

GOVERNMENT 2305: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT (T)

CRN 10850, 10851 – Fall 2016

Central Campus, 1300 Holman - Room SJAC 201

9:30 AM – 10:50 AM (10850); 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (10851) | Tuesday
3 hour lecture course, 0 lab/ 48 hours per semester/ 16 weeks/ Hybrid

Instructor:	Raymond Lew Government Department, HCC
Instructor Contact Information:	E-Mail:: Use Eagle Online mail Voice Mail: 713-718-6299
Office Location and Hours:	SJAC 328, Central College 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM Mondays, 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and by appointment
Department Information:	Evelyn Ballard Chair – Government Department evelyn.ballard@hccs.edu 713-718-2490 Note: If you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your instructor before contacting the department chair.

Course Description. Origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. Throughout, we will focus on the continuities and changes that have characterized the American political system.

Course Prerequisites. Must have passed ENGL 1301 (Composition I) or co-enrolled in ENGL 1301 as a co-requisite.

Course Objectives. The main objective of the course is to broaden and deepen our understanding of American politics. This objective has at least three parts. The first part is to develop a body of shared knowledge about American politics. The second part is to become acquainted with and understand a number of important concepts and theories with which to make sense of American politics. The third part is to develop some of the skills necessary to the understanding and practice of American politics.

Course Learning Outcomes. Upon successful completion of this course, each student will be able to:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

Government Program Student Learning Outcomes.

1. Identify and describe the institutions of American national government.
2. Identify and evaluate information sources for political news, data, and opinion.
3. Analyze the effects of the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces on politics and government.
4. 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.

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 the GOVT 2305 core curriculum course 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.

Course Requirements. The course requirements are:

First Examination	14% of the course grade
Second Examination	14% of the course grade
Third Examination	14% of the course grade
Final Examination	14% of the course grade
Review Quizzes	14% of the course grade
Exercises	30% of the course grade

Make-Up Policy. The general make-up policy for work missed is the following:

Exams:	Make-up is possible only with written legitimate excuse. The written excuse, with appropriate documentation, must be submitted within one week of the missed exam day. Failure to do so means you have forfeited your opportunity to take the make-up exam. Make-up exams will be given on the last regular class day (November 29).
Review Quizzes:	No make-up is possible. A grade of 0 will be assigned for a missed quiz.
Exercises:	Five point penalty for each calendar day an exercise is overdue.

Grading Scale. The grading scale for all course work and the course itself is:

A = 100 - 90
B = 89 - 80
C = 79 - 70
D = 69 - 60
F = 59 and below
FX = a failing grade with less than 70% of the work submitted

Grades are based on the quality of the work submitted. The emphasis will be on the demonstration by the student that he or she understands the material. Understanding the material goes beyond memorization and includes the abilities to explain and apply what one has learned.

Instructional Methods. This is a hybrid/flipped class. The class will consist of lectures, class discussions, class activities, and online activities. Accessing the course website on a regular basis is central to the class.

Course Website. The course website and login is at <http://eagleonline.hccs.edu>.

Your Eagle Online login user ID will be your HCC User ID (sometimes referred to as the "W" number). All HCC students have a unique User ID. If you do not know your User ID, you can look it up by following the instructions on the Eagle Online login page.

Your password is the password you have created for your HCC student account. Please visit the [Student E-mail/Eagle ID](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-e-maileagle-id/) (<http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-e-maileagle-id/>) website if you need additional assistance with your login.

Course Attendance and Withdrawal Policy. Attendance will be taken on a daily basis. A student may officially drop at the registrar's office any time up to and including October 28. Students who stop attending class prior to October 28 or have excessive absences (more than four class days) will be dropped. Students who attend class after October 28 cannot receive a W.

Students who take a course for the third time or more 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 or a 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.

The State of Texas imposes penalties on students who withdraw/drop courses excessively. Students are limited to no more than SIX total course withdrawals throughout their educational career at a Texas public college or university. Students are encouraged to review the HCC Drop Policy.

To help you avoid having to withdraw from any class, contact your professor regarding your academic performance. You may also want to contact your counselor to learn about helpful HCC resources (e.g. online tutoring, child care, financial aid, job placement, etc.).

If a student decides to withdraw from a class upon careful review of other options, the student can withdraw online prior to the deadline through their HCC Student Center.

HCC and/or professors may withdraw students for excessive absences without notification (see course attendance policy above).

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 [Ability Services Office Locations](#). Faculty members are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

Student Rights and Responsibilities. 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 can be found on the [HCC website](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/anti-discrimination/) (<http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/anti-discrimination/>). Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance.

International Students. Receiving a W in a course may affect the status of your student visa. Once a W is given for the course, it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8520 if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

HCC Policy Statement: Academic Honesty. A student who is academically dishonest is, by definition, not showing that the coursework has been learned, and that student is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcement roles. You are expected to be familiar with the University's Policy on Academic Honesty, found in the catalog. What that means is: If you are charged with an offense, pleading ignorance of the rules will not help you. Students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by College 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:

- Copying from another students' test paper;
- Using materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Collaborating with another student during a test without authorization;
- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test that has not been administered;
- 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 offered for credit.

Collusion mean the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit. Possible punishments for academic dishonesty may include a grade of 0 or F in the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the College System. (See the Student Handbook)

Student Handbook. Students are responsible for the information contained in the [student handbook](http://central.hccs.edu/students/student-handbook/) (<http://central.hccs.edu/students/student-handbook/>).

Electronic Devices in the Classroom. (1) Prior to entering the classroom please turn off all cell phones and any other electronic communication devices in your possession and place all such devices in your backpack or briefcase. (2) No cell phones or any other electronic communication devices are permitted to be displayed on your desk top. (3) The use of computers (laptops, tablets, etc.) is permitted only for the purpose of expediting your taking of notes during the class. Surfing the web, checking e-mail, using social media during the class is not permitted.

EGLS₃—Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System. At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.

Course Textbooks and Readings. The textbook for the course can be purchased at the bookstore at HCCS Central College, 1300 Holman. [Take this syllabus with you to make sure you get the correct book.](#)

An e-book version of the textbook can be purchased online for significantly less than the bookstore price. Go to <http://www.cengagebrain.com> and enter 9781305084643 in the search field.

The text for the course is:

John Geer, Wendy Schiller, Richard Herrera, Jeffrey Segal, *Gateways to Democracy*, 3rd edition with Mindtap Access Code (Cengage, 2016)

Copies of the textbook are on reserve at the Central College library, 1300 Holman. These are for library use only. They cannot be checked out.

Several additional readings will be assigned. These can be accessed from the course website.

Course Topics and Schedule of Readings.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics and Readings</u>
August 23	COURSE OVERVIEW
August 30	I. UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Geer, et al., <i>Gateways to Democracy</i>, Ch. 12. "Declaration of Independence" in Geer, et al., <i>Gateways to Democracy</i>, Appendix A, pp. 578-5803. Roberto Foa and Yascha Mounk, "Are Americans Losing Faith in Democracy?" [Access from the course website]

- September 6 II. UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION
1. Constitution of the United States in Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Appendix B, pp. 582-596
 2. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 2
 3. Madison, 'Federalist #51' in Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Appendix C, pp. 603-605
 4. Madison, 'Federalist #10' in Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Appendix C, pp. 598-602
 5. Sanford Levinson, "It is Time to Repair the Constitution's Flaws" [Access from the course website]
- September 13 III. PUBLIC OPINION AND MEDIA
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapters 6 and 7
 2. Amanda Taub, "The Rise of American Authoritarianism" [Access from the course website]
- September 20 FIRST EXAMINATION
- September 27 IV. POLITICAL PARTIES: THE AMERICAN TWO PARTY SYSTEM
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 9
- October 4 V. ELECTION SYSTEMS
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 10 and pp. 285-289, 388-394
 2. Rob Richie, "Fix the Top 2 Primary: Admirable Goals Don't Justify Indefensible Outcomes" [Access from the course website]
 3. Farhad Manjoo, "Your Presidential Candidate: Hot or Not?" [Access from the course website]
 4. Sam Wang, "The Great Gerrymander of 2012" [Access from the course website]
 5. Sam Wang, "Let Math Save Our Democracy" [Access from the course website]

- October 11 VI. CAMPAIGNS AND VOTING
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 11 and pp. 329-344
 2. Sadie Dingfelder, "The Science of Political Advertising" [Access from the course website]
- Read one of the following:
3. Sasha Issenberg, "How President Obama's Campaign Used Big Data to Rally Individual Voters" [Access from the course website]
 4. Sasha Issenberg, "Inside the GOP's Efforts to Close the Campaign-Science Gap with Democrats" [Access from the course website]
 5. Sasha Issenberg, "Dept. of Experiments" [Access from the course website]
- October 18 SECOND EXAMINATION
- October 25 VII. CONGRESS
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 12
 2. Ezra Klein, "What Happens When Congress Fails to Do Its Job?" [Access from the course website]
 3. Lawrence Lessing, "How to Get Our Democracy Back: There will be no change until we change Congress" [Access from the course website]
 4. David Mayhew, "Is Congress 'The Broken Branch'?" [Access from the course website]
- October 28 LAST DAY FOR STUDENT WITHDRAWAL
Anyone who attends class after this day cannot receive a W.
- November 1 VIII. FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BRANCH
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapters 13 and 14
 2. Garrett Epps, "The Founders' Great Mistake" [Access from the course website]
 3. Haley Edwards, "He Who Makes the Rules" [Access from the course website]
- November 8 IX. FEDERAL JUDICIARY
1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 15
 2. Erwin Chemerinsky, "The Case Against the Supreme Court" [Access from the course website]
- November 15 THIRD EXAMINATION

November 22 X. PUBLIC POLICIES

1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 16

November 29 XI. AMERICAN POWER STRUCTURES

1. Geer, et al., *Gateways to Democracy*, Chapter 8
2. Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens" [Access from the course website]
3. Frances Fox Piven, "Movements Making Noise" [Access from the course website]

December 6 FINAL EXAMINATION

9:30 AM for 9:30-11:00 Class (10850)

11:00 AM for 11:00-12:30 Class (10851)

Review Quiz Instructions. Here are the instructions for accessing and taking the review quizzes.

1. All the review quizzes are required. You can view a complete list of the review quizzes in Assignments or Grades.
2. Each quiz is located in its topic section.
3. Each quiz covers the lecture notes **and** readings for that topic.
4. Each quiz must be taken and submitted by its due date. There is no make up for missed quizzes.
5. Each quiz consists of ten questions. There is a time limit for taking a quiz. The time limit is thirty minutes.
6. You can take each quiz twice. Your grade on a quiz will be the higher of the two grades. Both attempts must be completed before the quiz due date.
7. While there will be regular reminders about which quiz you should be taking, it is the student's responsibility to take the quizzes on time.

Extra Credit. There are two optional extra credit opportunities.

1. Optional Extra Credit Activity: Volunteering in a Political Campaign. The instructions for this activity are located in Assignments. The grade you make on this activity will replace the lowest grade on the required exercises.
2. Mindtap Optional Extra Credit Activities. These are optional extra credit activities you can do. They are located on the CengageBrain website set up by the publisher of our textbook.

There are Mindtap activities for each topic. The links to these activities are located in each topic. Open a topic and navigate from there to the CengageBrain website to complete the activities.

You will need an access code to access these activities. If you purchased a new copy of the textbook, an access code was included with your textbook. If you purchased a used copy of the textbook, you can purchase an access code on the CengageBrain website.

The first time you access the CengageBrain website, you will be asked to set up an account. This is where you will enter your access code. You may also be asked for a course key. The course key is: **MTPN-44LP-9V0S**

The totality of Mindtap activities is worth a possible ten points. The points you earn will be added to your final course grade. For example, if you correctly answer 60% of the Mindtap questions, then you have earned six points. These six points will be added to your final course grade.

Technical support for Mindtap can be accessed at:

<http://support.cengage.com/magellan/ClassLandingPage.aspx?OptyId=1-1XWG72F>

<http://services.cengage.com/dcs/mindtap/start/resourcelist/>