GOVT 2306: Texas Government | Lecture | #14830
Online | Office Hours: before or after class
3 Credit Hours | 48 hours per semester

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: William Parent, M.L.A.
HCC Email: william.parent@hccs.edu

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 Canvas (preferred method of contact) or my HCC email with your HCC email. Emails sent from non-HCC accounts (i.e. gmail, yahoo, etc) will not receive a response.

I will respond to emails within 48 hours.

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, online course, 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 administer class assignments, such as exams, and activities. This course is a traditional online class, and the instructional material is available only on Eagle Online Canvas.

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.
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](http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/supplemental-instruction/) 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 here.

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
• Be aware of and comply with academic honesty policies in the HCCS Student Handbook

Assignments, Exams, and Activities

This is a Distance Education course which means it will be fully delivered Online. The material will be made available through PowerPoint Presentations and supplemental activities and resources through the publisher’s website as well as assigned chapters from the course textbook.

During the semester, there are four scheduled class exams. All exams will be administered online, and each exam is worth 15% of your overall grade. It is imperative that students keep up with class assignments and readings if they wish to succeed in this course. The exam dates are listed in the course calendar (see above). Exams One, Two, Three and Four will each consist of a combination of seventy-five objective questions worth one point apiece. There will also be an essay question for each of these four exams which are worth twenty-five points. Each exam will cover only the material since the last exam, including both the readings and class discussion. You will only have seventy-five minutes to complete Exams One, Two, & Three. You will have one hundred-twenty minutes to complete Exam Four.

There will be fifteen discussion questions that I will post throughout the semester online. Each discussion is worth two points towards your overall grade in the class. I drop your five lowest discussion posts. The discussion dates are listed in the course calendar (see above).

Students will be expected to write a research paper for the class and submit it through Eagle Online. The research paper must be submitted by 10:00 p.m. Monday, April 22nd, 2019. The paper is worth 20% of your overall grade for the class. Guidelines for the research paper will be posted on Eagle Online.

Grading Formula

90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
Less than 60% = F
Instructor Grading Criteria

Your final course grade will be calculated according to the following formula:

EXAM ONE = 15%
EXAM TWO = 15%
EXAM THREE = 15%
EXAM FOUR = 15%
DISCUSSIONS = 20%
RESEARCH PAPER = 20%

TOTAL = 100%

HCC Grading Scale can be found on this site under Academic Information: http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/

Course Calendar

UNIT ONE
DISCUSSION ONE: will open on Monday, February 11th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, February 17th at 10:00 p.m. (Introduction)
DISCUSSION TWO: will open on Monday, February 11th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, February 17th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 1)
DISCUSSION THREE: will open on Monday, February 18th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, February 24th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 2)
DISCUSSION FOUR: will open on Monday, February 18th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, February 24th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 6)
EXAM ONE: will open on Monday, February 25th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, March 3rd at 10:00 p.m. Exam One will cover the following chapters: 1, 2 & 6.
Chapter 1 (Introduction to Texas History and Politics)
Chapter 2 (The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System)
Chapter 6 (Local Government in Texas)

UNIT TWO
DISCUSSION FIVE: will open on Monday, March 4th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, March 10th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 3)
DISCUSSION SIX: will open on Monday, March 18th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, March 24th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 4)
DISCUSSION SEVEN: will open on Monday, March 18th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, March 24th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 5)
EXAM TWO: will open on Monday, March 25th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, March 31st at 10:00 p.m. Exam Two will cover the following chapters: 3, 4, & 5.
Chapter 3 (The Texas Legislature)
Chapter 4 (The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor of Texas)
Chapter 5 (The Court System of Texas)

UNIT THREE
DISCUSSION EIGHT: will open on Monday, April 1st at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 7th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 7)
DISCUSSION NINE: will open on Monday, April 1st at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 7th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 8)
DISCUSSION TEN: will open on Monday, April 8th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 14th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 9)
DISCUSSION ELEVEN: will open on Monday, April 8th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 14th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 10)
EXAM THREE: will open on Monday, April 15th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Thursday, April 18th at 10:00 p.m. Exam Three will cover the following chapters: 7, 8, 9, & 10.
Chapter 7 (Voting and Political Participation in Texas)
Chapter 8 (Elections and Campaigns in Texas)
Chapter 9 (Political Parties in Texas)
Chapter 10 (Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas)

UNIT FOUR
RESEARCH PAPER: will open on Monday, February 11th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Monday, April 22nd at 10:00 p.m.
DISCUSSION TWELVE: will open on Monday, April 22nd at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 28th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 11)
DISCUSSION THIRTEEN: will open on Monday, April 22nd at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, April 28th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 12)
DISCUSSION FOURTEEN: will open on Monday, April 29th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, May 5th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 13)
DISCUSSION FIFTEEN: will open on Monday, April 29th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, May 5th at 10:00 p.m. (covers chapter 14)
EXAM FOUR: will open on Monday, May 6th at 8:00 a.m. and is due no later than Thursday, May 9th at 10:00 p.m. Exam Four will cover the following chapters: 11, 12, 13 & 14.
Chapter 11 (Public Policy in Texas)
Chapter 12 (The Criminal Justice System in Texas)
Chapter 13 (Financing State Government)
Chapter 14 (Public Opinion and the Media in Texas)

Other important dates:
Spring Break: 3/11/19 - 3/17/19
Last day to withdraw with a “W” 4/9/19
Spring Holiday: 4/19/19

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 Assignment
Please complete all discussions and exams by their individual deadlines which can be found on the course calendar. Students who fail to complete a discussion by the deadline will receive a zero for that discussion. Students who miss exams one, two or three have an opportunity to make up the exam; however, there will be a 30-point deduction. There will be no opportunities to make up exam four if missed; a grade of zero will be given for exam four. Please note: that if a student has a valid excuse then I will allow them to make up missed work without any type of penalty being assessed. Documentation must be provided such as a doctor’s note. It should be noted that the make-up exam is not a retake. That is, make-up exams are allowed only for missed exams.

Academic Integrity
HCCS students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by HCC 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 but is not limited to: Copying from another student's test paper; using unauthorized materials during a test, unauthorized collaboration with another student during a test; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test; and bribing another person to obtain a copy of a test. Plagiarism includes the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work. Collusion includes the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work.

Honest work and effort are expected and are rewarded. However, if any student is caught cheating on a test or plagiarizing papers, the student will receive a grade of zero on that test or assignment. A second infraction will result in a grade of "F" for the semester. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized collusion on tests or papers, copying directly from another person's work but passing it off as your own, or using unauthorized "cheat sheets", during a test. Review your obligations in the HCC Student Handbook.

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**

As stated in the HCC Catalog, all students are expected to attend classes regularly. Students in DE courses must log into their Eagle Online class or they will be counted as absent. Just like an on-campus class, your regular participation is required. Although it is the responsibility of the student to withdraw officially from a course, the professor also has the authority to block a student from accessing the class, and/or to withdraw a student for excessive absences or failure to participate regularly. DE students who do not log into their online class before the Official Day of Record will be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Completing the DE online orientation does not count as attendance.

**Withdrawals:**

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.

The drop/withdrawal date this semester is Tuesday, April 9th, 2019.
**Student Conduct**

As this is an online 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.

**Instructor’s Course-Specific Information**

I will grade your exams and discussion posts within 120 hours of the due date. I will make an effort to ensure that all grades will be returned to students in a timely manner.

**Distance Education**

The HCC Online Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should have reviewed 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. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link: [http://www.hccs.edu/media/houston-community-college/distance-education/student-services/pdf/HCC-Online-Student-Handbook.pdf](http://www.hccs.edu/media/houston-community-college/distance-education/student-services/pdf/HCC-Online-Student-Handbook.pdf)
HCC Policies
Here’s the link to the HCC 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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EGLS³
The EGLS³ (Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System) 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/

Campus Carry Link
Here’s the link to the HCC information about 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 and 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.
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-equality/)

**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/

**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
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.