Texas Government-15328

GOVT-2306

DL1 2022   Section 892   3 Credits   01/24/2022 to 05/15/2022   Modified 01/25/2022

🕐 Course Meetings

Course Modality

Online On A Schedule

Meeting Days

Tuesday and Thursday

Meeting Times

7:45-9:10

Meeting Location

WebEx

👤 Welcome and Instructor Information

Instructor: Kristin Murzyn

Email: kristin.murzyn@hccs.edu
Office: I don't have one.
Phone: I don't have one.

What's Exciting About This Course

Students who finish GOVT 2306 will have completed one of the most relevant classes during their college career. In this class, it will be made clear that government and politics are in everything that we, as citizens interact with each other, with our government leaders, and the policies our government leaders enact. This is especially the case currently given how so many events either are currently ongoing or will take place this year, ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the protests that have stemmed from centuries of systemic racism, and the US presidential and governor elections, among others. In this survey course, we will be scratching the surface on the ins and outs of our Texas government. As chaotic as these major events have been and may continue to be, this is the best time to be enrolled in this class.

My Personal Welcome

Welcome! I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Professor Kristin Murzyn and the most important thing that I want you to know about me is that I love my job. There is nothing else that I would rather be doing and your success is also my success. I want each one of you to earn an A in my class. I have been teaching for 22 years and my background is in teaching high school. I have been with Houston Community College as a full-time instructor for 6 years. I am approachable. If there is anything that I can do to help you or if you have a question, please ask. If I don't know or I cannot help you, I will point you in the right direction.

Now to a little about me. I have a daughter in elementary school and a stepson that is "figuring life out" post high school.

Hopefully, he will be an HCC student soon. My husband is a nurse so healthcare policy is always a topic in my house. I love dogs and we have three. I like to draw and my daughter wants to be Taylor Swift when she grows up so there is a lot of pop music and glitter around.

Preferred Method of Contact

kristin.murzyn@hccs.edu

You can contact me through either my HCC email (preferred method of contact) or Canvas. Emails sent from non-HCC accounts (i.e. Gmail, yahoo, etc.) will not receive a response. I will respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday; expect a reply to emails sent over the weekend by Monday morning.

Government Department Chair: Cammy Shay   cammy.shay@hccs.edu   713-718-7141

Note: If you have a problem with your government course, please contact your instructor before contacting the chair.

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, 11:45 AM to 1:00 PM, Library

🖥 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 textbook for this course is found in the course modules. It is an OER textbook. Additionally, you must purchase How Texas Politics Really Works.

✔ Course Requirements

Assignments, Exams, and Activities

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Extra Credit	+2 points on your final average	Personal Introduction Discussion	This will be your only opportunity for extra credit this semester.
Tests	25%	Various	There will be two tests in this course. Each are 70 multiple choice questions and you will have 70 minutes to take the test. Tests are in Canvas from an extremely large test bank. No two tests will be alike. You will have two opportunities to take the test.

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Online Discussions	15%	Various	There will be three online discussions that apply current events.
Class Led Discussion	30%		There in one class that will be student led. Each group will choose a topic and develop a discussion on this topic.
Projects and Papers	30%		There are two projects with associated papers.

Grading Formula

Grade	Range	Notes
A	90-100%	
B	80-89%	
C	70-79%	
D	60-69%	
F	59% or lower	

✳ Instructor's Practices and Procedures

Incomplete Policy

In order to receive a grade of Incomplete ("I"), a student must have completed at least 85% of the work in the course. There must be a non academic, documentable reason for the request. In all cases, the instructor reserves the right to decline a student's request to receive a grade of Incomplete.

Missed Assignments/Make-Up Policy

Students should take tests when they are scheduled and turn in assignments when they are due. Due to illness or personal emergencies, occasionally students will not be able to take tests on the scheduled days. If you have an issue that causes you to miss a test or due date, please contact me and we will formulate a plan. Points will be deducted for late work, 10% per day.

Academic Integrity

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. Possible punishments for academic dishonesty may include a grade of 0 or F on the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the HCC

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/)

Attendance Procedures

Students with poor attendance records and those who are consistently tardy perform very poorly in this course. Attending class is the best way to succeed in the course. If there are circumstances that cause you to miss class regularly, please discuss them with me before your absences/tardiness becomes a problem. You are expected to attend class regularly and you are responsible for the material covered during your absence. Attendance will be taken and I have the authority to drop you for excessive absences. HCC policy states that a student may be dropped by the instructor after missing more than six hours of class time. If you cannot complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. You may receive a grade in the course if you do not attend and do not withdraw.

Student Conduct

We will be discussing many controversial issues in the class and many of you will have differences of opinion. It is expected that each of you conduct yourself in a respectful manner. and to behave like adults. One of the skills that is important for our citizenry to develop, but which we do not see currently, is the ability to have conversations and make your point without becoming angry and to utilize facts and data to support your position. Remember that this is a college course and not a high school course. All applicable topics and perspectives are up for discussion.

Instructor's Course-Specific Information

The primary instructional method for this class will be in person. Instruction will include methods such as reading the textbook and answering study questions, lecture materials, and other supplemental resources provided for you. Additionally, discussion will be part of this course. Discussion of the topic will help you remember, understand, analyze, and evaluate the information. These skills are important for your good performance on assessments.

Faculty Statement about Student Success

To be successful in this course, you must read the textbook and answer the study questions. You must also participate in class and answer questions that I ask. Ask your own questions when you do not understand a concept or you need clarification.

Additionally, put forth effort on your discussion and projects. Do not leave them until the last minute because the rush to finish will come through in the quality of work you submit.

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

Houston Community College is committed to furthering the cause of social justice in our community and beyond. HCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status. I fully support that commitment and, as such, will work to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this course, we share in the creation and maintenance of a positive and safe learning environment. Part of this process includes acknowledging and embracing the differences among us in order to establish and reinforce that each one of us matters. I appreciate your suggestions about how to best maintain this environment of respect. If you experience any type of discrimination, please contact me and/or the Office of Institutional Equity at 713-718-8271.

🏛 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
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 Catalog and Student Handbook

Here's the link to the HCC Catalog and Student Handbook: [https://catalog.hccs.edu/ (https://catalog.hccs.edu/)](https://catalog.hccs.edu/)

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/student-conduct (https://www.hccs.edu/student-conduct) (scroll down to subsections)

Campus Carry Link

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

https://www.hccs.edu/campuscarry (https://www.hccs.edu/campuscarry)

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/email) and activate it now. You may also use Canvas Inbox to communicate.

Office of Institutional Equity

Use the following link to access the HCC Office of Institutional Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement: https://www.hccs.edu/eeo (https://www.hccs.edu/eeo)

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/accessibility (https://www.hccs.edu/accessibility)

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)

https://www.hccs.edu/titleix (https://www.hccs.edu/titleix)

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.

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

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/studenthandbook)](https://www.hccs.edu/studenthandbook)

EGLS3

The EGLS[3] ([Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System (https://www.hccs.edu/egls3)](https://www.hccs.edu/egls3)) 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. EGLS[3] 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/egls3 (https://www.hccs.edu/egls3)](https://www.hccs.edu/egls3)

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/tutoring)](https://www.hccs.edu/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/).

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/supplemental-instruction (https://www.hccs.edu/supplemental-instruction)](https://www.hccs.edu/supplemental-instruction)

Resources for Students:

[https://www.hccs.edu/covid19students (https://www.hccs.edu/covid19students)](https://www.hccs.edu/covid19students)

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

Student Basic Needs Application:

[https://www.hccs.edu/basicneeds (https://www.hccs.edu/basicneeds)](https://www.hccs.edu/basicneeds)

COVID-19

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

[https://www.hccs.edu/covid-19 (https://www.hccs.edu/covid-19)](https://www.hccs.edu/covid-19)

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

Copyright Statement

In order to uphold the integrity of the academic environment and protect and foster a cohesive learning environment for all, HCC prohibits unauthorized use of course materials. Materials shared in this course are based on my professional knowledge and experience and are presented in an educational context for the students in the course. Authorized use of course materials is limited to personal study or educational uses. Material should not be shared, distributed, or sold outside the course without permission. Students are also explicitly forbidden in all circumstances from plagiarizing or appropriating course materials. This includes but is not limited to publically posting quizzes, essays, or other materials. This prohibition extends not only during this course, but after. Sharing of the materials in any context will be a violation of the HCC Student Code of Conduct and may subject the student to discipline, as well as any applicable civil or criminal liability. Consequences for unauthorized sharing, plagiarizing, or other methods of academic dishonesty may range from a 0 on the specified assignment and/or up to expulsion from Houston Community College. Questions about this policy may be directed to me or to the Manager of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

📅 Course Calendar

Syllabus Modifications

Please keep up-to-date with the Canvas calendar. 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
Angela Morales Building, 101.12
6815 Rustic
Houston, Texas, 77087
713-718-7141
cammy.shay@hccs.edu
http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/cammy.shay