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**Government Course Syllabus**

GOVT 2306-0001

Spring, 2017, CRN 13338

Alief-Hayes Campus: Room B126: 9:30-11am  
Monday &Wednesday

3 Semester Credit Hours

48 Contact Hours

16 Weeks

Face to Face

**Instructor Name**

J. Danielle Bachan, MPA

[Jennifer.bachan@hccs.edu](mailto:Jennifer.bachan@hccs.edu)

**Government Department Chair**

Evelyn Ballard

**Evelyn.ballard@hccs.edu**

713-718-2490

Note: if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact Professor Bachan before contacting Mrs. Ballard.

**Office Hours**

**Alief-Hayes Campus – Office Number A415   
 Monday:** 12:30-1:30pm **Tuesday:** 12-1:30pm **Wednesday:** 12:30-1:30pm **Thursday:** 12-2:30pm **\*** Other times by appointment, please email

**Course Description**

Texas-- 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.

**Academic Program Learning Outcomes:**2017-2020 HCC Government Program Student Learning Outcomes   
GOVT 2306

\* 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.

**Course Calendar**

Exam 1: Feb 6th

February 20th- Presidents day No Class

Exam 2: Feb 27th   
Spring Break: March 13th & 16th

Exam 3: April 3rd

Journal due: April 12th

Make-up Date: May 8th 9am

\*\* dates are subject to change by instructor\*\*

**Instructional Methods:**In addition to in class lectures, news clips, short videos and text readings we will engage in the following instructional methods:

**Discussions & Debates**: Each class we will have discussions on a variety of topics.When we have classroom discussions please respect one another or you will be asked to leave. We all have different opinions, and we all have different reasons for having them. We also are each entitled to have these opinions, and have a respectful environment to share them. Please remain respectful, if you do not believe you will be respectful please refrain from participating in the discussion. (This includes and is not limited to: foul language, rude comments and raising your voice). We will also have debates on numerous topics, the same rules for our discussions apply.

**Guest Speakers:** We will have guest speakers come into our classroom to speak about their experiences linked to our course topics. When these speakers are in our classroom remember to be: respectful. Listen to what they are saying; they are real life examples of our coursework. Many will be political leaders in our state and local areas, we will discuss before they visit details about the topics and how they are connected. Just remember to be respectful. You are representing yourself, your class/school and HCC as a whole

**Student Assignment Breakdown**

Exams:   
 - x 3 = 10% each

* There will be 3 exams (consisting of 50 multiple choice questions).

Quizzes:   
 - x4 = 5% each (total 20%)

* These will consist of either multiple choice, essay, short answer, or fill in the blank. All quizzes will be taken in class, and will be eligible for being made up ONLY on the make-up day at the end of the semester. The makeup quiz will be given in essay format only.

Journals:   
 - 1x = 25%

* Each day we meet in class (ie: 2 times a week) you will be required to submit a one page summary of a news article. Each article will have the link from where you obtained the story, and the date. These must be typed, stapled or bound and will be turned in on **Wednesday APRIL 12th**Each of the news stories must have actual relation to Government. Any news story that has pop star news and movie star news is not acceptable. Ie: anything from TMZ would be rejected. A list of news sources you may want to refer to is posted on the learning web.   
    
  \*\*\*There will be a letter grade deduction from your journal grade each day that your assignment is late. Ie: One day late, grading starts at a B, two days late grading starts at a C, three days late grading starts at a D. One day is a calendar day, not a classroom day\*\*\*

Participation:

* 10% total
* I will begin each class with a topic of current events. These will pertain to governmental events, political happenings, or news that pertains to our class. These could be printed out and brought to class with you (or notes taken and brought with you), and you should have a summary prepared to present to the class. Besides having current events/news stories to mention at the start of class, participating in discussions regularly is another way to earn a higher grade on participation. I will not call on students to participate, so jump in our discussions once you feel comfortable.

Final Presentation:   
 - 1x =15%   
 - Your final grade will consist of a presentation given to the class on a   
 policy proposal. More information regarding the presentations will be given   
 in February and found on the learning web.   
 - Presentations will occur throughout a few class periods, so that everyone   
 has enough time to present. You must attend your classmate’s presentations   
 (even if you have already presented), failing to do so will result in a letter   
 grade deduction per presentation day missed. If you miss your assigned day   
 to present, you will earn a failing grade.

Extra credit:   
 - Will be offered throughout the semester in a variety of ways. Some require more work than others. Some are reflective essays, attending a lecture, civic engagement opportunities, social media experiments, data collection for in class discussions or small research projects. Each extra credit opportunity is due the next class period after it is assigned. No late extra credit assignments will be collected or accepted. Extra credit is optional, and one more way to make an extra effort towards the grade you seek to earn.

**Make-up Policy**

If you miss an exam or a quiz, please send me an email. I will send you a make-up exam request form, that you will bring with you on the scheduled “Make Up Day”- your scheduled make-up day is **Monday May 8th 9am**. If you do not request a make-up you will not be eligible to make up the quiz or exam on the scheduled date.   
\*\*\*NOTE: Journals and Presentations are NOT eligible for the make-up day. Please see the section titled “Student Assignment Breakdown” for specific grading criteria for these assignments, and submitting these late\*\*\*

**Grading Scale**

90-100%= A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

less than 60% = F

**Instructor Grading Criteria**

Exam 1: 10%

Exam 2: 10%

Exam 3: 10%

Quizzes x4 20% (5% each)   
Journals: 25%

Policy Presentation: 15%  
Participation: 10%  
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total = 100%

**Instructional Materials**

Text Book: Practicing Texas Politics. This text can be found in the HCC bookstore, online or rented. The MindTap access pack is optional. In addition to the text; students will engage in topics of current events and additional articles that will be posted on Twitter, the Learning Web or handed out in class.

**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](http://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](http://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:** This is a college course, you should be attending class to perform well in this class. Statistically speaking students who attend class regularly perform better on graded assignments. I will not drop you from this class but please know your exam and quiz grades tend to reflect your attendance. As reading the book alone is not enough to do well in this course.   
  
You are expected to attend class and participate in the class discussions. As well as arrive on-time, and stay throughout the class. \*\*\*Attendance will be taken every single class\*\*\* It is your responsibility to sign in every day. I will not tolerate disruptions in the class. This is not limited to: cell phone use, talking and sleeping. You will be asked to leave and marked absent. Once again, NO CELL PHONES IN CLASS.

**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 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/>

**Additional Course Information:**   
**Tutoring and Extra Help**: I will offer tutoring during the week days by appointment (email me to set this up) or stop by during my office hours. I will also offer a tutoring session (for those who are interested) that will go further in depth before each exam, and allow you to ask any questions you may have. These sessions will not take place unless requested, and occur at the Alief-Hayes campus.   
  
The tutoring center can help with your papers, and journal assignment. I am also here to help. On-line tutoring is available 24/7, 365 days a year. You use your student ID W number and an email address to register for this free service. <http://hccs.askonline.net/>

**Contacting Students:**   
We will set up a remind anonymous texting program for the class AND I ask you to follow me on Twitter, this is the only way I communicate with my students for important reminders and sending class wide information. As always please feel free to email me, send a message on Remind, or for a quick or short response you may also tweet me, and tag my handle in your tweet or I will not see it. If you need assistance using any of the social media platforms, please let me know! I am more than happy to assist you in learning the platforms. We will be corresponding and engaging with lawmakers and politicians as well, so knowledge of Twitter is needed.   
Class Twitter Handle: @mrsjdnorcross or search “TheGOVTProfessor”   
Class Instagram: @thegovtprofessor  
Remind code: will be given in class the first day

**Email:**   
If you choose to send an email instead of using social media please include the following in your email: Your name, class location and day/time your class meets. (ie: John Brown- TX 1 Govt-Alief-M/W 9:30-11am). This way I can quickly respond to your email question and provide the correct information for your class.

**Computers and Phones:** I allow computers and tablets for note taking purposes, but once this privilege is abused, I reserve the right to no longer allow computers in class. Cell phones and texting will not be tolerated in class under any conditions.  \*\*\*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. \*\*\*

**Learning Web:**

I will post course materials regularly on the HCC learning web found on the HCC homepage or at this link <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/jennifer.bachan> (search for your class Texas Government, then your CRN number or location. Be sure you are viewing your class syllabus)