**GOVERNMENT 2306**

**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

**Southwest College, West Loop Campus** **Fall 2016**

Course: **Texas Government** Section: **CRN 15963**

**Professor** **Kwame Acheampong** Room: **C223** **West Loop Campus**

Time: **TuTh** **6:00 PM – 7:50 7M**

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**Government Department
Evelyn Ballard,** **evelyn.ballard@hccs.edu**

**713-718-2490**

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

**Purpose of the Course:**

Government 2306 is designed to introduce students to the politics of Texas government in the context of federal structure of American government. This course studies the origin and development of the Texas Constitution. It describes state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.

It further discusses separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. Students would acquire knowledge about the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. They would learn the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. Finally, students would learn and analyze the state and local election process, identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens as relate to issues, policies and political culture of Texas. It is important to note that this course is fully transferable to all Texas State colleges and universities.

**Course Pre-requisite: ENGL 1301**

**The Government Department of Houston Community College requires one textbook for Government 2306**

 Brown, **Lyle C., Langenegger, Joyce A., Garcia, Sonia R., Biles, Robert E.:** *Practicing Texas Politics, 2015 – 2016 Edition.*

ISBN: 978-1-285-85310-9

This book can be purchased online and from local college bookstores.

Students are encouraged to read daily newspapers, notable periodicals/magazines and major TV Network news for information and current events for enrichment and understanding of government and politics.

**GRADE COMPUTATION:**

**(700 points – 100%)**

**Reading assignments & Text Summary Presentation:** 20% of Final Grade, equivalent of 100 points. See below:

Assigned chapter presentation - 100 points 15% of course work

Four quizzes – 25 points each -100 points 10% of course work

One short essay – 100 points 15% of course work

Four exams – 100 points each -400 points 60% of course work

And other group exercises, video presentations, and other techniques to assist the student to monitor their learning and success in meeting the course objectives.

**FOUR EXAMS**

**Exam I – Tuesday, October 18, 2016**

**Exam II – Tuesday, November 8, 2016**

**Exam III – Tuesday, November 29, 2016**

**Exam IV (final) – Tuesday, December 6, 2016.**

This course includes three (3) major examinations, which are non-comprehensive in nature. The three exams consist of fifty (50) objective (multiple choice) components, or questions. The final examination may be comprehensive but the detail of the exams would be discussed in class.

**Please take all exams at the scheduled time. Makeup exams will be given only in emergency situations**.

All grades will be scored 0 - 100. The final percentage value resulting from the sum of the above components will be converted into letter grades according to the following scale:

A = 90 - 100% B = 80 - 89% C = 70 - 79% D = 60 - 69% F = Below 60%

**ADA STATEMENT:**

HCC is compliant with the ADA and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. “Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Service Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Services Office.” The Disability Services Office number for Southwest College is 713-718-7909.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**:

You should attend class regularly. It is my experience that students with good attendance records usually do well in the course. The college provides that students MAY be dropped after missing more than six hours of class time. I do not wish to drop anyone who is making a good faith effort to succeed in the course. If it appears to me, however, that you have stopped attending, I will drop you because the alternative is to give you an F. Please keep me informed if you are having problems that are affecting your attendance and I will do my best to work with you.

If you decide you must drop the course, please fill out the appropriate form in the college office on campus. Instructors are not allowed to withdraw students with a grade of “W” on the final grade sheet. You must also drop the course by the specified withdrawal deadline.

**THREE-PEATER STATEMENT:**

Students who take a course for the third time or more may face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. 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.

**HONESTY POLICY**:

Ethical conduct is part of being a competent student. Academic dishonesty (cheating) will result in a zero for the assignment and/or failure of the course, depending on the severity of the offense.

**CLASS PREPARATION**

Each student must purchase all books necessary for this course and be prepared to discuss the reading assignments in advance of each class meeting.

**STUDENT CONFERENCES**

Students are encouraged to see me to discuss any course-related problems. However, I must emphasize that this should be arranged at the appropriate time during the semester. Conferences will be scheduled by appointment only.

**I am confident that students would find this course engaging and stimulating indeed!**

**Class Schedule**

***Foundation of Texas Politics***

**The Environment of Texas Politics**

Read: Chapter 1.

**Federalism and the Texas Constitution**

Read: Chapter 2.

**Local Governments**

Read: Chapter 3.

**First Exam - see above for calendar date**

***Political Behavior***

**Texas Political Parties**

 Read: Chapter 4

**Campaign and Elections**

Read: Chapter 5

**The Politics of Interest Groups**

Read: Chapter 7

**Second Exam - see above for calendar date**

***Political Institutions***

**The Legislative Branch** (Citizens’ Legislature)

Chapter 8.

**The Executive Branch** (Plural Executive)

Chapter 9

**Public Policy and Administration** (The State Bureaucracy)

Chapter 10

**Judicial Branch** (Texas Court System)

Chapter 11.

***Policy Analysis (Finance)***

**Finance and Fiscal Policy** (State Revenues and Expenditures)

Chapter 13

**Third Exam - - see above for calendar date**

**Exams IV (Finals)** - **see above for calendar date**