Texas Government 2306  
CRN 66769– Fall 2013  
Room 217 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Tue/Thurs  
3 hour lecture course / 48 hours per semester/ 16 weeks

INSTRUCTOR:  
Rosalyn Crain

OFFICE LOCATION:  
Houston Community College-Northwest College  
Katy Campus  
Room 112C  
Phone: (713) 718-5235  
E-mail: Rosalyn.crain@hccs.edu

OFFICE HOURS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.</td>
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LEARNING WEB: [http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/rosalyn.crain](http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/rosalyn.crain)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Government 2306 focuses on the 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.

PRE-REQUISITES: Students in Texas Government 2306 must be placed into college-level reading and college-level writing.

COURSE GOALS:

This course is designed to provide students with a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the structure, workings and practices of government at the state level. Additionally, the course is designed to help students develop the necessary intellectual skills to examine and critically evaluate the impact of government to society and understand how they can effectively engage in and influence the policy making process.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution
- Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government
- Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas
Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government
Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
Analyze the state and local election process
Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens
Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas

Course Calendar with Due Dates for Reading and Testing

Week of August 26:  Assigned Reading: Introduction to Texas Government /Texas Political Culture (Part I) (pp.2-26 of Chapter 1)

Week of September 2:  Assigned Reading: Texas Constitution (Chapter 2)

Quiz #1—“Open Note”

Week of September 9:  Assigned Reading: The Texas Legislature (Chapter 6)

Week of September 16:  Assigned Reading: The Governor and the Texas Bureaucracy (Chapter 7 and Chapter 8)

Quiz #2—“Open Note”

Week of September 23:  Assigned Reading: The Texas Court System (Chapter 9)

Week of September 30:  Assigned Reading: Local government in Texas (Chapter 11)

Test #1: Tuesday, October 8

Week of October 7:  Assigned Reading: Texas Political Culture Part II (pp. 26-36 of Chapter 1)

Week of October 14:  Assigned Reading: Texas Budget Policy (Chapter 12)

Quiz #3—“Open Note”

Week of October 21:  Assigned Reading: Other State Policy Issues: Education/Environment/Health Care/Women (Chapter 13)

Week of October 28:  Assigned Reading: Other State Policy Issues: Education/Environment/Health Care/Women (Chapter 14)

Quiz #4—“Open Note”

Test #2: Thursday, October 31

Week of November 4:  Assigned Reading: The Context to Contemporary Texas Politics (Assigned Supplemental Reading)

Week of November 11:  Assigned Reading: Political Behavior (pp. 136-146 of Chapter 5 and Assigned Supplemental Reading)
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

As your instructor, I am committed to helping each of you achieve your academic goals. It is my responsibility to provide each student with a firm foundation of knowledge related to Texas government.

This is a lecture course. Instruction includes the use of lecture materials, collaborative activities in the classroom, on-line interactive exercises and other supplemental resources as provided by the instructor.

Additionally, discussion will be an important aspect of the course. It is my belief that discourse helps students move beyond memorization of the material and into critical analysis and evaluation of the concepts and theories examined in the course. You will be involved in discussions with your classmates and your instructor. In order to contribute to these discussions, you will need to stay prepared by following the reading schedule, attending class regularly, submitting assignments on time, taking advantage of the supplemental resources provided by the instructor (including any enrichment exercises) and fully participating in every aspect of the course.

I am committed to your success and hope that you are too!

TESTS, QUIZZES, WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

There will be 3 tests, 12 quizzes, an in-class writing exercise, and a course paper.

Tests: Tests #1-3 are worth 100 points each and will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer. Each exam assesses understanding of material covered in the corresponding section. The final exam is not comprehensive.

Quizzes: There will be twelve ten-point quizzes associated with the course material. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions or short answer/essay. Use the quizzes to assess your comprehension of the course material prior to the test. All of the course quizzes assess the student’s knowledge of assigned course readings and in-class activities including videos and guided group discussions. In order to do well on these assessments, students should fully participate in the course. Six of the course quizzes are announced and scheduled in the course syllabus. These assessments are “open note,” allowing students to use their written or typed notes. Students are not allowed to use their textbook. There will also be six unannounced quizzes. These quizzes may be administered at any time during class. As such, you must stay prepared.
In-Class Writing Exercise: There is a 40-point writing exercise associated with the course material. You will be provided with two writing prompts to which you will respond. The writing exercise is an assessment of your knowledge so support your response with your knowledge of the course material.

Course Paper: There will also be a 100-point analysis paper. Details related to the course paper will be discussed the first week of class and posted on the Learning Web.

GRADING SCALE:

The final grade will be based on the tests, quizzes, and the analysis paper. There are 550 possible points in the course.

90-100 = A (493 points and up)

80-89.9 = B (438-492 points)

70-79.9 = C (383 - 437 points)

60-69.9 = D (328 - 382 points)

0-59.9 = F (327 points and below)

WEIGHTING:

Tests = 55%

Quizzes = 20%

Paper = 18%

Writing Exercise = 7%

LATE SUBMISSION/MAKE-UP POLICY:

Quizzes: There will be NO make-ups for quizzes (no exceptions). Please make every effort to regularly attend class and to arrive on time.

Course Paper: Late submissions of the course paper will not be accepted. No exceptions.

Tests: The instructor reserves the right to determine the legitimacy of a student’s excuse for missing a test. If a make-up test is granted, the test may consist largely of essay questions. There will be no exceptions to this policy. I strongly discourage missing a test.


There are several options for buying the textbook.

♦ HCC Bookstore: You can purchase or rent a new or used textbook from the HCC bookstore.
♦ Direct from the Publisher: Using a credit or debit card, you may also purchase the textbook directly from the textbook publisher. There are several format and price options.

♦ Other Online Sources: As you know, textbooks may often be found online through other vendors. However, if you exercise this option, please make sure you purchase the correct textbook (including the edition). You will need your textbook in a timely manner.

**USING THE TEXTBOOK:** It is important that you follow the reading schedule. While it may be tempting, do not fall behind on your reading or wait until right before a test to study. To avoid becoming overwhelmed with the material, pace yourself by maintaining the reading schedule as printed. The textbook is complementary to the supplemental readings, assignments and your personal note taking. Ensure your personal success in the course by staying prepared and engaged!

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA STATEMENT)**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office (713-718-5422) at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

For questions, please contact Donna Price (District) at 713.718.5165 or one of the Disability Counselor at Northwest College, Dr. LaRonda Ashford at (713) 718-5408 or Lisa Parkinson M.Ed. at (713) 718-5422. To visit the ADA Web site, please visit: www.hccs.edu then click “Future students,” scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY, PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION:** I will follow HCC policy for any and all academic dishonesty, plagiarism and collusion. Any form of cheating, including plagiarism, will result in a zero (F) for that particular graded activity. You may also receive a grade of (F) for the course. Identified instances of cheating will also be reported to the college and could result in administrative withdrawal. Please note that you will not be allowed to leave the classroom during the testing process.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating on a test includes copying from another student's test paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with another student during a test without authority; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test; or bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered. 'Plagiarism' means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work for credit. ‘Collusion’ means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit."

For further clarification on what is considered academic dishonesty and/or cheating, in simplified terms it is (1) taking unchanged passages (or slightly edited) from another person's writing and portraying them as one's own; (2) submitting a paper that includes paraphrases of another person's writing without giving credit; (3) having someone else write your paper for you; (4) copying or using another person's work during in-class writing or testing; (5) the unauthorized use of electronic devices during in-class writing or testing; and (6) violating testing rules. Keep in mind also that whether you are cheating or not, not following testing or writing rules properly, such as communicating with your neighbor or using a cell phone during a test will be construed as cheating. This is not an exhaustive list of the forms of cheating on written work. If you are in doubt, consult your instructor.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE AND HCC COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Attending class regularly is the best way to succeed in the course. Research has shown that the single most important factor in student success is attendance. Simply put, going to class greatly increases your ability to succeed. You are expected to attend class regularly. You are also responsible for materials covered during your absences. Class attendance is checked daily.
Although it is your responsibility to drop a course for non-attendance, the instructor has the authority to drop you for excessive absences. I reserve the right to withdraw students for low or no attendance.

If you feel that you cannot complete this course, you will need to withdraw from the course prior to the final date of withdrawal. HCC policy provides that students may be dropped by the instructor after missing more than six hours of class time. If you don’t attend class and fail to withdraw from the course by the deadline, you will receive a grade in the course. For students who fail the course due to excessive absences a special grade will be assigned (see Non Attendance and Failure to Withdraw Policy for details).

The last day that you may be withdrawn from the course is Friday, November 1 by 4:30 p.m. After this date, you will receive a grade (not a W) in the course.

NON ATTENDANCE AND FAILURE TO WITHDRAW

If you do not attend class (actively engage in the course) and fail to withdraw by the deadline, you will receive a grade of “FX” in the course. A grade of “FX” is failure due to lack of attendance, which is a distinction from an “earned” grade of “F”-failure due to poor performance.

Students who withdraw by the deadline will receive a “W” in the course instead of a grade.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED WITHDRAWAL POLICY (STATE OF TEXAS POLICY)

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.

HOW TO DROP

• If a student decides to withdraw from a class upon careful review of other options, the student can withdraw online prior to the deadline through their HCC Student Center.

• HCC and/or professors may withdraw students for excessive absences without notification (see Class Attendance below).

• Students should check HCC’s Academic Calendar by Term for withdrawal dates and deadlines. Classes of other duration (flex-entry, 8-weeks, etc.) may have different final withdrawal deadlines. Please contact the HCC Registrar’s Office at 713.718.8500 to determine mini-term class withdrawal deadlines.

IMPORTANT: Students are now able to withdraw from one or more of their classes online. While it is still advisable that student receive good counsel from instructional and counseling faculty prior to dropping one or more classes, students will no longer be required to “see” someone before they will be allowed to drop. They will be provided information related to the implications and possible consequences of dropping their courses. The following will occur when a student selects the “drop” option during an enrollment request:

• Students will be required to select a drop reason in order to complete the withdrawal request (the drop reason will cue whether the dropped course will count toward the 6 drop rule or not).
• Students will be invited to click on several links to learn more of the implications of dropping on the six-drop rule (on veterans, on financial aid, and on international students): (http://imc02.hccs.edu/gcac/drop.htm).

• Students will be required to acknowledge the implications of withdrawing from a class.

The last day for an administrative /student withdrawal is: Friday, November 1 by 4:30 p.m.

HCC EARLY ALERT

The HCC Early Alert Initiative is a college-wide effort to successfully retain students who are at risk of failing, withdrawing or dropping a course. This joint effort between Instruction and Student Services identifies students that are performing poorly in the classroom so that effective support services can be provided to the student.

PERFORMANCE EARLY INTERVENTION I am committed to helping you achieve your academic goals. If you find that you are not performing at a level you are pleased with, it is vitally important that you make every effort possible to seek assistance. Failing even one test may be detrimental to your final grade. If you do not perform well on the first exam, or you find that your quiz/assignment scores are weak, please see me immediately! Do not wait until the week before the final exam to turn things around!

CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

It is our shared responsibility to develop and maintain a positive learning environment for everyone. Adult behavior is expected. Disruptive behavior/activities which interfere with teaching and/or learning will not be tolerated, and may result in an administrative withdrawal without refund.

ALL electronic devices are to be turned completely off (see signs in classroom) during instruction. Note that “off” does not mean on vibrate. Please remember that ringing and buzzing phones and other devices are a disruption and interfere with the ability of others to learn. Additionally, please limit your use of laptops in the classroom for note taking purposes only. If your use of a laptop becomes disruptive to the learning environment, you will be asked to cease further use.

Use of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for more information.

INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS

As your Instructor, it is my responsibility to:

• Provide the grading scale and detailed grading formula explaining how student grades are to be derived
• Facilitate an effective learning environment through class activities, discussions, and lectures
• Inform you of any special projects or assignments
• Inform students of policies such as attendance, withdrawal, tardiness and make up
• Provide the course outline and class calendar which will include a description of any special projects or assignments
• Arrange to meet with individual students before and after class as required

To be successful in this class, it is the student’s responsibility to:

• Attend class and participate in class discussions and activities
• Read and comprehend the textbook
• Complete the required assignments and exams:
• Ask for help when there is a question or problem
• Keep copies of all paperwork, including this syllabus, handouts and all assignments

DISCIPLINE REQUIREMENT

Writing must comprise at least 25% of the student’s final course grade. One of the core competencies essential to the learning process in the social sciences disciplines is writing at the college level, meaning having the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose, adapted to purpose, occasion and audience. This includes not only grammar, spelling and punctuation, but the writing process itself. All graded assessments (in their totality) will meet and/or exceed this discipline requirement.

**The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any point during the semester **