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**Government Course Syllabus**

GOVT 2306-0042

Spring, 2017, CRN 13398

Alief-Hayes Campus: 10-12pm  
Tuesday & Thursday HYBRID

3 Semester Credit Hours

48 Contact Hours

Second Start

Hybrid

**Instructor Name**

J. Danielle Bachan, MPA

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**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.

**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 meet in person (Tuesdays only) 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 2 = (10% each)

* There will be 2 exams (consisting of 73 multiple choice questions, you will have 3 attempts with the highest grade being saved.
* 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.
* 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.

Quizzes:   
 - x4 = 25% total

* These will consist of either multiple choice, essay, short answer, or fill in the blank. All quizzes will be taken on canvas.   
  \*\* Your first quiz will be posting on the Introduction discussion board, this will insure that you have mastered the use of canvas\*\*
* The remaining 3 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.

Reflective Writings:   
 - x 5 = 5% each = 25% total

* Each major topic will have a reflective writing, the writing will be submitted on canvas
* Assignments that fail to meet the below 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.
* Students will complete 5 reflective writings this semester. Reflective writings will be completed at home and submitted to Eagle Online/canvas. Instructions are posted in canvas, 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.

Final Presentation:   
 - 1x = 10% total   
 - Your final exam grade will consist of a presentation given on a   
 policy proposal. More information regarding the presentations will be given   
 in February and found on the learning web and canvas.   
 - Presentations will be recorded and uploaded on canvas. Instructions can be   
 found in your assignments section.

Discussion Boards:   
 - 2x = 10% each (20% total)  
 - Each discussion will be another way for your to engage with the material and   
 your fellow classmates on the days we do not meet in class. These discussions   
 will be either on the material, current events news in Texas or the first one will be   
 an introduction to insure you know how to navigate canvas before the hybrid   
 portion begins.

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 bored. 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.

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** Each exam and quiz will be open from Thursday morning until Sunday evening. You MUST take the exam or quiz during this time period.

**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%

Quizzes x4= 25% total   
Reflective writings: 5x = 5% each (25% total)

Policy Presentation: 10%  
Discussion: 3x = 20% total   
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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. WE WILL BE USING CANVASFOR THE HYBRID PORTION OF THIS CLASS. THE HYBRUD PORTION IS NOT OPTIONAL.

**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 HYBRID course, meaning we will ONLY meet on TUESDAYS. If you miss Tuesday, you have missed important information that will help you in the coming readings and information for assignments. I will keep you updated on canvas, twitter and remind BUT your being in class is VERY important in a hybrid course as well as to succeed in college in general…   
  
If you email me and ask what you missed I will tell you to contact a classmate. It is your responsibility to find out what you missed.   
  
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 11th

**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 2 Govt-Alief-M/W 11-12:30). 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)