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## Government Course Syllabus

GOVT 2306 – Texas Government  
SS, 2016, CRN 14384  
Tuesday/Thursday 4:00 – 5:50p  
Eastside Campus  
Angela Morales Building, 315  
3 Semester Credit Hours  
48 Contact Hours  
12 Weeks

### **Instructor Name**

Dr. Cammy Shay  
cammy.shay@hccs.edu

### **Government Department Chair**

Evelyn Ballard  
[Evelyn.ballard@hccs.edu](mailto:Evelyn.ballard@hccs.edu)  
713-718-2490

Note: if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your Dr. Shay before contacting the Department Chair.

### **Office Hours**

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00-2:00p, by appointment

### **Course Description**

The origin and development of the Texas constitution, structures and powers of state and local governments, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. Additionally, this particular survey of the Texas system of government includes the fundamental principles of political science and analysis of contemporary policies.

### **Prerequisite, Co-requisite**

Must have passed or be co-enrolled in English 1301 (Composition I) as a co-requisite.

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I will make every effort to fulfill the requirements of this syllabus during this term. However, in the unlikely event that changes must be made, I reserve the right to make such changes and to notify students in a timely manner of any such changes.

**Academic Program Learning Outcomes:**

2017-2020 HCC Government Program Student Learning Outcomes

**GOVT 2306**

- \* Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
- \* Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
- \* Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
- \* Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
- \* Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
- \* Analyze the state and local election process.
- \* Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- \* Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

**Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)**

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.

**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 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.

**Course Calendar**

This course is organized into five modules, each of which contains the information you must learn in order to be successful. From the homepage in Eagle Online, you may access the course modules as well as an array of supplemental information you are obligated to familiarize yourself with this term.

Week	Date in Class	What to Do	What is Due	Your Score
1	9/20 & 9/22	Post Introduction, complete Practice Bonus Assignment (PBA), review Module 1 content, read assignments and other supplemental materials, post all assignments on time	Intro: 9/22 PBA: 9/23	/3

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Week	Date in Class	What to Do	What is Due	Your Score
2	9/27 & 9/29*	Continue as above	DS: 9/27 TT: 9/28 WGY: 9/29	/20 /20 /5
3	10/4 & 10/6	Review Module 2 content, read assignments and other supplemental materials, post all assignments on time	DS: 10/5	/20
4	10/11 & 10/13	Continue as above	TT: 10/12 WGY: 10/13	/20 /5
5	10/18 & 10/20	Review Module 3 content, read assignments and other supplemental materials, post all assignments on time	DS: 10/19	/20
6	10/25 & 10/27	Continue as above	TT: 10/26 WGY: 10/27	/20 /5
7	11/1 & 11/3	Review Module 4 content, read assignments and other supplemental materials, post all assignments on time	DS: 11/2	/20
8	11/8 & 11-10	Continue as above	TT: 11/9 WGY: 11/10	/20 /5
9	11/15 & 11/17	Review Module 5 content, read assignments and other supplemental materials, post all assignments on time	DS: 11/16	/20
10	11/22 & 11/24	Continue as above No class Thursday	TT: 11/23	/20
11	11/29 & 12/1	Complete Module 5	WGY: 12/1	/5
12	12/6	End of Term Wrap-Up		

### **Instructional Methods**

The teaching and learning philosophy I bring to this course emphasizes student independence and responsibility in furthering knowledge, skills, and abilities that are relevant to twenty-first century living. I value critical and reflective thinking and analysis of important political concepts. It is more important to read for understanding than to try to memorize information. The course format requires different forms of interaction and active learning. Students will participate with me, with each other, and with the course material in class and through asynchronous discussions about relevant topics. Students are expected to take an active interest in their own learning this term.

You must be highly disciplined and focused to succeed in this accelerated sophomore-level course. This class offers you an opportunity to engage in learning using different instructional techniques (class discussions and debates, video, audio, websites, online discussions, group work, etc.). We will discuss topics and issues relevant to the assigned material. It is important to finish readings and explorations of resource materials in a timely manner. Students are expected to attend class on campus and in Eagle Online, and actively participate in all aspects of the class. When you are online you will be expected to read all posted information, email, and announcements.

### **Instructor Grading Criteria**

This is a writing-intensive class and your ability to communicate effectively and clearly in English is important. You will participate in class discussions and regular essay-based writing assignments that require you to demonstrate your understanding of relevant concepts, facts, and theories in the study of Texas politics and government. When working on assignment, you will follow instructions, and respond to prompts in a minimum number of words written in academic English. You will use your own voice and write in your own words. No quotes, paraphrases, or plagiarism allowed.

I will provide assignments and assessments that you can use to determine how successful you are at achieving the course learning outcomes (mastery of course content and skills). If you find you are not mastering the material and skills, you are encouraged to reflect on how you study and prepare for class. I welcome a dialogue on what you discover and may be able to assist you in finding resources that will improve your performance.

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5 Discussions 20 points each (100 points)	31.0% of your final grade
5 TED Talks, 20 points each (100 points)	31.0% of your final grade
5 What Grabbed You?, 5 points each (25)	8.0% of your final grade
Attendance (50 points)	15.0% of your final grade
Participation (50 points)	15.0% of your final grade
325 Points	100%

### **Grading Scale**

90-100%= A (293 – 325 points)  
80-89% = B (260 – 292 points)  
70-79% = C (228 – 259 points)  
60-69% = D (195 – 227 points)  
less than 60% = F (below 195 points)

An Incomplete is given only in a case of documented emergency that prevents you from submitting the Blog Project.

A grade of “A” (90% or above) reflects work that is excellent in all ways. Because this is a writing-intensive class, a grade of “A” will reflect excellent writing skills. Writing errors may result in scores less than 90%, so be sure to proof-read your work (read it out loud as well), use HCC Upswing <https://hccs.upswing.io/> or visit any HCC Writing Center to obtain information on how to improve your writing skills.

Bonus opportunities are as follows: Practice Bonus Assignment (3 points), TED Talk and Discussion Follow Up Comments (10 points) = up to 13 points or approximately 3% of your grade. Participation is optional but recommended. All bonus work must be submitted on time; no make ups will be provided or scored.

### **Make-up Policy**

Any work submitted late will be assessed a minimum deduction of 50% off possible points. Work ahead and plan accordingly to avoid this stiff penalty. In the event of an emergency that precludes you from submitting work on time, I will need valid documentation indicating dates or the event, your name on the document, and a person to contact to verify. Permissible emergencies: death in your immediate family, hospitalization, arrest.

### **Instructional Materials**

You will be linked to a free open source online e-textbook titled *Texas Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, The Texas Politics Project, (Sooma Learning, 2015).

### **HCC Policies**

**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 [www.hccs.edu](http://www.hccs.edu), then click future students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information. Faculty members are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

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 are in the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly. Know your rights and how to avoid these difficult situations.

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Log in to [www.edurisksolutions.org](http://www.edurisksolutions.org) Sign in using your HCC student e-mail account, then go to the button at the top right that says **Login** and enter your student number.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty:**

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.

***If any evidence of plagiarism or collusion is detected in your writing you will receive a score of zero for the assignment and a warning from me. If a second violation of the HCC Academic Dishonesty policy occurs, you will receive a grade of F for the course. This class policy is supported by the HCC Academic Dishonesty Policy.***

### **Absences:**

You are expected to attend all class meetings as well as log in to our Eagle Online class regularly. You are responsible for submitting all work on time. If you stop attending and/or logging in you must withdraw from the course or your final grade will be recorded as FX. There are financial aid penalties associated with a grade of FX. I reserve the right to drop students who do not attend class on campus or online and who do not respond to requests for information about class 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 11/7/16.*

### **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.

### **HCC Student Handbook**

The HCC Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the online 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 HCC 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 Student Handbook by visiting this link: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-handbook/>

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