

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Campus	Central College
Fall 2006	Govt 2302: National, State and Local
Professor	Dr. Vinette Meikle Harris
Office Hours	MW 10:30 am – 11:30 am; 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm or by appointment (Rm 310 Business Careers) Tel 713 718 6242 e-mail vinette.meikle@hccs.edu http://learning.cc.hccs.edu/Members/vharris

Catalog Description

Prerequisites: *Must be placed into college-level reading and college-level writing.*

A study of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government at both the national and state levels; economic and regulatory policy; social policy; civil liberties and civil rights policy; and foreign policy. Core Curriculum Course

As a core curriculum course, Government 2302 aims to provide the student with a working knowledge of the functions of government and politics. Many people are unaware of the impact that these institutions, policies and systems have on our daily lives. The ultimate goal of this course is to make students become more cognizant of the dynamics involved, in an effort to allow them to make more informed decisions.

Required Texts

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore Lowi, Margaret Weir. We The People: An Introduction to American Politics, 5th Edition. New York: Norton.

Tannahill, Neal. Texas Government: Policy and Politics, 8th Edition. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

Canon David, John Coleman, and Kenneth Mayer. The Enduring Debate 4th Ed.

Optional

Study guides for the Texas and American Government texts are available at the bookstore or on the web. Students may find these to be useful preparation tools for the tests.

Grading

There will be four tests, one writing assignment, and a final exam. **The lowest test grade before the final exam will be dropped automatically.** The four tests grades that will be counted will comprise 80% of the total grade. The other 20% will come from the written assignment. Students will only be exempted from the final exam if they have scored all A's on the previous four tests and writing assignments (NB. not an A average). The final grade will be allocated as follows: 90-100% =A; 80-89%=B; 70-79%=C; 60-69%=D; below 60%=F.

There is no make up exam policy in this class. However accommodations may be made at my discretion if I am given prior notice of appointments, or contacted before the next class session, if an emergency situation should occur on the day of the test. Students must have valid excuses. Students are also welcomed to sit in one of my other lectures if they missed theirs, or take a test during another of my class sessions, provided that the other class is the same course, the students are also taking a test, and there is available space. If there seems to be a pattern of any student not taking the tests within the times set aside for his/her entire class to do so, accommodations will be denied. **A missed test will be counted as a low grade and will be the one to drop. Try not to miss more than one test.**

Testing materials will be drawn from the lecture notes and assigned readings from the texts. Usually tests will take the form of a combination of multiple-choice with short answers. However, the instructor reserves the right to give essay questions as well.

Writing Assignment

Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to do individual work, which will attest to their knowledge and understanding of the subject areas, diction, critical thinking skills, and computer literacy skills. The written assignment involves critical analyses of the **Reader** in relation to the text on specific subject areas. The instructor will go over the details as these assignments are given.

Service Learning

Service Learning can be a good source for extra credit. It can also be used to substitute for the major written assignment. This would entail prior approval from the professor or the service learning personnel on campus. You can access this information at the HCC homepage under "For Students," where there is a service learning icon. This will take you to the "student handbook," the application is on page 8. You can either send the completed application to Dr. Eomurian at central.slp@hccs.edu or go by the office at FAC 306. Also available is a list of community partners where you can volunteer.

Class Participation

Participation is greatly encouraged. This can be enhanced, by reading the assigned readings before class, and keeping up with the news relating to government and politics. Participation can also take the form of assigned group activities, or team- work. In recognition of the diverse interests and experiences of our students, orderly and timely class discussions are encouraged when they pertain to the subject matter being addressed by the instructor. I cannot overemphasize the need to read the assigned readings before coming to class. Failure to do so on a regular basis, is usually reflected negatively on the tests grades. Students are encouraged to go my website on the Learning Web for additional helpful websites and information.

Attendance and General Conduct

*Since this is not a correspondence course, students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. If you are having problems that are affecting your attendance, please keep me informed and I will do my best to work with you. **All cell phones, pagers, alarms must be silenced/turned off upon entering the class.** Students should restrict movement in- and- out of the class -room to emergency situations only. Only work pertaining to each class session must be done during class. Note taking from previous classes must be done outside of the session and at the students' convenience. During a test, students will not be allowed to leave and reenter the classroom (all restroom breaks must be taken either before the test starts or after the test has been turned in).*

Withdrawal from a Course (W)

It is your responsibility to officially withdraw from a course and prevent an F from appearing on your transcript. When considering withdrawal from a course, remember the following information:

- *If you withdraw before the Official Date of Record, no grade is given and your transcript reflects no record of the course.*
- *A "W" (indicating withdrawal) appears on your transcript if you drop a course after the Official Date of Record and before the final deadline.*
- *College policy requires professors to write "never attended" on the official roll sheet next to the name of those students who do not attend class by the Official Date of Record. If you do not attend class before the Official Date of Record, the college may automatically drop you from the course.*
- *A "W" (withdrawal) may negatively impact your ability to receive financial aid or your visa status if you are an international student.*

Failure of a Course ("F")

You will receive an "F" in this class if your grade is less than 60%. Receiving an "F" (failure) may negatively impact your ability to receive financial

aid. It is YOUR responsibility to submit college-level quality work in a timely fashion or to withdraw yourself from the course by the deadline if you cannot complete your work satisfactorily.

Incomplete (“I”)

*You will receive an “I” (incomplete) **only** in the event of a documented emergency situation that prevents you from completing the last assignment, such as the final exam. You must speak with your professor as soon as possible in the event of such an emergency to arrange a course completion schedule. If you receive an “I” you must arrange with the professor to complete the course work before the end of the next long semester. After the deadline, the “I” becomes an “F.” All “I” designations must be changed to grades prior to graduation. The changed grade will appear on your record as “I/Grade” (ex: “I/B”).*

Extra Credit

Usually extra credit opportunities present themselves during the course of the semester. It is to be understood that while they are meant to expose the students to different areas that can augment their learning and experience outside of the classroom, seizure of these opportunities is totally voluntary on the part of the student. You will be informed of these opportunities as they arise. Students are also encouraged to participate in student organizations and activities for possible extra credit. Also welcomed are campaigning and community activities approved by the professor.

New Policy Regarding Repeaters

Beginning Fall 2006, students who take a course for the third or more times will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your professor / 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.

International Students

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

Scholastic Dishonesty

Students **must** refer to page 27 of the Students Handbook for the details regarding scholastic dishonesty. These measures will be strictly enforced.

Students who require reasonable accommodations for disabilities are encouraged to report to the appropriate school officials or Room 102 SJAC, Central College, or call (713) 718-6164 to make necessary arrangements. Faculty is only authorized to provide accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Offices.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE GOVT 2302

DATE	TOPICS
Week 1	<i>Introduction and Discussion of Syllabus</i>
Week 1-2	<i>The National Legislature - Congress</i> We The People: Ch 12 Reader: Issues [26, 27, 28] p. 158
Week 3	<i>The Chief Executive</i> We The People: Ch 13 Reader: Issues [32, 33] p. 192
Week 4	<i>The Judicial Branch of Government</i> We The People: Ch 15 Reader: Issues [42, 43] p. 268
SEPTEMBER 25 FIRST TEST OVER TOPICS ABOVE	
Week 5-6	<i>The Texas Legislature</i> Texas Govt: Ch 8
Week 6-7	<i>Who Governs Texas?</i> Texas Govt: Ch 9
Week 7-8	<i>Judicial Politics - Texas Style</i> Texas Govt: Ch 10

OCTOBER 18 SECOND TEST OVER TOPICS COVERED AFTER TEST # 1

Week 9 *Economic and Social Policy*
We The People: Ch 16, Ch 17 **Reader:** Issues [74, 75] p.
526; Issues [79, 80, 81] p.575

Week 10 *Fiscal Policies in Texas*
Texas Govt: Ch 13

NOVEMBER 6 THIRD TEST OVER TOPICS COVERED AFTER TEST # 2

Week 11-12 *Bureaucratic Politics*
We The People: Ch 14 **Reader:** Issues [36, 37, 38] p. 225

Week 12-13 *Civil Liberties*
We The People: Ch 4 **Reader:** Issues [21, 22] p. 125

NOVEMBER 22 FOURTH TEST OVER THE ABOVE TWO TOPICS

Week 14 *Civil Rights*
We The People: Ch 5 **Reader:** Issues [19, 20] p. 108

Week 15 *American Foreign Policy in a Changing World*
We The People: Ch 18 **Reader:** Issues [84, 85, 86] p. 609

**FINAL EXAM DEC 11-14. FINAL EXAM WILL BE OVER LAST TWO TOPICS.
PLEASE CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE EXACT DATE AND TIME.**

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT IS DUE NOVEMBER 29, 2006