In-Person | North Forest Rm. TBA | MW 10 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
3 Credit Hours | 48 hours per semester

Instructor Contact Information
Instructor: Steven N. Tran, Ph.D.  Office Phone: 713-718-6979
Office: A. Morales @ SE College  Office Hours: MW 10:00am-3:00pm
HCC Email: steven.tran@hccs.edu  Office Location: A. Morales, Rm 101.10

Please feel free to contact me concerning any problems that you are experiencing in this course. Your performance in my class is very important to me. I am available to hear your concerns and just to discuss course topics.

Instructor’s Preferred Method of Contact

You can contact me through either Canvas (preferred method of contact) or to my HCC email with your HCC email. Emails sent via non-HCC accounts (i.e. gmail, yahoo, etc) will probably not receive a response.

I will respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday; I will reply to weekend messages on Monday mornings.

What’s Exciting About This Course

Students who finish GOVT 2306 will have completed one of the most important class they will ever take in their college career. In these classes, it should 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 roles, while equally important, also are in conflict with each other. Laws promote liberty may compromise security and vice versa. Which state and/or local institutions comes up with these practices and enforces them? How do they come up with these practices? What role do we, as Texas residents, play in offering this overall balance between liberty and security? This will be a large theme in this course.
My Personal Welcome

On behalf of the Government Department faculty, 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. Students will need to be proficient with computers and other necessary electronic devices to access instructional material and course assignments.

GOVT 2306 is an introductory course in State and Local Government. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to write college-level essays, analyze various written works, and have a basic understanding of: Texas’ political environment (including culture, political economy, and ideologies), Texas constitutions (states in a federal context), state and local government, political participation, interest groups, political parties, and elections, Texas Legislature, Texas Executive Branch (Governor and bureaucracy), and the Texas Courts.

Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

GOVT 2306 requires college-level reading and writing skills. The minimum requirements for enrollment in GOVT 2306 include AT LEAST concurrent enrollment in ENGL 1301. If you have enrolled in this course having satisfied these prerequisites, you have a higher chance of success than students who have not done so. Please carefully read and consider the repeater policy in the HCCS Student Handbook.

Eagle Online Canvas Learning Management System

This section of GOVT 2306 will use Eagle Online Canvas (https://eagleonline.hccs.edu) to supplement in-class assignments, exams, and activities. While this course is a traditional in-person class, there is a web-enhanced component to the class as the bulk of instructional material is available only on Eagle Online Canvas. Very little material will be available by your instructor as a traditional hard-copy.

HCCS Open Lab locations may be used to access the Internet and Eagle Online Canvas. It is recommended that you USE FIREFOX OR CHROME AS YOUR BROWSER.

HCC Online Information and Policies

Here is the link to information about HCC Online classes including the required Online Orientation for all fully online classes: http://www.hccs.edu/online/

Scoring Rubrics, Sample Assignments, etc.
Look in Eagle Online 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
Instructional Materials

Textbook Information


This ISBN is for a package that includes the loose-leaf version of the text with the Connect access card. The Connect access contains a SmartBook/eBook.

It is included in a package that contains the text as well as an access code and are found at the HCC Bookstore. You may either use a hard copy of the book, or rent the e-book from McGraw-Hill. Order your book here: HCC Bookstore

Temporary Free Access to E-Book

*Students are able to obtain temporary free access to a digital version of the text for fourteen days. The necessary links to gain such access are available in your Eagle Online Canvas page.*

Other Instructional 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 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 http://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 http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/.
Course Overview

Government 2306 is one of two courses designed to introduce students to the study of the origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. This particular survey of the Texas state system of government includes the fundamental principles of political science, the study of the Texas state constitution, the state legislative, executive and judicial branches, local governments, methods of participation, and analysis of contemporary policies. This course is fully transferable to all Texas State colleges and universities.

Core Curriculum Objectives (CCOs)

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 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.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

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
Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
2. Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
6. Analyze the state and local election process.
7. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives for each CSLO can be found at GOVT 2306 can be found here. An updated version will be available soon.

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 your guide.

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 make up
- Provide the course outline and class calendar which will include a description of any special projects or assignments
- Arrange to meet with individual students 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
• Attain a raw score of at least 50% on the departmental final exam
• Be aware of and comply with academic honesty policies in the HCCS Student Handbook

Assignments, Exams, and Activities

Exams

There will be THREE non-comprehensive exams scheduled this term. Each exam will comprise of 50 multiple choice questions (one point per question) AND two short essay questions (15 points each). Each exam will cover a combination of material from assigned chapter readings and lecture notes.

Additional guidelines pertaining to the exam are as follows:

1) Students are expected to arrive on time at the beginning of class on the day of the exam with their own no. 2 pencil and Scantron Form 882.
2) Students will have the entire allotted time (1 hour, 45 minutes) to complete each exam. To take full advantage of the time allotted, be sure to arrive about 5 minutes BEFORE the official class time to find a seat and make yourself as comfortable as you can appropriately be in a classroom setting. Students who are late to an exam will have only the remaining time left after arriving.
3) Students will NOT be permitted to take any breaks at any point during an exam; make sure that all bodily needs have been met and all life distractions are taken care of PRIOR to taking the exam or can be taken care of AFTER turning in that exam. Any and all “emergencies” a student absolutely has to be addressed during the exam WILL be considered a submission of that exam.
4) Students should also power off all mobile devices in their possession and keep them off throughout the duration of the exam. Mobile devices that go off during the exam may also be seen as a submission.
5) Important Note: Exams should not be difficult with adequate preparation in advance (i.e. attend every class, take thorough notes, and keep up with the assigned readings, etc.).

In-Class Activities

Regular Quizzes (7 Points Per Quiz, 40 Points Total)
Expect there to be about six quizzes assigned throughout the course. Simply put, while there may be classes in which no quiz is given, it is generally safe to assume there will be quizzes every day. These quizzes will be mostly short answer format and are intended to encourage students to keep up with assigned readings and lectures. Quizzes will be worth around 7 points each and, when combined, should sum up to a maximum possibility of 40 points. All quizzes are open note and textbook. There will be absolutely NO makeups to any missed quizzes.NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

Syllabus Quiz (20 Points Total)
In addition to your six quizzes mentioned earlier, there will also be a required syllabus quiz scheduled during the beginning of the semester. Students will have unlimited opportunities to take and retake the quiz until the maximum number of points (twenty, two points per correct answer) can be earned. The purpose of the syllabus quiz is to insure that all enrolled students become familiar with my course expectations and requirements.
Online Activities

**ONLINE MODULE ACTIVITIES (3 POINTS PER COMPLETED CHAPTER ACTIVITY, 50 POINTS TOTAL)**
There will be a total of THREE learning modules. Each module will consist of anywhere between three and five assigned chapter readings and activities that correspond with the readings. Students will earn four points upon completion of a chapter activity. Given that there are a total of 14 chapters in your assigned textbook, students can earn up to 56 points per completion of all chapter activities. Given that I have set the “maximum” number of points students can remains at 50, students can earn a small built-in bonus for fully completing all completion activities.

Given that the points earned from these activities call upon the opening and subsequent reading of the chapters, it is safe to assume that they are open book and open practically everything else. Once an exercise is made available for students to start on, you will have to successfully answer all practice questions by the stated deadline. See calendar for exact due dates.

**Extra Credit**

Any and all extra credit opportunities to improve your grade will be announced ONLY in class. Points awarded will be calculated in your overall grade in addition to points earned at the end of the semester. No other extra credit chances will be provided beyond what I announce in class.

**Grading Formula**

To calculate your grade, simply add up your top three exam scores and both of your written assignments. You can earn a maximum of 350 points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Points for Each Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>80 POINTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>80 POINTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>80 POINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Module Activities</td>
<td>50 POINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Quizzes</td>
<td>40 POINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>20 POINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>350 POINTS</strong></td>
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After adding up all the necessary grades, match your total number with the appropriate letter grade as follows below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>315-350</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280-314</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>245-279</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210-244</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-209</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HCC Grading Scale can be found on this site under Academic Information:
http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/

Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS DATE</th>
<th>READING ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>Reference Chapter</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Syllabus and Course Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/27-10/2</td>
<td>Introduction to Texas History and Politics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/4-10/9</td>
<td>Texas Constitution and American Federal System</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11-10/16</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Module 1 Activities Due</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Texas Legislature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Texas Governor and Executive Department</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30-11/1</td>
<td>Public Policy and Financing State Government</td>
<td>11, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/6-11/8</td>
<td>Texas Judiciary and the Criminal Justice System</td>
<td>5, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8</td>
<td>Module 2 Activities Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/15-11/20</td>
<td>Public Opinion &amp; Media</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day: No Class!</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Interest Groups</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/4-12/6</td>
<td>Voting, Campaigns &amp; Elections</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/6</td>
<td>Module 3 Activities Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13</td>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other important dates:
Last day to withdraw with a “W” 11/12/18
Thanksgiving Day: 11/22/18

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.

Instructor’s Practices and Procedures

Missed Assignments

I STRONGLY recommend that you make yourself available on the scheduled exam date. Students who miss either the first or second exam will have an opportunity to make up that test on the same scheduled date as Exam 3 for any reason. That is, in addition to having to complete Exam 3 on that day, students will also need to complete whichever exam they missed within that same allotted period. On a case-by-case basis, students can be permitted to make up an exam before the scheduled Exam 3 date only during the direst of circumstances that MUST be supported by legitimate documentation

Expect the makeup exam to be at least subtly different from the original exam, but not necessarily more difficult. However, students do not typically score as well on the makeup.
Academic Integrity

Here’s the link to the HCC information about academic integrity (Scholastic Dishonesty and Violation of Academic Scholastic Dishonesty and Grievance): http://www.hccs.edu/about-hcc/procedures/student-rights-policies--procedures/student-procedures/

Houston Community College is committed to a high standard of academic integrity in the academic community. In becoming a part of the academic community, students are responsible for honesty and independent effort. Examples of these violations include, but are not limited to, the following: Plagiarizing written work or projects, cheating on exams or assignments, collusion on an exam or project, and misrepresentation of credentials or prerequisites when registering for a course.

Simply put, violations of academic integrity will NOT be tolerated. At a minimum, a grade of "0" will be recorded on the assignment or exam in question. Additional sanctions may include but are not necessarily limited to the following: Being assigned a grade of "F" for the course, being withdrawn from the course, or being expelled from the College.

Attendance Procedures

While you should expect attendance to be taken every day, aside from missing any quizzes and/or in-class assignments administered that day, there will be no other direct penalty for being absent. However, much of the material tested over will consist of information I present in class. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain lecture notes from other students should they miss a class. My personal lecture notes will not be made available to students.

Student Conduct

As this is an in-person class with a lecture-oriented component, disruptive behavior and activities that interfere with my teaching and your learning will not be tolerated. Any instances of these disruptions may result in an administrative withdrawal without refund. At a minimum, such disruption can result the student in question being asked to leave the classroom and not be allowed back without a forthcoming, contrite apology.

Instructor’s Course-Specific Information (As Needed)

I will make an effort to ensure that all grades will be returned to students in a timely manner.

While I will be happy to discuss any questions and concerns with students especially on graded written, please allow for AT LEAST a 24 hour “cooling” period after receiving your grade. Communication opportunities are often lost without such a period. Patience is virtue.

Electronic Devices

Laptop computers and/or other electronic devices are conditionally permitted for educational purposes at my discretion. If it is clear to me that any use of such a device serves as a disruption at any point during the semester, I reserve the right to prohibit any and all use of such devices.
Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for information regarding reasonable accommodations.

**Government Program Information**

- To be added later.

### HCC Policies

Here’s the link to the HCC Student Handbook [http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/](http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/) In it you will find information about the following:

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

**EGLS³**

The EGLS³ ([Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System](http://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.

### Campus Carry Link

Here’s the link to the HCC information about Campus Carry: [http://www.hccs.edu/departments/police/campus-carry/](http://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](http://www.hccs.edu/), activate it now. You may also use Canvas Inbox to communicate.

### 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.

**Office of Institutional Equity**

Use the link below to access the HCC Office of Institutional Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement ([http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/](http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/))

**disAbility Services**

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including 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 [http://www.hccs.edu/support-services/disability-services/](http://www.hccs.edu/support-services/disability-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)  

**Department Chair Contact Information**

Department Chair: Dr. Cammy Shay  
Email Address: [cammy.shay@hccs.edu](mailto:cammy.shay@hccs.edu)  
Office Number: 713-718-7141

Per the HCC Student Handbook, if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your instructor before contacting the department chair.