Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Government Department  
http://www.hccs.edu/programs/areas-of-study/social--behavioral-sciences/government/

GOVT 2306: Texas Government | Lecture | #16219  
In-Person | Southwest Workforce Building Rm. E122 | TTH 8:00 a.m.- 9:20 a.m.  
3 Credit Hours | 48 hours per semester

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor:  Amb. Udo Moses Williams, PhD  
Office Phone:
Office:  Stafford Learning Hub  
Office Hours:
HCC Email:  udo.williams@hccs.edu  
Office Location:

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 to discuss course topics.

Instructor’s Preferred Method of Contact

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; I will reply to weekend  
messages on Monday mornings.

You can contact me through either my HCC email (preferred method of contact) my HCC  
email with your HCC email. You may also contact me through Canvas email. 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; 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 classes they  
will take in their college career. In this class, it will 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 concepts, while equally important, also are in  
conflict with each other. Laws that promote liberty may compromise security and vice versa.  
Which state and/or local institutions come up with these practices and enforces them? How
do they come up with these practices? What role do we, as Texas residents, play in this balance between liberty and security? This will be a large theme in my course.

My Personal Welcome

On behalf of the Government Department, 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. As we will be using Canvas and a whole host of online technology, students will need to be proficient with computers and other necessary electronic devices to access instructional material and course assignments. More information to follow below.

Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

GOVT 2306 requires college-level reading and writing skills. The minimum requirement for enrollment in GOVT 2306 include concurrent enrollment in or successful completion of ENGL 1301. If you have enrolled in this course having satisfied this prerequisite, 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 will be available on Eagle Online Canvas (and also on the Learning Web). 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**

Here is the link to get temporary free access to a digital version of the text for fourteen days:

*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**

**Must Reads Will Be Posted**

**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](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/](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 the State of Texas 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.

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 here.

Student Success

Expect to spend at least twice as many hours per week on your own in addition to the time you would normally spend during instruction. 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
- Be aware of and comply with academic honesty policies in the HCCS Student Handbook

Instructor guidelines and policies:

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

All assignments are to be completed and submitted to the instructor on the scheduled due date. No late assignments will be accepted.
It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of deadlines for assignments, discussions, and exams. Although it is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from the course, a student may be dropped from the course for reasons stated in the Policy Regarding “W,” “F,” and “I” section on the last page of the syllabus. Failure of a student to officially withdraw could result in the student receiving a grade of “F” in the course or a “W” at the discretion of the professor.

GRADE DETERMINATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your grade will be determined by the following</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Percent of Final Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAM 1</td>
<td>CHAPTERS: 1-7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAM 2</td>
<td>CHAPTERS: 8-13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS RANDOM QUIZZES/INTERACTIVES</td>
<td>QUIZZES BASED ON LECTURES/CHAPTERS/INTERACTIVE</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH PAPER</td>
<td>A TOPIC FOR ALL SECTIONS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>CHAPTERS 1-13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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LETTER GRADE ASSIGNMENT:

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<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Final Average in Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tentative Instructional Outline:

CHAPTER 1: TEXAS HISTORY & CULTURE
CHAPTER 2: THE TEXAS STATE CONSTITUTION AND THE AMERICAN FEDERAL SYSTEM
CHAPTER 3: THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE
CHAPTER 4: THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT AND THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR OF TEXAS
CHAPTER 5: THE COURT SYSTEM IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 6: LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 7: VOTING AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 8: CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 9: POLITICAL PARTIES IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 10: INTEREST GROUPS AND LOBBYING IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 11: PUBLIC POLICY IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 12: THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN TEXAS
CHAPTER 13: FINANCING STATE GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 14: PUBLIC OPINION AND MEDIA IN TEXAS
**EXAMINATIONS SCHEDULE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAM</th>
<th>CHAPTERS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAM 1</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>March 5, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>REVIEW</td>
<td>April 30, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAM 2</td>
<td>8-13</td>
<td>May 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td>CHAPTERS 1-14</td>
<td>May 9: 8:00 a.m.</td>
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**Research Paper: Due – March 7, 2019**

Students are required to complete a research paper as part of the course. These papers are to be original work which will contain both researched information and your personal analysis and application of that information. These papers are to be fact based and driven, and not to include speculations or slangs. These papers will be graded mostly for content but will need to be composed at a level appropriate for college students. Your research topic is as follows:

*Explain the composition, the relevance and the oversight function of the Sunset Review Commission, citing and documenting at least an important case of its review in the recent past.*

**Research Paper Guidelines:**

The following guidelines must be adhered to in your research paper. Failure to do so will result in a lowered grade.

- This paper should not be more than 2 pages, double spaced, 12 point font, and one inch margins. Cover pages and Bibliography pages do not count as part of the pages.
- You must use source citations for all quotes, paraphrases, or borrowed ideas or facts on the above topic.
- Do preliminary research to ensure that you have sufficient sources to support your paper. In a paper of this length you should have no fewer than four sources.
- Every well-written paper should have at least three main parts. You should have an opening statement with a thesis which addresses the question or issue you are researching, and adopt a framework/design/plan for organizing the information/data of your research. The body of the paper should present the evidence to support your thesis. If there is contradicting evidence from your sources, you should pay attention to that also. The paper should end with a well stated conclusion that either supports or refutes your thesis and explains why and the effect or repercussion of the issue you are researching.

**Student Notification Statements:**

**Mobile Device Policy:**

If you own a mobile device (such as a laptop, a tablet, or a smart phone), you may use it provided that you are accessing appropriate course content (online text, D2L, etc.) or taking notes (no texting, face-booking, etc). Please see that it is in silent mode during class time. You may expect that from time to time, I will ask that they all be put away.
Attendance:

Attendance to all classes and participation in class activities are required. Should you anticipate an absence, please notify the instructor in advance. **Nine class absences will prohibit the successful completion of the course. Those who miss nine classes would receive “I”, INCOMPLETE and must meet with the instructor for make-up arrangements to complete the course. More than 14 class absences cannot be made up, unless a school administrative accommodation is submitted.** If a student should miss a class, it is the student’s responsibility to obtain lecture notes and assignments from a classmate. Attendance list will be taken at all class meetings/group activities. **Students who come late or leave the class early without permission, will be counted absent.**

**FINAL GRADE OF FX:** Students who stop attending class and do not complete at least 60% of the course, 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. 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 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.

Withdrawals:

First, **ALL WITHDRAWAL are up to the student.** If you fail to withdraw from the class by the required withdrawal date do not ask me to do it for you, because no matter what the reason is I WILL NOT.

Students who take a course for the third time or more must now pay significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. At HCC, it is an additional $50 per credit hour. 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. Also, the state of Texas has passed a new law limiting new students (as of Fall 2007) to no more than six withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree.

Repeating Courses:

As a result of recent Texas legislative changes, please be advised that HCC is charging additional tuition for students who enroll in the same class three or more times at HCC. While it is the hope of HCC that students will be successful in their first attempt at classes, we realize that life demands, academic struggles, and other issues may result in students needing to take the same class more than once. Speaking with an advisor will help you develop student success skills, improving your overall academic performance. If a student repeats a course in which a grade (A-F) has been received, the highest grade received at HCC is the permanent grade for the course and will be used in computing the GPA. All grades earned in a given course will be reflected on the transcript. Other colleges may compute the GPA differently than HCC.
Link to Academic Calendar:

http://www.hccs.edu/student-experience/events-calendar/academic-calendar/

HCC Student Handbook:

Please note that it is each student’s responsibility to read and be familiar with the HCC Student Handbook. Please see:

http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/

ESSENTIAL NEEDS STATEMENT

Any student who may be facing challenges in affording or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Success for support. Additionally, please notify your professor (me) if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide you with guidance on resources that I am aware of relating to essential needs.

BASIC NEEDS STATEMENT

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 Student Success for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

IN-CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOR:

- All Electronic devices (including cell phones and lap tops) are to be turned off. Turned off cell phones does NOT INCLUDE Vibrate. I shut down my cell phone going into class, and you are too as well. For whatever reason you need to use a laptop or have your cell phone not turned off you need to make a formal request via email. If you are caught on your lap-top or cell phone doing something other than what you formally requested during class or cause a disruption, you will lose your privilege of using that electronic device in class for the duration of the semester.

- Use of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for more information.

- Not be respectful of the instructor or other students will not be tolerated during lecture. This includes any type of disruption during the course of lecturing or discussion. Adult behavior is expected. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior/activities which interfere with teaching and/or learning will not be tolerated, and may result in an administrative withdrawal without refund.

- We must be mindful of others and their views. We will be discussing hot button issues in today’s society. Inevitably, disagreements will arise. This is OK, and debate is encouraged. But it is important to maintain a high level of decorum during these
discussions and treat your colleagues with the up-most respect. In addition, please use appropriate language in the classroom.

**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/](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.*

**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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<th>Academic Information</th>
<th>Incomplete Grades</th>
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<td>Police Services &amp; Campus Safety</td>
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<td>disAbility Support Services</td>
<td>Student Life at HCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal Educational Opportunity</td>
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</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>
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</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.

[http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/](http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/)
**Campus Carry Link**
Here’s the link to the HCC information about 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 and activate it now](http://www.hccs.edu/departments/eagleid/). 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.

**Government Program Information**
The Houston Community College Government department supports students in a number of different ways. These include:

- **GOVT Majors** – 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 who will connect them to events, news, and opportunities.
- **Careers in GOVT** – 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.
- **GOVT Student Organizations** – The HCC Political Science Club holds discussions and sponsors events to connect students to politics in the real world.
- **GOVT Scholarships** – The Government Department will work with students to locate scholarship support, when possible.

**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  
http://www.hccs.edu/departments/institutional-equity/title-ix-know-your-rights/

**Department Chair Contact Information**

Department Chair: Dr. Cammy Shay  
Email Address: 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.