



Texas Government-19426

GOVT-2306

RT 2021 Section 093 3 Credits 08/23/2021 to 12/12/2021 Modified 09/06/2021

Course Meetings

Course Modality

In-Person (P)

Safe, face-to-face course with scheduled dates and times

Meeting Days

MW

Meeting Times

7 pm - 8:20 pm

Meeting Location

West Loop Center Rm. TBA

Welcome and Instructor Information

Kevin Jefferies Dr.

Email: kevin.jefferies@hccs.edu

Office: N/A

Phone: 832-259-2496

Website: www.theweakerparty.blogspot.edu

What's Exciting About This Course

Students who finish GOVT 2306 will have completed one of the most important classes they will take in their college career. In this class, it will be made clear that government and politics are in everything that we, as citizens, do and interact with, particularly when it comes to ensuring our liberty and our security. These concepts, while equally important, also are in conflict with each other. Laws that promote liberty may compromise security and vice versa. Which state and/or local institutions come up with these practices and enforces them? How do they come up with these practices? What role do we, as Texas residents, play in this balance between liberty and security? This will be a large theme in my course.

My Personal Welcome

On behalf of the Government Department, I welcome you to the study of Texas Government at Houston Community College. While this is a traditional, face-to-face course, there will be a web-enhanced component. As we will be using Canvas and a whole host of online technology, students will need to be proficient with computers and other necessary electronic devices to access instructional material and course assignments. More information to follow below.

Preferred Method of Contact

My HCCS email: kevin.jefferies@hccs.edu

In case of an emergency, you may text me at 832-259-2496

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9:30 AM to 10:45 AM

Course Overview

Course Description

Origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and intergovernmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. Core Curriculum Course.

Requisites

Students must have passed ENGL 1301 (Composition I) or be co-enrolled in ENGL 1301 as a corequisite.

Government Department Website

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

Core Curriculum Objectives (CCOs)

This course satisfies part of the Government/Political Science requirement in the HCCS core curriculum. The HCCS Government Discipline Committee has specified that the course addresses 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
- **Empirical/Quantitative Skills**—to include manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- **Teamwork**—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- **Personal Responsibility**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
- **Social Responsibility**—to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Student Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

- Define and relate critical course concepts to contemporary issues in government and politics.
- Describe and assess the importance of civic engagement in the representative democratic structures of national, state, or local governments.
- Evaluate different kinds of data used in the study of government and politics.
- Articulate their own positions on contemporary issues in government and politics.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

Upon completion of GOVT 2306, students will be able to:

- 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.

☰ Departmental Practices and Procedures

The study of government and politics engages students with practices and issues that generate conflict. In light of the nature of the class you are enrolled in, it is important to understand that what you learn may challenge some of your beliefs. This kind of intellectual stretch is at the heart of higher education. Though some of your beliefs may be challenged, only you can decide to retain or change them. Consider the following quote from Rogers Smith, past president of the American Political Science Association :

"[A]ny political science teaching worthy of the name must examine controversial political matters and must present unpopular views concerning those subjects. The more teaching about politics is done by teachers who feel themselves to be in highly vulnerable positions, wary of offending taxpayers, governmental officials, or corporate donors, the more likely it is that political science teaching will be done in ways that simply canvass conventional perspectives, rather than promoting wide-ranging critical reflection and deeper public understanding of important political concerns."

Social Science Research Council, *Transformations of the Public Sphere*, 8.

☰ Instructional Materials and Resources

Instructional Materials

The [HCC Online Bookstore \(https://hccs.bnccollege.com/shop/hccs-central/page/find-textbooks\)](https://hccs.bnccollege.com/shop/hccs-central/page/find-textbooks) provides searchable information on textbooks for all courses. Check with your instructor before purchasing textbooks because the book might be included in your course fees.

Add Instructional Materials Here

Temporary Free Access to E-Book

Here is the link to get temporary free access to a digital version of the text for fourteen days:

<< [add link] >>

Other Instructional Resources

Courseware

Content here...

The State of Texas

Author: Sherri Mora & William Ruger

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Edition: 3rd Edition

ISBN: 9781260664188

Availability: HCC Bookstore

✓ Course Requirements

Assignments, Exams, and Activities

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
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Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Written Assignment	100 points	So What Am I To Do About HB 3979?	You will also have a 500 word essay due at the end of the semester. The topic and requirements are on the assignment link to the left. You will turn it in on Canvas when you complete it.
4 Multiple Choice Exams	400 point total - 100 points each		You will have four, 100 point, multiple - choice exams covering the assigned chapters of the textbook. These tests will be given to you on Canvas. You may take each test once and I will not allow re - takes. Because the computer randomly selects questions from a large database, no two tests are identical. Students should prepare for exams before they take a test.
4 Written Assignments	140 points - 35 points each	Varies	And you will have four written assignments, each must be at least 150 words long. These will also be given to you on Canvas - look to the discussions section to the left, and you will turn your work in there as well.
Class Introduction	10 points	Tell me something about yourself	Look under the assignments tab to find it
Extra Credit			Describe the assignment here.

Grading Formula

Grade	Range	Notes
A	585-650 points	
B	520-584 points	
C	455-519 points	
D	390-454 points	
F	Less than 389 points	

* Instructor's Practices and Procedures

Incomplete Policy

Add Content Here

Missed Assignments/Make-Up Policy

Add Content Here

Academic Integrity

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

<https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/>
[\(https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/\)](https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/)

Attendance Procedures

Add Content Here

Student Conduct

Add Content Here

Instructor's Course-Specific Information

Add Content Here

Devices

Add Content Here

Faculty Statement about Student Success

Add Content Here

Faculty-Specific Information Regarding Canvas

This course section will use Canvas (<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu> (<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu>)) to supplement in-class assignments, exams, and activities.

HCCS Open Lab locations may be used to access the Internet and Canvas. For best performance, Canvas should be used on the current or first previous major release of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari. Because it's built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with a modern web browser.

Canvas only requires an operating system that can run the latest compatible web browsers. Your computer operating system should be kept up to date with the latest recommended security updates and upgrades.

Social Justice Statement

Add Content Here

HCC Policies and Information

HCC Grading System

HCC uses the following standard grading system:

Grade	Grade Interpretation	Grade Points
A	Excellent (90-100)	4
B	Good (80-89)	3
C	Fair (70-79)	2
D	Passing (60-69), except in developmental courses.	1
F	Failing (59 and below)	0
FX	Failing due to non-attendance	0
W	Withdrawn	0

Grade	Grade Interpretation	Grade Points
I	Incomplete	0
AUD	Audit	0
IP	In Progress. Given only in certain developmental courses. A student must re-enroll to receive credit.	0
COM	Completed. Given in non-credit and continuing education courses.	0

Link to Policies in Student Handbook

Here's the link to the HCC Student Handbook <https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/>) In it you will find information about the following:

- Academic Information
- Academic Support
- Attendance, Repeating Courses, and Withdrawal
- Career Planning and Job Search
- Childcare
- disAbility Support Services
- Electronic Devices
- Equal Educational Opportunity
- Financial Aid TV (FATV)
- General Student Complaints
- Grade of FX
- Incomplete Grades
- International Student Services
- Health Awareness
- Libraries/Bookstore
- Police Services & Campus Safety
- Student Life at HCC
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Services
- Testing
- Transfer Planning
- Veteran Services

Link to HCC Academic Integrity Statement

<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/faculty/student-conduct-resources-for-faculty/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/faculty/student-conduct-resources-for-faculty/>)

Campus Carry Link

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

<https://www.hccs.edu/departments/police/campus-carry/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/departments/police/campus-carry/>)

HCC Email Policy

When communicating via email, HCC requires students to communicate only through the HCC email system to protect your privacy. If you have not activated your HCC student email account, you can go [to HCC Eagle ID \(https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-e-maileagle-id/\)](https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-e-maileagle-id/) and activate it now. You may also use Canvas Inbox to communicate.

Office of Institutional Equity

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

(<https://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/>))

Ability Services

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including long and short term conditions, 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 <https://www.hccs.edu/support-services/ability-services/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/support-services/ability-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 (<mailto:Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu>)

<http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/title-ix-know-your-rights/> (<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/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-complaints/speak-with-the-dean-of-students/>)

Student Success

Expect to spend at least twice as many hours per week outside of class as you do in class studying the course content.

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 a guide.

Canvas Learning Management System

Canvas is HCC's Learning Management System (LMS), and can be accessed at the following URL:

<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu> (<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu>)

HCCS Open Lab locations may be used to access the Internet and Canvas. For best performance, Canvas should be used on the current or first previous major release of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari. Because it's built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with a modern web browser.

Canvas only requires an operating system that can run the latest compatible web browsers. Your computer operating system should be kept up to date with the latest recommended security updates and upgrades.

HCC Online Information and Policies

Here is the link to information about HCC Online classes, which includes access to the required Online Information Class Preview for all fully online classes: <https://www.hccs.edu/online/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/online/>)

Scoring Rubrics, Sample Assignments, etc.

Look in Canvas for the scoring rubrics for assignments, samples of class assignments, and other information to assist you in the course. <https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/login/ldap> (<https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/login/ldap>)

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 making up assignments
- Provide the course outline and class calendar that will include a description of any special projects or assignments
- Arrange to meet with individual students during office hours, and 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](https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/) (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/>)

EGLS3

The EGLS³ ([Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System](https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/) (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/>)) 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.

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

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.

Student Resources

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 \(https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/tutoring/\)](https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/tutoring/) 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 [https://library.hccs.edu \(https://library.hccs.edu/\)](https://library.hccs.edu (https://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 <https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/>).

Resources for Students:

<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/communicable-diseases/resources-for-students/>
(<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/communicable-diseases/resources-for-students/>)

Basic Needs Resources:

<https://www.hccs.edu/support-services/counseling/hcc-cares/basic-needs-resources/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/support-services/counseling/hcc-cares/basic-needs-resources/>)

Student Basic Needs Application:

https://hccs.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_25WyNx7NwMRz1FH
(https://hccs.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_25WyNx7NwMRz1FH)

COVID-19

Here's the link to the HCC information about COVID-19:

<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/communicable-diseases/> (<https://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/communicable-diseases/>)

Sensitive or Mature Course Content

In this college-level course, we may occasionally discuss sensitive or mature content. All members of the classroom environment, from your instructor to your fellow students, are expected to handle potentially controversial subjects with respect and consideration for one another's varied experiences and values.

Instructional Modalities

In-Person (P)

Safe, face-to-face course with scheduled dates and times

Online on a Schedule (WS)

Fully online course with virtual meetings at scheduled dates and times

Online Anytime (WW)

Traditional online course without scheduled meetings

Hybrid (H)

Course that meets safely 50% face-to-face and 50% virtually

Hybrid Lab (HL)

Lab class that meets safely 50% face-to-face and 50% virtually

Course Calendar

Course Calendar

The course begins on August 13, 2021

The official day of record is September 9, 2021

Module 1: Constitutions and Budgets

- Chapter 1: Introduction to Texas History and Politics
- Chapter 2: The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System
- Chapter 6: Local Government in Texas
- Chapter 13: Financing State Government

Test 1 Covers Module 1

The last day to take Test 1 is September 15, 2021

The last day to submit the personal introduction is September 15, 2021

The last day to submit Discussion 1 is September 15, 2021

Module 2: Political Institutions

- Chapter 8: Campaign and Elections in Texas
- Chapter 7: Voting and Political Participation in Texas
- Chapter 9: Political Parties in Texas
- Chapter 10: Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas

Test 2 Covers Module 2

The last day to take Test 2 is October 13, 2021

The last day to submit Discussion 2 is October 13, 2021

The last day to withdraw is October 29, 2021

Module 3: Governing Institutions

- Chapter 3: The Texas Legislature
- Chapter 4: The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor
- Chapter 5: The Court System in Texas

Test 3 covers Module 3

The last day to take Test 3 is November 10, 2021

The last day to submit Discussion 3 is November 10, 2021

Module 4: Public Policy

- Chapter 11: Public Policy in Texas
- Chapter 12: The Criminal Justice System in Texas
- Chapter 13: Financing State Government (Review)

Test 4 covers Module 4

The last day to take Test 4 is December 8, 2021

The last day to submit Discussion 4 is December 8, 2021

The last day to submit the research project is December 8, 2021

The course ends on December 12, 2021

Syllabus Modifications

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the semester and will promptly notify students in writing, typically by e-mail, of any such changes.

Additional Information

Departmental/Program Information

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

- **Government Majors & Minors:** 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 that will connect them to events, news, and opportunities.
- **Careers in Government:** 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.
- **Government Student Organizations:** The Government Department supports the activities of the *Center for Civic Engagement* and the HCC *Political Science Club*, both of which hold discussions and sponsor events to connect students to politics in the real world.
- **GOVT Scholarship:** The Government Department will work with students to locate scholarship support, when possible.

Process for Expressing Concerns about the Course

If you have concerns about any aspect of this course, please reach out to your instructor for assistance first. If your instructor is not able to assist you, then you may wish to contact the Department Chair.

Cammy Shay, Ph.D. (she/her/hers)
Faculty Division Chair - Government
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713-718-7141
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<http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/cammy.shay>