



Government Course Syllabus

GOVT 2306
Spring, 2017, 14592
HCC Online

3 Semester Credit Hours
48 Contact Hours
16
Distance Education

Instructor Name

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Government Department Chair

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Note: if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your instructor before contacting me.

Office Hours

Office Hours: Southeast Campus

Tuesdays and Thursdays 7:30 am – 9:30 am and 12:30 pm – 1 pm

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

Prerequisite, Co-requisite

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

2306

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

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

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.

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.

Reading Schedule:

Week 1 and 2

1. Ch. 1: Environment of Texas Politics.
2. Ch. 2 Federalism and The Texas Constitution
3. Constitutional Chart Activity
4. Module 1 : Texas Political Environment and Political Landscape
5. Module 2: Federalism and the Texas Constitution

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Week 3 and 4

1. Ch. 8: Legislative Branch
2. Module 3: Texas Legislative Branch and Congress

Week 4

1. Ch. 9: Texas Executive Branch
2. Module 4: Texas Governor, Bureaucracy and Executive Branch

Week 5, 6 and 7

1. Ch. 11: Court System
2. Module 5: Judicial Branch and Texas Courts
3. Ch. 12: Criminal Justice
4. Module 6: Criminal Justice System, Crimes, Corrections, and Punishments

Week 8

1. Ch. 3: Local Government
2. Module 8: Local Government

"9th week" Spring Break Monday Mar. 13rd – Mar. 17th

Week 10

1. Ch, 13: Finance and Fiscal Policy
2. Module 8: Finance and Fiscal Policy

Week 11

1. **Ch. 4 Political Parties**
2. **Module 9: Module 9: Political Parties, Interest Groups and Lobbying**

Week 12 and 13

1. **Ch. 5: Campaigns and Elections**
2. **Ch. 6: Media and Politics in Texas**
3. **Module 10: Campaigns, Elections, Media and Politics**

Week 14

1. **Ch. 10: Public Policy and Administration**
2. **Module 11: Public Policy and Administration**

Week 15 Review

Week 16: Final Exams

Course Calendar

Quiz 1- *Syllabus quiz, due by 8 am Wed. Feb. 1*

Quiz 2- *due by midnight Sun. Feb. 5*

Week 1-4 materials

Quiz 3- *due by midnight Sunday Mar. 5th*

Week 5-8 materials

Quiz 4- *due by midnight Sun. April 2nd*

Week 9-12 materials

Quiz 5- *due by midnight Sun. April 30th*

Week 13-16 materials

RW 1- *due by midnight Sun. Jan. 29th*

RW 2- *due by midnight Sun. Feb. 12th*

RW 3- *due by midnight Sun. Mar. 5th*

RW 4- *due by midnight Sun. Mar. 26th*

RW 5- *due by midnight April 30th*

Current Event Article 1 – due by midnight Mar 5th

Current Event Article 2- due by midnight April 30th

Exam 1- opens at noon on Fri. Feb. 17th and closes Sun. Feb. 19th midnight

Week 1-6 materials

Exam 2- opens on Fri. Mar. 31st at noon and closes at midnight Sun. April 2nd

Week 7-12 materials

Exam 3- opens on Wed. May 10th at noon and due at midnight Fri. May 12th

comprehensive plus week 13-16 materials

Holiday Schedule

JANUARY 2017		
Date	Day	Event
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 16	Monday	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
FEBRUARY 2017		
Date	Day	Event
<input type="checkbox"/> Feb 20	Monday	Presidents Day
MARCH 2017		
Date	Day	Event
<input type="checkbox"/> Mar 13	Monday	Spring Break
APRIL 2017		
Date	Day	Event
<input type="checkbox"/> Apr 14	Friday	Spring Holiday
MAY 2017		
Date	Day	Event
<input type="checkbox"/> May 29	Monday	Memorial Day

Grading Criteria

Assignments that fail to meet the above formatting requirements.. Submissions indicated by Turn It In to have a 50% or greater match with content from any publications, online resources, scholarly works, or student submissions, and that lack proper in-text and bibliographic citations.

No make-up, extensions, or resubmissions will be accepted. No exceptions.

Reflective writings must answer directly the prompt or discussion topic, provided in the instructions. Responses should provide a critical assessment or pose an argumentative political position towards the prompt or discussion question. Purely summarizing the materials in response to the question or topic will be considered an average response and receive no higher than a grade of a 70.

Above average responses should provide at least one independently researched resource, as well as include example(s) from the materials, to show support of the student's assessment or political position.

25% Module and Chapter Quizzes (5% each)

You will complete 5 quizzes this semester. The first quiz is the syllabus quiz. It must be completed and passed with a 100% score by census day (Sept. 16 at 8 am) or a student will be dropped from the course, and unable to re-enroll.

The remaining 4 quizzes will test students on information from module materials and book chapters. You will have 3 attempts at each quiz. Each attempt has a time limit of 45 minutes. The highest grade will be recorded in the gradebook and count towards the students' course total.

25% Reflective Writings (5% each)

Students will complete 5 reflective writings this semester. Reflective writings will be completed at home and submitted to Eagle Online. Instructions are posted in Eagle Online, to the Writing Assignment folder. There is a minimum 2 page length requirement for each writing assignment. Writings are to be constructed in essay format, using 1 inch margins, and written in complete sentences, double spaced, with paragraphs, proper grammar, 12 point font and Times New Roman. Students may choose to use MLA, APA or Chicago style to format their bibliographic and parenthetical citations, as long as they are consistent throughout the paper. Failure to cite any direct or paraphrased quotes from course provided or independent research materials will result in an automatic zero, without make-up. All submissions must include a bibliography or works cited page. This does not count towards the 2 page minimum requirement.

20% Current Event Article Discussions (10% each)

Students will participate in 2 separate current event class discussions. There are two parts to each discussion. Current events must be pertinent to the American Government Topics assigned the week they are due. To be current, articles must be retrieved within the last 3 months.

There will be a separate discussion board for students to both parts, for each of the two current event article assignments. Meaning, to successfully complete current event article 1, students will make 2 submissions, their part 1 post and part 2 rebuttal to this one discussion board. They will do the same, but on a different board, designated for Current Event Discussion 2.

Part 1- *students will find a current news article (online or in print) about a current political event, issue, election, debate (etc.) that has taken place within the state of Texas, local or state level governments or politics, in the last 3 months, News articles must be connected the topic(s) assigned to the week that they are due.*

Whats a summary analysis, you say? The granddaddy of political science, Harold Lasswell, is known for defining Politics. , Ideological values, beliefs, and opinions, aside, when it comes to government and politics, his definition of the word (ironically) is probably the only thing that all mankind can agree on. Lasswell, defines politics, as "who, gets what, where, when, and how". Apply that definition to the article's information, or the article's information to that definition, and write a 10 sentence summary that focuses on critically evaluating what is going on, from your personal perspective. Interject your opinion. You should be making a statement, argument, and your opinion about the subject matter, should be known. However, this needs to be done in a scholarly and academic manner. Focus on explanation, reason and rationalization, to provide a clear opinion statement and discussion of their personal perspective and political position towards the event or issue in their article. In addition, to receive full credit, students MUST include a direct link to the original article's text that they are using to complete this assignment.

Part 2- students will review summary analyses submissions, made in part 1, and offer a rebuttal to a classmate's current event analysis, which opposes their own. **MOST IMPORTANTLY, BE CONSTRUCTIVE** in your critiques; and **RATIONAL** in your explanation of your perspective. Rebuttals must be 5-10 sentences in length.

Both parts are to be submitted to this discussion board. Reply directly to the original post of your peer, when completing part 2. .

You must complete part 1, and post your article with the summary analysis, before you will be able to review and respond to the posts of your peers.

30% Exam There will be a total of 3 exams. Each exam is worth 10%.

All exams will be taken online, through the Eagle Online Canvas platform . Students have two attempts at Exams 1 and 2; and 1 attempt to complete the final exam.

Each attempt for exams 1 and 2 have a 1 hr and 30 minute (90 minutes) time limit. You will have 2 hours to complete the final exam. Once you click "begin attempt", your time limit will start counting down. You will not be able to start, pause, or stop taking the exam without losing time.

The third and final exam will be comprehensive. Students will have one attempt and a 2 hour time limit to complete their final exam.

Instructional Methods

Lectures, exams, chapter readings, online investigations, online activities and assignments, in class discussions, external internet links and webpages, video links, student-led discussion and debate

Debate When appropriate and relevant, analysis of assigned reading material will be the topic of student-driven debate. Students will be assessed on their ability to successfully argue their position in a manner that exhibits familiarity and preparedness.

Make-up Policy

No make-up exams will be given, unless there are documented and exceptional circumstances.

Grading Scale

90-100%= A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

less than 60% = F

You may use a total point system, but it must conform to the HCC grading scale (above)

Instructional Materials

Brown, Lyle C., Joyce A. Langenegger, Sonia R. Garcia, Ted A. Lewis, and Robert E. Biles, Ryan Rynbrandt, Veronica Reyna. Practicing Texas Politics, 2015-2016 Edition. Cengage Learning.

Text-Only Student Edition ISBN-13: 978-1-285-85310-9

WE WILL NOT USE MINDTAP

******Additional supplemental content and reading materials will be provided by the instructor through Eagle Online.*

HCC Policies

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.

Students who do not complete the syllabus quiz by the census date (Wed. Feb. 1) will be dropped from the course, and unable to re-enroll.

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 Mon. April 3rd.

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/>

Distance Education

The Distance Education Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should have reviewed the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link:

[http://de.hccs.edu/media/houston-community-college/distance-education/student-services/pdf/2015-HCC-DE-Student-Handbook-%28Revised-5 28 15%29 will.pdf](http://de.hccs.edu/media/houston-community-college/distance-education/student-services/pdf/2015-HCC-DE-Student-Handbook-%28Revised-5%2015%29%20will.pdf)