Instructor: Rey Flores
Office #: Del Rio Hall - D-261
Office Phone: Please contact me through email.

Online/Virtual office hours-- Mon./Wed./Fri. 11:00am-12:00pm & Tues./Thurs. 12:30pm - 1:30pm

E-mail Address: RFlores@dcccd.edu

Please note I will attempt to respond to your email ASAP and/or within 48 hours during regular business days (Monday-Friday). I do check my email on weekends. However, please exercise some patience if communicating with me during the weekend as I may be out of town and/or attending to other business. Thank you for your patience.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. (3 Lec.) Coordinating Board Academic Approval Number 4510025125.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to help you obtain an understanding of the American systems of government and to become familiar with some of the important problems with which the U.S. government is concerned about. In addition, the course is intended to provide some basic facts on which to make political generalizations, to improve your capacity to think clearly, critically, and dispassionately about government and politics as well as to make rational judgments concerning political questions within the context of the values of American democratic tradition.
The course will provide you with a grasp of the organization and implementation of government, and the role of human beings in shaping and directing process.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** If you encounter any Technical Problem, contact technical support at 972-669-6402.

**TWO (2) TEXTBOOKS:**

TWO (2) TEXTBOOKS:


2) **Critical Thinking: Concepts & Tools**  
Author: Richard Paul and Linda Elder  
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking  
Copyright: 2009  
Pages: 23  
Dimensions: 4" x 5 1/2"  

**Student Learning Outcomes for GOVT 2305** – Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.  
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.  
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.  
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.  
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.  
6. Analyze the election process.  
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens  
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

**Core Objectives** – GOVT 2305 develops the following Core Objectives:
Critical Thinking - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
Communication - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
Social Responsibility - to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
Personal Responsibility - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

ATTENDANCE - VERY IMPORTANT: Please note this is a distance learning course. With this in mind, no attendance is required. However, it is required that you complete the student orientation survey within the first two days from the start date. This will ensure that your attendance in the course is certified.

For financial aid and certification purposes, it is important that you complete the student orientation survey located in the welcome menu course button within the first two days from the start date. Deadline to complete the survey is 11/24/15.

It is important that all of you complete the orientation student survey and establish an e-mail account if you do not already have one. I will be sending e-mails to all of you periodically; therefore, you must have an email account.

TESTS AND GRADES:

Your performance will be evaluated as follows:

10% Information/Computer Literacy quiz to be completed anytime on or before 11/26/15 by 11:59pm

*Test I 10% (Unit I) including retake to be completed anytime on or before 11/29/15 by 11:59pm

*Test II 10% (Unit II) to be completed anytime on or before 12/5/15 by 11:59pm

10% Critical Thinking quiz to be completed anytime on or before 12/8/15 by 11:59pm

*Test III 10% (Unit III) including retake to be completed anytime on or before 12/11/15 by 11:59pm

20% Problem Solving Research Paper to be completed on or before 12/12/15 by 11:59pm

*Test IV 10% (Unit IV) to be completed anytime on or before 12/15/15 by 11:59pm
20% Discussion Board Posts - see instructions and deadlines in discussion board.

*Please note you have an opportunity to take exam I and III test twice and the highest score will remain as your official score. This policy does not apply to quizzes.

A. Tests – Four (4) Exams - 10% each for a total of 40% of total grade

The educational objective for this test(s) requirement is five-fold: 1) Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States, 2) Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system, 3) Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice, 4) Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government, 5) Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.

The tests will include material from the chapters in the assigned units. You will have 1 hour (60 minutes) to complete each exam. Please note that a penalty may be assessed to your grade if you exceed the time limit allotted for each test. For this reason, I encourage you to use your allotted time accordingly. Each exam will become available on ecampus soon after the deadline of the preceding test.

(Please note: All answers to the exam questions come implicitly/explicitly from the assigned readings. With this in mind, it is important for you to comprehend beyond just their meanings, the terms, concepts, principles, etc. introduced in the chapters. In other words, when reading the chapters, be prepared to make inferences based on critical analyses of the material.)

B. 10% of your final grade also consists of an Information/Computer Literacy quiz.

The educational objective for this requirement is to teach you how to think critically and strategically about information and the processes of:

- Investigating a topic.
- Searching for information.
- Locating the information in the library.
- Evaluating the quality of information.
- Utilizing the information in papers, speeches, or projects.

C. 10% of your final grade consists of a Critical Thinking quiz.

The educational objective for this requirement is four-fold: 1) to learn different critical thinking skills, 2) to develop critical thinking skills, and 3) to apply critical thinking skills to problem solving, 4) to learn creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
The material for the Critical Thinking quiz will come from the required textbook; Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools Guide.

D. **20%** of your final grade consists of a Problem Solving Research Paper. The analysis will be graded using the problem solving value rubric located in the value rubrics link in ecampus. In addition, points earned on the analysis are based on the quality/content of your responses and how well you apply the skills and concepts found/learned through the research as well as the required course textbooks; We the People 10th Edition.

The **educational objectives** for this requirement are five-fold: 1) To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues, 2) To analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems, and 3) To recognize personal responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy, 4) Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system, 5) Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens, 6) Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

(Read more details regarding this requirement in the Problem Solving Paper link.)

A course link with instructions and details concerning this requirement will be made available later in the term.

E. **20%** Discussion Board Posts - Students are expected and required to engage in critical discussions/reactions to postings from other students. Students are expected to respect and appreciate all points of view. Do not post any discussions and/or comments unrelated to the topics under consideration. Please make note of the deadline(s) for the discussion board forums.

1. The postings will be assessed using the critical thinking value rubric located in the value rubrics link in ecampus. In addition, points earned on the analysis are based on the quality/content of your responses and how well you apply the skills and concepts found/learned through the research as well as required textbook. You can find more details regarding this requirement in the discussion board.

2. Communicating online in discussions groups and through email requires basic etiquette, and there are some basic principles to keep in mind to make this working well in an academic setting. It is required that you read and comply with the etiquette principles outlined in the following link. [http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/dl/faculty/dl_etiquette.htm](http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/dl/faculty/dl_etiquette.htm) Failure to comply with these instructions may result in an assessed penalty to your course performance and/or other disciplinary action.

The **educational objectives** for this requirement are four-fold: 1) To recognize and assume one's responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for
oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy, and 2) To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures, 3) To describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens, 4) To learn effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written communication.

Discussion Board Posts are due – See Discussion Board for deadlines.

F. There is no cumulative final exam covering the entire course.

G. Please note students will have one “free mulligan” to use at the end of the semester. What does a “free mulligan” mean? It means that if, for whatever reason, you missed a deadline for one of the quizzes or exams you will have one opportunity to make it up at the end of the semester. I must emphasize that this policy only applies towards quizzes and exams and does not include papers or discussion boards so please use it accordingly. I will post an announcement with more details later in the term concerning this policy. Please note it is your responsibility to inform me through email that you will be using this opportunity.

GRADE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN:

A = 90 - 100% D = 60 - 69%

B = 80 - 89% F = 0 - 59%

C = 70 - 79%

COURSE OUTLINE:

UNIT I: Constitutional Democracy and Federalism

Chapters 1, 2, & 3

UNIT II: Civil Rights, Civil Liberties, and Public Opinion

Chapters 4, 5, & 6

UNIT III: Political Participation, Election Process, and Interest Groups

Chapter 7, 8, & 9

UNIT IV: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches

Chapters 11, 12, & 14
PLEASE NOTE THAT A TEST WILL FOLLOW THE STUDY OF EACH UNIT.

VERY IMPORTANT: If you encounter any Technical Problem, contact technical support at 972-669-6402 or by email at ecampus.support@dcccd.edu.

Richland College Distance Learning Department - 

POLICIES:

A. FINAL WITHDRAW DATE:

If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. The withdrawal request must be received in the Registrar’s Office by December 11, 2015. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an "F". If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a "W" (Withdraw) in each class dropped.

For more information about drop deadlines, refer to the current printed Credit Class Schedule, contact the Admissions/Student Records office at 972-238-6100 or 6101 (Thunderduck Hall, T170), or contact the LEAD office.

Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure which you must initiate. I cannot do it for you.

Last day to drop a class with a "W" - December 11, 2015.

REPEATING THIS COURSE:

Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 Semester.

See Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course at http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/

STOP BEFORE YOU DROP / 6 DROP POLICY:

For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop.
You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions.

Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a "W". Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access:

https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops

CONFERENCES:

I will be happy to meet with you at any mutually convenient time; however, I encourage you to make appointments. See me to arrange details.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY(S):

Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused if you inform your instructor at the beginning of the course. A student whose absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to contract with the instructor to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalog at http://www.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm (Select Purpose)

Please note that students are prohibited from printing and/or saving exams into personal files. Any allegation of such conduct will be considered as a rule/course violation and addressed accordingly.

CAMPUS EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN:

Campus Emergency Operation Plan: Richland College and the Dallas County Community College District have developed policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies that may occur on campus.

➢ To familiarize yourself with these procedures, please take time to watch the overview video: http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv
➢ The complete Emergency Operations Plan can be viewed and printed at the following website:
http://www.richlandcollege.edu/emergency
If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Richland College Office of Emergency Management. This office can be reached by phone (972/238-3794) or by e-mail (rlcoem@dcccd.edu)

**Contingency Plan:** Richland College has developed an Instructional Contingency Plan for Temporary College Closing for On-Campus Courses. Please discuss this contingency plan with your instructor. For distance learning courses, your instructor will use email to contact students in the event of extended technology downtime. To assure work in the class continues, it is important for all students to have an accurate email address recorded in both eCampus and eConnect.

[http://video.dccc.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dccc.wmv](http://video.dccc.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dccc.wmv)

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE:**

If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires accommodations, please contact the college Disability Services Office at 972-238-6180 (Voice/TTY), visit Thunderduck Hall, T120, or go [http://richlandcollege.edu.dso](http://richlandcollege.edu.dso)

[http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/support/DisServ.htm](http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/support/DisServ.htm)

**ACADEMIC PROGRESS:**

Students are encouraged to discuss academic goals and degree completion with their instructors. Degree plan advising is available throughout the semester. Information about academic advising locations at Richland is available at under the Step 6 tab at [www.richlandcollege.edu/admissions/process.php](http://www.richlandcollege.edu/admissions/process.php).

**Financial Aid Attendance and Participation Requirements:**

Your instructor is required by law to validate/certify your attendance in your on-campus or online course(s) in order for you to receive financial aid. To meet the attendance requirement, you must *attend and participate* in your on-campus or online course(s) prior to the course certification date and continue beyond the course withdrawal date. You must participate in an academic related activity pertaining to the course such as but not limited to the following examples: initiating contact with your instructor to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course; submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam; completing an interactive tutorial; participating in computer-assisted instruction; attending a study group that is assigned by the instructor; or participating in an online discussion about academic matters relating to the course. **In an online class, simply logging in is not sufficient by itself to demonstrate academic attendance.** You must demonstrate that you are participating in your online class and are engaged in an academically related activity such as in the examples described above.
Failure to attend classes will result in loss of Financial Aid (FA). If you are receiving any form of financial aid, you should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.

http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/finaid/index.htm

FINAL GRADES:

- Final Grades for the Course: Students are able to retrieve their final grades online through the Internet on the DCCCD eConnect web-site (http://econnect.dcccd.edu) or through the Telephone Touch-tone system (972-613-1818).
- Students who do not have Internet access at home or work may also access their grades by using drop-in computer labs at various college locations.
- **Disclaimer Reserving Right to Change Syllabus:**
- The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary. The instructor has the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course or syllabus.