

Fall 2014 **REVISED 8/25/14** Class Syllabus HCC Northeast College, Distance Education:
Government 2306, Texas Constitution, Institutions of Texas Government,
 & Related Topics **Calendar: 8/25/2014- 12/14/2014**

Instructor retains the option to alter this syllabus and schedule as needed. The course will be organized into a series of 4 modules, each with 4 weeks work covering the major topics of the course. Each module will close out at the end of a test, and a new module will open. There are no make-up tests or work accepted after a module closes out.



		Monday	Calendar: Regular Term, Fall 2014, 8/25/13 to 12/14/13			
Week 1	8/25/14		Week 9	10/20/14		
Week 2	9/1/14	9/1 Mon. Labor Day Holiday	Week 10	10/31/14	10/31 Fri. Drop Date	
Week 3	9/8/14	date of record	Week 11	11/3/14	11/4 Tues. Election Day	
Week 4	9/15/14	TEST	Week 12	11/10/14	TEST	
Week 5	9/22/14		Week 13	11/17/14	Paper/Project due	
Week 6	9/29/14		Week 14	11/20/14	11/20 Thanksgiving Day	
Week 7	10/6/14		Week 15	12/1/14	12/5 Last day of face classes	
Week 8	10/13/14	Mid Term TEST	Week 16	12/8/14	Finals week	

Instructor contact: Max.Beauregard@hccs.edu 832/892-2123 cell

Learning web address: <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/max.beauregard>

The Instructor's Welcome/Orientation statement and HCC Distance Education Student Handbook <http://de.hccs.edu/de/de-student-handbook> contain policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should review the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars.

It is mandatory that you fill out the **Robo Form** as part of the Orientation because it contains outside email and phone contact info. The instructor must have alternative contact info beside what is listed within Eagle. **Quikmail** is a one-way email feature that allows you to send from Eagle, but you receive it in your personal email. Therefore, adjust your email preference in your People Soft records so that message contact from within Eagle can be directed to your preferred Yahoo, Gmail, or whatever. Without this change, email is sent by default to HCC email, and many students are not aware and do not check this account. If the instructor cannot contact the student for whatever reason, the consequences can be dire. Check your email daily or multiple times per week!!

Course Description. 2306 is Texas government, covering the major institutions [Governor, Texas Legislature, State Courts, Texas Constitution], prisons/death penalty, local government (cities, counties, ISDs/schools, METRO, regional government), and the Texas election process (Primaries, conventions). The course is 3 credit hours and fully transferable to other colleges and universities in Texas.

These topics are studied and synchronized within the calendar of actual current events, so students can connect to them in a real world environment, rather than mere abstract concepts from the book without contemporary context. This class is very focused on current events and local affairs, so any effort that you use to plug into the news will help you succeed in this class. This course is focused on real-world examples and practical applications of government as they are occurring. Part of your grade (16%) is based on class participation to watch the news and summarize it.

Core Objectives

The Texas 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.

Government Program, Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. Identify and describe the institutions of American national government. GOVT 2302/2305
2. Identify and describe the institutions of the State of Texas government. GOVT 2302/2306
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

Preparation and Study Tips:

- a) You must have a reliable computer and Internet connection (ISP) throughout the course, especially while taking tests. **Technical difficulties, computer crashes, malfunctions, holidays, or even the weather are not an acceptable excuse for not participating or meeting deadlines** (see the DE Handbook). There are computers in the Learning Labs and libraries of all 33 HCC facilities, so do not wait until the last minute to do your work.
- b) The course utilizes the software application ***Eagle Online*** 1.9 (aka Moodle), which is best viewed using the ***Firefox*** browser. **IE or Chrome browsers have demonstrated less desirable results, and HCC Tech Support does not support them.**
- c) Bookmark the web address and password of the DE site on your computer.
- d) Create a subdirectory on your harddrive to download and store the course materials and your notes.
- e) Complete the **data form** on the Orientation page with email and phone contact information. It is very important that I have [emergency] contact info for you!!
- f) **Plan a regular, weekly study time when you Login for this course.** You must schedule a regular time and pattern for weekly studies to insure that you complete the work, just the same as a 'face' class. There are many distractions that will arise over the 16-week semester and **without a patterned, weekly routine for study, your success will be compromised.**
- g) **Buy a paper calendar from the \$1. store to mark the test dates and schedule. Hang it on the side of your monitor for weekly reference. Post the same dates into your phone and set alarms accordingly. You must be aware of the calendar at all times to complete the work on time. The course is divided into 4 @ 4 week modules that close at the end of each module (color coded on the calendar, above.). No work is accepted after a module closes.**
- h) This course will follow the standard **Carnegie Unit of college credit**. This means that **for each hour spent online for classroom work, you will likely spend another two hours for homework.** For a three-hour course, this translates into an average of about six hours a week for class readings, studying, videos, and other assignments. Failure to meet the minimum attendance standards makes you subject to drop without notice. Regular 'face' classes meet 3 hours /week, and you expected to be online at least this amount ***PLUS*** and equivalent time for homework.
- i) **There are absolutely no make-ups for missed tests or assignments!**



VIRTUAL DE CLASSROOM CONDUCT

As with on-campus classes, all students in HCC Distance Education courses are required to follow all HCC Policies & Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Handbook, and relevant sections of the Texas Education Code when interacting and communicating in a virtual classroom with faculty and fellow students. Students who violate these policies and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action that could include denial of access to course-related email, discussion groups, and chat rooms or being removed from the class.

Eagle Online software, Moodle version 2.0

Access to your online course is found at: <https://eo2.hccs.edu/login/index.php>

Follow the login direction using your W-number and password. If you have difficulties, contact directly the support personnel listed below. Tech support is there to help you, so use them. If you have software problems with a test, call ME immediately so it can be resolved. There are no test make-ups, so this must be resolved within the time of the test window.

Contact DE support via de.hccs.edu or the online request from [AskDECounseling](#) or by calling:

General information

713-718-5275 option1

DE course log in information

713/718-2000 options 4 or 2,

Technical assistance or for 24/7 help.

713/718-2000 options 4, 2, 3.

For counseling and student services

713-718-5275 option 4 or for faster service, please complete

the **Ask DE Counseling Form** at <http://de-counseling.hccs.edu>

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Students are restricted to ONLY ONE online/distance education class per semester. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8520 if you have additional questions about your visa status.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA)

The Houston Community College System is committed to compliance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the appropriate HCC Disability Support Service (DSS) Counselor at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office. No special testing accommodations are expected for this class, but any other services must first contact the appropriate (most convenient) DSS office for assistance. After student accommodation letters have been approved by the DSS office and submitted to DE Counseling for processing, students will receive an email confirmation informing them of the Instructional Support Specialist assigned to their professor.

Disability Support Services Offices:

System: 713.718.5165

Northwest: 713.718.5422

Central: 713.718.6164 – also for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services or students outside HCC District

Southwest: 713.718.7910

Northeast: 713.718.8322

Tamara Petty

Southeast: 713.718.7218

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY: If you are caught committing scholastic dishonesty in any way, you will receive an F for the course; I do not negotiate “second chances.” Please seek me out for help if you are having problems, rather than resort to something that will tarnish your record. **Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.** Cheating on a test includes copying from another student's test paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with another student during a test without authority; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test; or bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered. **“Plagiarism” means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work for credit, especially copying from the internet without appropriate citations. The college uses professional software (Turn It In.com) specifically designed to determine plagiarized work.** “Collusion” means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit. In simplified terms, cheating is:

- (1) taking unchanged passages (or slightly edited) from another person's writing and portraying them as one's own, **INCLUDING copying passages from the Internet. This also includes not listing SOURCES or references as research is undertaken ;**
- (2) submitting a paper that includes paraphrases of another person's writing without giving credit;
- (3) having someone else write your paper for you;
- (4) copying or using another person's work during in-class writing or testing;
- (5) the unauthorized use of electronic devices during in-class writing or testing. Keep in mind also that whether you are cheating or not, not following testing or writing rules properly, such as communicating with your neighbor or using a cell phone during a test will be construed as cheating.

HCC Course Withdrawal Policy (Drop Date)

The State of Texas has begun to impose penalties on students who drop courses excessively. That is, if you repeat the same course more than twice, you have to pay extra tuition. In addition, as of Fall 2007, students are limited to no more than SIX total course withdrawals throughout their educational career at a Texas public college or university.

A “**DROP**” is an opportunity for a student to withdraw from the class if they are failing or unable to keep up with the work. A student is responsible for dropping himself, but please notify your professor. Likewise, a professor can drop you without notice for non-attendance after warning have been executed. Drops must be done PRIOR to the withdrawal deadline to receive a “W” on your transcript. If you do not withdraw before the deadline, you will receive the grade that you have earned at the end of the semester. Zeros averaged in for required assignments/tests not submitted will lower your semester average significantly, most likely resulting in a failing grade (“F”).

There are no make-ups for missed tests, the term Project, or assignments!

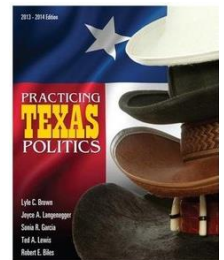
The final withdrawal deadline for Fall 2014 classes is Friday, October 31, 4:30pm.

Student Evaluation of Instructor (SEOI) is now EGLS₃ – At HCC, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time at the end of semester, students will be asked to answer a short online survey of researched-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction.

Most of the course materials will be provided within the Eagle Online course, so the textbook is not required. All study materials will be provided within Eagle Online.

However, the official textbook is also recommended, sources:

- 1) ***Practicing Texas Politics, 15th Edition.*** Wadsworth Cengage Learning. Loose Leaf Edition (HCC Bookstore) Lyle C. Brown, Joyce A. Langenegger, Sonia R. Garcia, Ted A. Lewis, Robert E. Biles. 2014.
- 2) Or on reserve in the Library



Course Grading: 90-100=A; 80-89 =B; 70-79 =C; 60-69 =D; <60 =F, or FX, which is failure to attend or not participating by failing to log in on a regular basis.

4 tests (16% each) covering the reading, news clippings, Power Points/PDFs, & videos	= 66%
Class participation, homework, and <u>weekly news summaries</u>	= 16%
1 of the following items: Paper/Campaign Project/Political Cartoon Journal	= 16%
Total	=100%

Class participation is mandatory. Failure to log in weekly with active participation (submission of weekly news summaries) is grounds for drop without notice.

FINAL GRADE OF FX

Students who stop attending class and do not withdraw themselves prior to the withdrawal deadline may either be dropped by their professor for excessive absences or be assigned the final grade of “FX” at the end of the semester. Students who stop attending classes will receive a grade of “FX”, compared to an earned grade of “F” which is due to poor performance. NOT logging into a DE course and without active participation is seen as non-attending.

Please note that HCC will not disperse financial aid funding for students who have never attended class. Students who receive financial aid, but fail to attend class will be reported to the US Department of Education and may have to pay back their aid. A grade of "FX" is treated exactly the same as a grade of "F" in terms of GPA, probation, suspension, and satisfactory academic progress.

F1 Visa students have to show that they are attending their classes. A similar requirement is in place for some of our Veteran awards. This process was set up to deter **Pell runners** who are students who stay in class until they receive their financial aid; then "take the money and run" or quit participating. This is only fair to other students who work hard and pay their own tuition PLUS the taxpayers who provide the funding for federal financial aid programs. The Republican controlled House of the US Congress is dominated by Tea Party Conservatives who absolutely want to cut spending, so federal aid programs for college tuition is one of their main targets.

The course will be organized into a series of 4 modules, each with 4 weeks work covering the major topics of the course. Each module will close out at the end of a test, and a new module will open. **There are no make-up tests under any circumstances.** There is no access to previous coursework after a module closes, so you must keep up with the schedule. The tests are not comprehensive over previous module's material and the midterm and final are not comprehensive.

Term Project: Choice of 1 of the following:

You must complete the Paper or Project to pass the class, no matter what your test grades are.

It is anticipated that any of the Project choices will take 8-10 hours to complete, which is why it is called a 'Term Project.' Do not wait until the last minute.

Commentary Paper (Option 1). Write a 4-6 page paper on a topic of governmental policy, agency, issue, or person/group that interests you (typed, 12 point font, space & half). Sample topics will be given. The purpose of any paper is for you to research and expand your current knowledge based on FACTS of the role of government in that topic (especially government agencies, departments, people, power structures) *and* to express your ideas and thoughts on the topic; not to copy or paraphrase the topic from research sources. **Build on what you already know, but learn something new about the topic, especially from a governmental perspective *and with a local focus local or state*.** **Specific guidelines on structure and content of the paper will be given later.**

Campaign Project (Option 2): Texas has elections every year, so there are many opportunities to volunteer and engage in the campaign/election process. Volunteering for a political campaign, Party, or candidate is an excellent way to gain insight into the workings of candidates and campaign operations. Such participation will involve travel to the campaign HQ, usually requiring extra time, and the clerical tasks of phone banking, block walking, or preparing campaign literature. This Project gives you the rare time to get offline, out of the library, and *into the streets of your community where grassroots government occurs!* Prepare a PowerPoint summary of your experiences with photos and commentary. Potential candidates and details will be provided. **Specific guidelines on structure and content will be given later.**

Political Cartoon Project (Option 3) Cartoons are a common and more subtle means of making political commentary by journalists. Use PowerPoint to compile a diary of cartoons digitally copied from the Chronicle or other Online newspapers or publications. **Most importantly,** provide your personal analysis of the issues and effectiveness of the cartoon and the author to communicate and persuade the public with his artistic work. **Specific guidelines on structure and method will be given later.**

Texas Government 2306: Course Calendar and Topics **DRAFT**

Divided government prevails at many levels of local, state, and federal government; as each level grapples with the recession, chronic unemployment, and deficits. The Texas story is very different however, because the Texas economy is an anomaly since it is strong due to a resurgence of oil drilling across the state. Houston thrives with low unemployment, low cost of living, and high quality of life. This philosophy has empowered Texas Republicans and Tea Party extremists (that dominate state government) to demonstrate their resentment to Obama's policies by implementing additional, but conflicting laws that reflect their ultra conservative agenda.

Midterm election is scheduled for Nov. 4, Week 8, so prior to this we will be exposed to brutal election ads from Republican candidates as they campaign to choose a winning candidate amongst themselves in preparation for the Midterm Election against state and Congressional Democrats in November 2014.

Week 1: Introduction to Beauregard, Labor Day, Unions, Minimum Wages, ; Introduction to Government, What is government and why do we have it? Changing political landscape and disagreement over the role of government. Issues confronting the country and Texas: Divided government, dominance of the Republican Party, but push back by Democrats in response to extreme policies of the 2013 Legislative session. Importance of citizen activism.

Week 2 & 3: Current Economic Policy/Issues: Health Care, Recession & Job Losses, Houston economy,

Weeks 4: Democracy/Capitalism/ Socialism & Current Environment of Texas Politics Chapter 1

TEST 1

Week 5: Review of the U.S. Constitution; Branches and Levels of Government - A brief review of the **US Constitution** is provided, so to appreciate the importance of **Federalism** (power to the states, especially Texas), the Bureaucracy.

Week 6: A comparison to the Texas Constitution

Week 7: Right to Vote & Voter Registration & Political Parties

Week 8: Campaigns, Voting, and Elections - Early Voting, The 2010, 2012, & 2014 election

Midterm TEST 2

Projects due

Week 9: Institutions of Texas Government:

Texas Legislature Restoring the budget cuts of 2011, moving forward in 2013, and controversy of 2013 Special Sessions: Texas Abortion Law.

Week 10: Governor and Plural Bureaucracy

Week 11 & 12: The Texas Judiciary, Prisons, & Harris Co. Criminal Justice System

What happens if you get arrested for DUI or you are falsely accused of a crime? What are your rights and what is the process to prove your innocence? What happens on jury duty?

Significant criminal justices reforms are resulting in Harris Co. and Texas from the availability of DNA evidence, which has exonerated numerous falsely incarcerated persons after serving years in prison. These realities have led to extensive changes in criminal investigations, the jury selection process, and appeals process, esp. in Harris Co.

TEST 3

Week 13: Political Socialization, Public Opinion, and the Media - Chapter 10
Polling, Demographic stratification & segmentation: age, gender, ethnicity, religious, Frank Luntz, Push Polls. Newspapers, online newspapers, electronic media, social media.

Thanksgiving

Week 14: Local Governments, Cities, Counties, Special Districts

Week 15: Taxes, METRO, Regional Planning & Schools/ ISDs

Week 16: TEST 4 Final Test

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