



**Government 2306-Revised 3/30/2020
Spring 2020**

**Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Government Department**

<http://www.hccs.edu/programs/areas-of-study/social-behavioral-sciences/government>

**Introduction to Texas Government- CRN# 12113
Katy Campus 218 11:00-12:20 TTh**

Instructor: Gary LeBlanc

Instructor Contact Information: 3 hour lecture course

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Office: 112D

OFFICE HOURS: 7-8:00 a.m. and 1:00-2:00 Monday/Wednesday
9-9:30 a.m. and 12:30-1:30 p.m. Tuesday/Thursday
Other times and Fridays by appointment



Welcome! Your participation and involvement in the learning process and class activities is highly encouraged. Not only is this part of the required curriculum competencies, but this will be an essential ingredient in your enjoyment and success in this class. This course is designed to go far beyond the mere presentation, memorization and testing of data. It will promote each student's involvement in the learning process both in and out of class. I will encourage you to take an active role by listening, reading, completing assignments and independent learning exercises, as well as participation in classroom activities. I am looking forward to a positive and mutually beneficial learning

experience! **Relax and enjoy!**



GOVT 2306 requires college-level reading and writing skills. The minimum requirement for enrollment in GOVT 2306 include concurrent enrollment in or successful completion of ENGL 1301. If you have enrolled in this course having satisfied this prerequisite, you have a higher chance of success than students who have not done so. Please carefully read and consider the repeater policy in the [HCCS Student Handbook](#).

Eagle Online Canvas Learning Management System

This section of GOVT 2306 will use [Eagle Online Canvas https://eagleonline.hccs.edu](https://eagleonline.hccs.edu). While this course is a traditional in-person class, there is a web-enhanced component to the class as the bulk of instructional material is available only on HCCS Learning Web. Very little material will be available by your instructor as a traditional hard-copy.

Instructional Materials

TEXTBOOK:

Mark P. Jones; William Earl Waxwell; Crain, Ernest. **Texas Politics Today** 2017-2018 (18th Edition) (Boston: Cengage, 2018).



If you purchase a new textbook, you will receive an access code for MindTap. This is not mandatory but should serve as a supplement to the learning process. There are a number of features that might be useful to you but there will be no mandate for usage or any points associated with any of the activities included. Additional information will be included on the Learning Web at a later date.

Tutoring

HCC provides free, confidential, and convenient academic support, including writing critiques, to HCC students in an online environment and on campus. Tutoring is provided by HCC personnel in order to ensure that it is contextual and appropriate. Visit the [HCC Tutoring Services](#) website for services provided.

Libraries

The HCC Library System consists of 9 libraries and 6 Electronic Resource Centers (ERCs) that are inviting places to study and collaborate on projects. Librarians are available both at the libraries and online to show you how to locate and use the resources you need. The libraries maintain a large selection of electronic resources as well as collections of books, magazines, newspapers, and audiovisual materials. The portal to all libraries' resources and services is the HCCS library web page at <http://library.hccs.edu>.

Supplementary Instruction

Supplemental Instruction is an academic enrichment and support program that uses peer-assisted study sessions to improve student retention and success in historically difficult courses. Peer Support is provided by students who have already succeeded in completion of the specified course, and who earned a grade of A or B. Find details at <http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/>.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Government 2306 is one of two courses designed to introduce students to the politics of government at the national, state and local levels. This course is fully transferable to other colleges and universities. The course curriculum will include the following areas: Origin and development of the Texas Constitution, the structure and powers of state and local government, intergovernmental relations, political participation, the campaign/election process, public policy and the political culture of Texas. The course will basically be divided into three components/modules each resulting in test to evaluate learning outcomes. We will certainly address high profile current events, as well as issues related to the 86th legislative session.

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.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

1. Identify and describe the institutions of the State of Texas government
2. Identify and evaluate information sources for political news, data, and opinion.
3. Analyze the effects of the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces on politics and government.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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

Learning Objectives: Learning Objectives for each CSLO can be found [here](#).

Student Success

Expect to spend at least twice as many hours per week on your own in addition to the time you would normally spend during instruction. Additional time will be required for written assignments. The assignments provided will help you use your study hours wisely. Successful completion of this course requires a combination of the following:

- Reading the textbook
- Attending class in person and/or online
- Completing assignments
- Participating in class activities

There is no short cut for success in this course; it requires reading (and probably re-reading) and studying the material using the course objectives as your guide.

Instructor and Student Responsibilities

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 learner-centered instructional techniques
- Provide a description of any special projects or assignments
- Inform students of policies such as attendance, withdrawal, tardiness, and makeup
- 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

As a student, it is your responsibility to:

- Attend class in person and/or online
- Participate actively by reviewing course material, interacting with classmates, and responding promptly in your communication with me
- 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
- Be aware of and comply with academic honesty policies in the [HCCS Student Handbook](#)

TESTING: The final exam test be 100% short answer/essay. The two tests, including the in-class critical thinking essay, will account for **48%** of your final grade.

CLASS PROJECT: You should note that my grading system is comprehensive and includes a method of evaluation of each identified competency area. If test taking is not one of your strengths, you have the opportunity to improve your status in class with the other graded activities. Your chosen project will be valued at **100** points. There will be additional instructions on my Learning Web page.

ASSIGNMENTS: You will be given an assignment related to each exam that will count **24 points** each. These will self- paced assignments and you will have more than ample time.

GRADING: You will have the opportunity to earn a maximum of **420** points. Grades will be determined by the percentage of total points you earn based on the scale of 90-100%-A, 80-89%-B, 70-79%-C, 60-69%-D and 59% and below an F. The minimum number of points for each letter grade is as follows:

A-376 points...B-334 points...C-292 points...D-250 points... F-249 & Below

The following is the distribution of the pointsystem:

Test 1	100 points	Project.....	100 points 24%
Final).....	100 points	Assignments	72 points 17%
Final non comprehensive		Quizzes.....	36 points 9%
		Syllabus quiz.....	12 points 2%

**Government
2306 Course
Calendar**

The following is an outline of our course activities and a tentative schedule of those activities. Completion of this material will cover the educational objectives for the Social Sciences core curriculum identified earlier in the Syllabus.

January 22	Syllabus
January 27	Political, social and economic
January 29	Texas Constitution TPT- Ch. 3 pp. 56-62
February 3	Continue Texas Constitution TPT- Ch. 3 pp. 63-77 Syllabus Quiz

February 5	Complete Texas Constitution Begin Interest Groups
February 10	Interest Groups TPT- Ch. 6 pp. 138-150
February 12	Complete Interest Groups TPT- Ch. 6 pp.151-165
February 13	Political Parties TPT- Ch. 5 pp. 112-124
February 17	No classes –Presidents Day
February 19	TPT- Complete Political Parties Ch. 5 pp. 124-137 Begin voting, campaigns and elections
February 24	Complete voting, campaigns and elections TPT- Ch. 4 pp. 78-90 Review for Test.....
February 26	Test and Assignment #1
March 2	Legislative Branch TPT- Ch. 7 pp. 166-180
March 4	Legislative Branch TPT- Ch. 7 pp. 180-197
March 9	Completion of Legislative Begin Executive Branch TPT- Ch. 8 pp. 198-212
March 16-22	Spring Break
March 23	Complete Executive & State bureaucracy TPT- Ch. 8 pp. 213-235
March 25	Judicial System TPT- Ch. 9 pp. 236-250
March 30	Judicial System TPT- Ch. 9 pp. 250-259 and Ch. 10
April 1	Completion and Review

Electronic Devices	Student Rights and Responsibilities
Equal Educational Opportunity	Student Services
Financial Aid TV (FATV)	Testing
General Student Complaints	Transfer Planning
Grade of FX	Veteran Services

Incomplete

At least 85% of the required work in the course should have already been completed. Students granted an "I" will have until the end of the next long semester to finish the course. All "I's will convert to "F's" unless the student successfully complete all remaining work as determined by the instructor.

HCC Grading Scale can be found on this site under Academic Information:

<http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook>.

Academic Integrity

Houston Community College is committed to a high standard of academic integrity in the academic community. In becoming part of the academic community, students are responsible for honesty and independent effort. Examples of these violations include, but are not limited to, the following: Plagiarizing written work or projects, cheating on exams or assignments, collusion on an exam or project, and misrepresentation of credentials or prerequisites when registering for a course. Simply put, violations of academic integrity will NOT be tolerated.

All faculty at HCC are required to document these violations in Maxient, a system used to report any student behavior that constitutes a violation of academic integrity, triggering involvement from other appropriate departments.

Here's the link to the HCC information about academic integrity (Scholastic Dishonesty and Violation of Academic Scholastic Dishonesty and Grievance):

<http://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies-procedures/student-procedures/>

Attendance

Attendance is required and is taken daily (or if an online class is monitored regularly). Students who do not attend and actively participate in class will be marked as “never attended” on the official census roster, triggering an administrative withdrawal from the course. Students who are absent and/or who are not current with the required coursework will receive an Early Alert email from their professor and from an HCC adviser. The Early Alert system is designed to help students who may be facing challenges that impact their ability to succeed in class.

It is important that you come to class. Regular attendance is an important factor in your success in this class. There is a strong correlation between attendance and student success. You are expected to attend on a regular basis and you are still responsible for the information that you missed. Since we sometimes go beyond the textbook in class, the information that is discussed in class is important in the learning process. If you miss any class, **you are responsible for all material missed.** It is a good idea to find a friend or a buddy in class who would be willing to share class notes/ discussions or be able to assist you in some other way if you unavoidably miss a class. Also, you can always visit during my office hours to “catch up” on the material you missed. Please note that you should contact me directly to schedule a make-up exam.

EGLS³

The EGLS³ (**[Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System](#)**) will be available for most courses near the end of the term until finals start. This brief survey will give invaluable information to your faculty about their teaching.

Results are anonymous and will be available to faculty and division chairs after the end of the term. EGLS³ surveys are only available for the Fall and Spring semesters. EGLS3 surveys are not offered during the Summer semester due to logistical constraints.

<http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/>

Campus Carry Link

Here's the link to the HCC information about Campus Carry:

<http://www.hccs.edu/departments/police/campus-carry/>

Housing and Food Assistance for Students

Any student who faces challenges securing their foods or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students at their college for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable HCC to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

Government Program Information

The Houston Community College Government department supports students in a number of different ways. These including:

- GOVT Majors – Students can earn an Associate of Arts Degree in Government, which will prepare them for majoring in Political Science or Government when they transfer to a university. Majors and Minors—those students who are interested in Political Science or Government—are supported by a faculty committee who will connect them to events, news, and opportunities.
- Careers in GOVT – The study of government or political science prepares students for work in the public and private sectors by emphasizing critical thinking, analytical, and communication skills.
- GOVT Student Organizations – The HCC Political Science Club holds discussions and sponsors events to connect students to politics in the real world.
- GOVT Scholarships – The Government Department will work with students to locate scholarship support, when possible.

Office of Institutional Equity

Use the link below to access the HCC Office of Institutional Equity, Inclusion, and Disability Services

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please meet with a campus Abilities Counselor as soon as possible in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and Ability Services. It is the policy and practice of HCC to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. For more information, please go to <http://www.hccs.edu/support-services/disability-services/>

Title IX

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex-including pregnancy and parental status in educational programs and activities. If you require an accommodation due to pregnancy please contact an Abilities Services Counselor. The Director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator. All inquiries concerning HCC policies, compliance with applicable

laws, statutes, and regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504), and complaints may be directed to:

David Cross
Director EEO/Compliance
Office of Institutional Equity
& Diversity 3100 Main
(713) 718-8271
Houston, TX 77266-7517 or Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu
<http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/title-ix-know-your-rights/>

Office of the Dean of Students: Contact the office of the Dean of Students to seek assistance in determining the correct complaint procedure to follow or to identify the appropriate academic dean or supervisor for informal resolution of complaints:

<https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-complaints/speak-with-the-dean-of-students/>

Department Chair:

Dr. Cammy Shay

Email Address:

cammy.shay@hccs.edu

Office Number:

713-718-7141

Per the HCC Student Handbook, if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your instructor before contacting the department chair.

Final comments:

- 1) *Please be respectful of diverse opinions and do not allow technology as a diversion to your classroom engagement and participation.*
- 2) As noted earlier, the instructor will follow departmental policy to use the early alert system, as well as the Maxient reporting system for academic performance, academic honesty, as well as behavioral issues.

Withdrawal Policy

HCCS policy allows an instructor to drop or withdraw a student in they miss more than six hours of classroom instruction. I will work with you if you are making an effort and maintain appropriate communication. However, if it appears you have stopped attending without any communication, I **may drop you**. However, please do not assume this to be true and do not necessarily rely on me to do this for you!

The scheduled drop/withdrawal date is Monday-April 6, 2020.

Thanks and have a great semester! Gary LeBlanc

RECORD YOUR GRADES:

Test _____

Assignments _____

Syllabus Quiz _____

Project _____

1 2 3 4 5 6

