise, if you are unhappy or disappointed in any way, please speak with me so we can resolve conflict before it intensifies. You only have 6 drops throughout your college career, so use them wisely.

Withdrawals:

Students who take a course for the third time or more must now pay significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. At HCC, it is an additional \$50 per credit hour. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test-taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available. Also, the state of Texas has passed a new law limiting new students (as of Fall 2007) to no more than six withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree.

The drop/withdrawal date this semester is **October 28 at 4:30pm.**

Repeating Courses:

As a result of recent Texas legislative changes, please be advised that HCC is charging additional tuition for students who enroll in the same class three or more times at HCC. While it is the hope of HCC that students will be successful in their first attempt at classes, we realize that life demands, academic struggles, and other issues may result in students needing to take the same class more than once. Speaking with an advisor will help you develop student success skills, improving your overall academic performance. If a student repeats a course in which a grade (A-F) has been received, the highest grade received at HCC is the permanent grade for the course and will be used in computing the GPA. All grades earned in a given course will be reflected on the transcript. Other colleges may compute the GPA differently than HCC.

HCC Student Handbook:

Please note that it is each student's responsibility to read and be familiar with the HCC Student Handbook. Please see: <http://central.hccs.edu/students/student-handbook/>

PARKING PERMITS

You must have a parking permit to use the lots. Print your permit from your records in PeopleSoft and display in the rear window, lower left corner.

Term Project: Choice of 1 of the following:

You must complete the Paper or Project to pass the class, no matter what your test grades are.

It is always wise to begin your project early before you get distracted with other classes and social events. It is called a "term project" because you should be working the entire term!

It is anticipated that any of the Project choices will take 8-10 hours to complete, which is why it is called a "Term Project." Do not wait until the last minute. My job is to assist you in the Project, so please use the references that I will provide to maximize your focus and understanding of the issues. Often students get wrong ideas about topics and it is difficult to re-learn something once it is misconstrued. A government paper has a special focus, so it is different than any other paper. Our focus is Houston, Texas, and US, so do not get distracted by unrelated materials. You must also use the FREE services of tutors and staff in the Learning Lab; plus computer spell-check!

Research / Commentary Paper (Option 1). **Write a 4-6 page paper** on a topic of governmental policy, agency, issue, or person/group that interests you (typed, 12 point font, space & half). Sample topics will be given. The purpose of any paper is for you to research and expand your current knowledge based on FACTS of the role of government in that topic (especially government agencies, departments, people, power structures) and to express your ideas and thoughts on the topic; not to copy or paraphrase the topic from research sources. **Build on what you already know, but learn something new about the topic, especially from a governmental perspective and with a local focus local or state).** **Specific guidelines on structure and content of the paper will be given later.**

Political Cartoon Project (Option 2) Political cartoons are a common and equally powerful means of making political commentary by journalists. Historically the population was largely illiterate, so visual and graphic communications were the only method to educate, communicate, and engage citizens on timely issues. The power and controversy of political cartoons was fully realized in January 2015, when a French satirical newspaper, **Charlie Hebdo**, was targeted by Islamic terrorists who killed 12 journalists/cartoonists and 5 other innocent Jewish citizens in Paris. One of the greatest liberties in USA is freedom of speech/press; and the French embrace it in the

same reverent manner. After all, it was the French who gave us the *Statue of Liberty* in 1875! They are our allies and have similar values a do we for liberty and democracy.

Your task is to explore, collect a series of cartoons, and use PowerPoint to compile a diary of digital cartoons copied from the Chronicle or other online newspapers or publications. ***Most importantly***, provide your personal analysis of the issues, effectiveness of the cartoon, and the author to communicate and persuade the public with his artistic work. **Specific guidelines on structure and method will be given later.**

Campaign Project (Option 3): Texas has elections every year, so there are many opportunities to volunteer and engage in the campaign/election process. Volunteering for a political campaign, Party, or candidate is an excellent way to gain insight into the workings of candidates and campaign operations. Such participation will involve travel to the campaign HQ, usually requiring extra time, and the clerical tasks of phone banking, block walking, or preparing campaign literature. This Project gives you the rare time to get offline, out of the library, and *into the streets of your community where grassroots government occurs!* Prepare a PowerPoint summary of your experiences with photos and commentary. Potential candidates and details will be provided. **Specific guidelines on structure and content will be given later.**

“Super Tuesday” and Texas Primaries were March 1 and the general election is November 8. , so there will be many opportunities to participate in a campaign project in Houston for either Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders and any of the Republican candidates. Details of these will be available soon after the class begins.

Texas Government 2306: Course Calendar and Topics

Week 1 & 2: Introduction to Beauregard, Introduction to Government. What can you expect in this class and what is expected of you? What is government and why do we have it? Changing political landscape and disagreement over the role of government.

Week 3: Labor Day.

Week 4: Changing Political Demographics videos

TEST 1

Week 5 & 6: Right to Vote & Voter Registration & Political Parties, Campaigns, Voting, and Elections - Early Voting,

Weeks 7: Texas Constitution and importance of **Federalism** (power to the states, especially Texas), the Bureaucracy.

Week 8: Texas Legislature 2015 & Governor: education, guns, border control Restoring with the budget cuts of 2011, moving forward in 2013, and controversy of 2013 Special Sessions: Texas Abortion Law.

Week 8 Low Turnout Election

Midterm TEST 2

Week 9 & 10 & 11: The Texas Judiciary, Prisons, & Harris Co. Criminal Justice System

What happens if you get arrested for DUI or you are falsely accused of a crime? What are your rights and what is the process to prove your innocence? What happens on jury duty?

Significant criminal justices reforms are resulting in Harris Co. and Texas from the availability of DNA

evidence, which has exonerated numerous falsely incarcerated persons after serving years in prison. These realities have led to extensive changes in criminal investigations, the jury selection process, and appeals process, esp. in Harris Co.

Week 12:

TEST 3 Projects due before Thanksgiving

Week 13: Local Governments, Cities, Counties, We Love Houston

Week 14 & 15: Taxes, METRO, Regional Planning & Schools/ ISDs

Week 16: TEST 4 Final Test

Instructor retains the option to alter this syllabus.