GOVT 2305-23010 – Federal Government
Brookhaven College – DCCCD
Department of Social Science
Spring 2015

Class Time: F 9am-12:15pm
Room: K246

Instructor: Won Ha Gonzalez
E-mail: wgonzalez@dcccd.edu
Phone: (915) 355-6265
Office Hours: by appointment
Note: E-mail is the best mode of contact.

Required Course Material


And

Dallas Morning News, New York Times or access to any other major newspaper (knowledge of current events will be essential to course activities).

Grading System:

Note: In order to receive credit for your degree or for transfer, you must earn a grade of C or higher.

Attendance/Participation = 100 points
Current Events Essays 1-3 = 75 points each (225 points total)
Exams 1-3 = 75 points each (225 points total)
Potus Memo = 200 points
Final Exam = 250

A = 900 – 1000 points
B = 800– 899 points
C = 700 – 799 points
D = 600– 699 points
F = 0 -599 points

Calendar and Schedule of Due Dates

Phase 1: Foundations
Required Chapters: 1, 2, and 3
Classes begin: Jan. 23
Exam 1: Feb. 13

Phase 2: Institutions
Required Chapters: 12, 13, 14, and 15
Professional Development Day: Feb. 20 Class Cancelled
Current Events Essay 1: Mar. 7
Exam 2: Mar. 6

Phase 3 Domestic Policy
Required Chapters: 4, 5, 17, and 16
Spring Break: Mar. 9-13
Current Events Essay 2: Mar. 28
Exam 3: Mar. 27
POTUS Memo Proposal: Mar. 28

Phase 4: Foreign Policy and Media
Required Chapters: 18, 6, and 7
POTUS Memo: Apr. 17
Last day to Withdraw: Apr. 16

Phase 5: The Politics
Required Chapters: 8, 9, 10, and 11
Current Events 3 Due: May 8
Final Exam: May 8

Technology Requirements
- Internet access (free access available in campus computer labs)
- USB flash drive for back-up storage of electronic files
- Active E-mail account (check at least three times per week)
- Basic use of a personal computer (word processing and internet browsing).
- Access to the DCCCD e-campus system. (http://ecampus.dcccd.edu)

Technical Support:
- Everything you need to know about accessing e-campus, using the tools and contacting tech support is located on their webpage.

Software Requirements (free versions of these programs are available for download on e-campus and inside the course):
- Microsoft Office or Open Office (word processor and presentation viewer)
- Windows Media Player
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- All Quizzes/Tests/Exams for this course require the use of the Respondus Lockdown Browser. This must be installed on the computer from which you intend to take a quiz. As part of the course orientation, you will be asked to view this guide on installing and using the Respondus Lockdown Browser.

Course Content
GOVT 2305 is designed to introduce students to the organization, the principles and the various functions of the US Federal Government. Together we will analyze the history, structure, changes, and continued evolution of politics in the United States. In addition, we will explore a variety of contemporary political issues as they relate to the course material. This course does cover some historical information, but is primarily a study of modern politics (not history).

This is one of the rare collegiate courses where watching television (the news) will greatly benefit you. In addition, I highly encourage you to stay informed about current events issues that are related to the course via print, televised and electronic media. These additional resources will be of great assistance in your efforts to understand the content covered in this course.

The larger effort in this course is to understand how and why the United States of America has created a vast, dynamic and complex governmental system on the national, state and local levels. Upon completion of this course, you will have the knowledge and analytical skills necessary to better understand the philosophy, structure and logical processes which govern the world we live in. More importantly, this course will provide you with the resources necessary to participate in politics and make informed decisions in the future.
Course Information

GOVT 2305 – Federal Government. This is a Texas Common Course Number.

Prerequisite: The following must be met: (1) DREA 0093 or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0044 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Reading Standard AND (2) DWRI in 0093, or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0054 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Writing Standard.

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. Coordinating Board Academic Approval Number 4510025125.

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 for GOVT 2305

1. Critical Thinking Skills: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
3. Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
4. Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Course Requirements

Exams:
Students will be required to take a total of four exams. Questions for the exams will be pulled from both assigned readings and class notes. The exams will be open note. However, keep in mind that the exams will be conducted in class, meaning you will have a limited amount of time to thumb through your notes. You will need to have a thorough understanding of the material in order for the use of your notes to be helpful. The final exam will be a cumulative exam where the questions will be pulled from the previous exams taken throughout the semester. The format of the final exam will vary slightly from previous exams. This will be discussed in class.

NOTE: the final exam will be an optional exam for those students who have earned at least 90% (585 points. Note: any extra credit assignments do not count as far as your point tally is concerned until the very end of the semester. This is NON-NEGOTIABLE.) of the available points from the first 4 phases of the semester and have missed two classes or less. (If you chose to skip the final exam because you qualify for this option, this will count as one of your absences for the semester.) Those of you who take
the option to skip the final exam will see 225 points entered for the final exam score in your course grade book.

**Essays:**
Reading the material and taking tests does not fully demonstrate your command of the information. For this reason, a portion of your grade will be based on your written work. Students will also be required to submit three short essays at the throughout the semester. All of the essays will be based on a course relevant current events topic. The essay will require you to connect course material and connect it to the current event in question by identifying examples and concepts from lectures and your textbook readings. Additionally, you should be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills by telling me if and how the current event has policy implications that may affect the lives of the average American. The deadline for each essay is the end of the day (11:59PM) on the dates listed below as well as they in your eCampus tab for essay assignments. (see calendar for details). Late work will only be considered according to the late work policy. Once the deadline passes, the grade will be recorded as a zero.

As always, the essays are to be in your own words. Each essay should rely on at least 2-3 trusted sources (Note: the standard for high quality academic sources differs for the POTUS memo project. Each source is to be properly cited in the body of your text and on a works cited page using formal MLA or APA citation format. Each essay must be completed using the formatting guidelines provided below. Detailed directions on what is expected for each essay have been provided in the guidelines for each assignment. Any additional information will be provided during the semester. As a reminder, first person tone and contractions are inappropriate in any college research essay.

**Project:**
Additionally, you will be expected to conduct a project. **Failure to submit this project will result in automatic failure of the course, no exceptions.** Late work policy and project guidelines will be discussed below.

**Extra Credit:**
Extra credit assignments may be given throughout the course of the semester. These assignments will be assignments that require written work and a strong understanding of the course material. Instructions for the assignments will be issued throughout the semester as the assignments are offered. All guidelines discussed above will also be used for these extra credit assignments.

**Attendance/Class Participation:**
You will be expected to attend each class session and to participate in discussions that are being held in the classroom.

Role will be taken every day. Absences from class will not need documented "excuses", but keep in mind that your absence will be noticed and that you are fully responsible for all work/material given during that time. Any extra credit assignments given out during your absence will be forfeited by you. You may miss up to 3 classes without it affecting your attendance/participation grade. Any more than this and your attendance grade will be determined by simple arithmetic. (Ex: 20/24 = 83.333)

**Written Assignment Guidelines**
The minimum writing requirement is two full pages in your own words (around 800 words without citations). Anything less than the minimum writing expectations will be considered incomplete and will result in a zero. Simply meeting the minimum expectation does not guarantee a C, it only qualifies the assignment for a grade. Again, each essay must be 2 full pages in your own words and generally 3-4 pages with cited materials included. If you want to earn a high grade, take the time to carefully respond to each question with research and critical thought.

- **The formatting requirements for all assignments are** : typed / word processed, double-spaced, size 12 font, Arial or Times New Roman script, 1 inch margins (default setting), and a limited number of grammatical errors.
- **All essays are to have a cover page with the following information:** Your name, course and section number, semester of enrollment, a word count and a title indicating the topic of your essay.
The word count should reflect your own work (do not include citations, quotes, cover pages, or a bibliography).

- **Each student is expected to utilize 2-3 scholarly sources (peer-reviewed articles from academic journals) per writing assignment.** There is a tool built into the course to help you obtain quality sources for your writing assignment, it is labeled “research center” on the main menu of the course. For current events related information, use a newspaper, news magazine, news website, a court case or an actual law. The course textbook, Wikipedia, internet search engines, blogs and similar items are examples of unacceptable research sources on the collegiate level.

- **Failure to identify sources is plagiarism.** Provide the full MLA or APA citation for all outside sources. All references are to be documented with the body of the assignment and on a works cited page.

- **Only your own words will count toward the writing requirements.** The writing assignments are intended to assess your comprehension of the material.

- **All assignments are expected to meet college level writing requirements;** all answers are to be in essay format and the expectation is for each student to engage the topics using critical analysis. Please do not attempt to provide simplified or elementary answers if you wish to earn credit for your work. Take the time to fully explain your ideas and demonstrate the depth of your understanding to earn the grade you want.

- **Do not use first person tones in the essay assignments.** The prompts are designed to help you think about the topic, not to generate a direct response. First person tone is inappropriate in a college essay, but may be used in discussion forum activities.

- **There is no credit for partial work.** The minimum writing expectation for each assignment or activity must be satisfied to earn a grade. Incomplete assignments will receive a zero.

- **There is a specific course policy regarding late work.** Tests, class activities, extra credit, etc. are excluded from the late work policy and are always due by the stated deadline. Late work for a unit essay will only be accepted in a case where there are extenuating circumstances that the instructor was informed about in advance of the deadline.

- **All assignments are to be submitted as one electronic file to the appropriately titled online dropbox.** Again, all pages of an assignment (cover page, body text, and works cited) are to be submitted together. Assignments will not be accepted via any other delivery method, unless prior approval was obtained. **Assignments submitted online must be in one of the following file formats: doc, rtf or txt.** Other document formats are unacceptable and will be rejected by the dropbox.

**Course Etiquette Policy**

- **E-mail –** Please allow 48 hours for a reply via e-mail. There may be periods where it may take longer to get a reply (such as weekends and holidays). Again, be patient and allow me time to get back to you. For any technical issues with e-campus or your computer, please contact the technical support team.

- **Communication Dialogue –** Personal attacks, racial or ethnic slurs, outbursts or other inappropriate forms of communication will result in immediate removal from the class and possibly from the college (see academic freedom statement). Think about what you are saying, before you hit the send or submit button.

- **Personal Requests –** I am happy to assist you with any questions you may have about the course, about the news, or even college life in general. However, personal requests for exemptions to course policies will not be granted unless there is a legitimate reason. It is a form of discrimination by the instructor to grant exceptions without basis. Any exceptions made may require documentation and will only be considered in advance of a deadline. Please refrain from asking the instructor to engage in unprofessional or unethical behavior, such requests will be not receive an audience.

All students should feel free to express their thoughts during discussion as long as their opinions are respectful of your classmates and within the context of the class discussion, taking into account the content covered that day. Disrespectful behavior will NOT be tolerated and the person/persons engaging in this behavior will be asked to leave the class.
Protocol involving food and drink is determined by DCCCD building standards. Please observe posted signs. Cell phone use is prohibited during class. Students using their cell phone in class will be asked once to put away and turn off the phone. Repeated use of cell phone will result in being asked to leave the class. Usage of laptops and tablets are also discouraged.

**Late Work Policy:**

As a general policy, NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Ample time has been allotted to complete each activity. All assignments are expected on or before the deadline indicated in the syllabus. I am certainly willing to work with you through extenuating personal circumstances should the need arise to submit a late essay. Any student that needs to submit a late paper must contact me in advance of the deadline for approval and to make alternative arrangements. You may be required to provide some form of written documentation in order to substantiate a request to submit a late assignment.

If approved, late work will be considered for up to 50% of the original value of an assignment. Late work must be submitted within 2 calendar days of the original deadline (including weekends and holidays). If the assignment has not been submitted within 48 hours of the original deadline, it will receive a zero. Due to time constraints, late work will not be accepted at the final deadline. Tests, class activities and extra credit are excluded from the late work policy and are always due by the stated deadline.

**Course E-mail / Announcements**

There are frequent updates posted in the course announcements area and sent out via e-mail. This is the primary avenue of communication for this course. Each student is expected to read the information and keep current with the course. Many frequently asked questions are addressed via announcements and some may contain vital course information. These are official course communications, so bear in mind that you will be held accountable for the information provided via electronic communications.

**Course Honor Code**

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the DCCCD Student Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Students are expected to complete all course work by their own efforts and in their own words.

When you cite or paraphrase another author, you are required to properly acknowledge all sources with a parenthetical citation in the body text and provide a bibliographic listing on a works cited page. If you have any questions about citations, contact me immediately. Any attempt to submit work that is not a product of your own efforts will result in an automatic “F” for the assignment and the course. In addition, you may face disciplinary action by the college administration leading up to expulsion from the college.

The college uses a premier plagiarism detection program known as “SafeAssign.” Since all papers will be electronically submitted for review, I implore you to avoid procrastinating and begin your work as soon as possible. Time seems to be the largest factor in a student’s decision to plagiarize. Details on how to submit your work to the dropbox will be posted in the course announcement area.

**Statement of Academic Freedom**

The collegiate environment is one that promotes tolerance, understanding, communication and equality. Use the guidelines below in your interactions with the instructor and your peers: Students are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate their comprehension of political issues and express their understanding of key points in this course. The discussion format in particular is an opportunity for students to enjoy their constitutional right to free speech and expression. This is not intended to serve as a platform for one to express their political ideology or personal feelings about a
given issue. It is a forum for an intellectual dialogue and an exchange of ideas. Again, the expectation is that you will conduct yourself to the standards befitting a college student engaged in an intellectual dialogue (both inside and outside the classroom).

Academic freedom will be protected and respected by all students and the instructor. However, there are some limitations on free speech. Hateful, sexist, racist, hurtful, or otherwise obscene comments that are intended as a personal attack will not be tolerated. Additionally, any dialogue that does not specifically pertain to the topic at hand will not receive an audience. At the instructor’s discretion, a student that violates these guidelines may be removed from the course and possibly from the college.

*Formal Assessment Guidelines – POTUS Foreign Policy Memo (Mandatory Term Project)

Introduction
This activity is an opportunity for you to play the role of an expert regarding a single foreign policy issue and offer your best advice to the President of the United States (POTUS). Take into consideration the complexity of political, economic, cultural, religious, ideological differences, etc. when crafting a foreign policy. It is strongly suggested that you use the library database at the start of the semester to begin researching a topic. This assignment requires carefully planning throughout the semester. Refer to the course calendar for the specific due date. The final draft is to be submitted via the submission guidelines identified by the instructor.

The grading standards used to assess the quality of your work for the memo project will be detailed in a grading rubric, which will be provided during the semester. Completing this activity is a mandatory component of this course. It serves as the standard course assessment for all GOVT 2305 students. Failure to submit this project in its entirety will result in a failing grade for the course.

There are four steps to completing this project:

**Step 1:** Select a critical issue in the US foreign policy relationship with another country. Try to pick a country of personal interest, which should help motivate your research efforts. Then, identify strategies that could be used to improve those efforts.

**Step 2:** Conduct research to locate three (3) peer-reviewed articles published in an academic journal (aka: scholarly sources) using the following criteria:
- **The article must be less than ten years old and a minimum of five pages in length.**
- Carefully choose those works that provide a variety of perspectives on the topic.
- For current events information relevant to your topic, you may use newspaper articles, magazine articles, government publications and other reliable sources as “supplemental sources.” That is, in addition to the 3 scholarly sources.
- Textbooks, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias (including Wikipedia), Almanacs, or an Atlas are reference materials and should not be listed in any works cited page on the collegiate level.
- Properly document your sources in your memo and on a works cited page.

**Step 3:** Submit a proposal via e-mail by the date specified in the course calendar. Identify your topic and present a bibliography listing the 3 primary sources. Failure to submit a proposal will result in the assignment being incomplete.

**Step 4:** Prepare a formal policy memo for the President of the United States (POTUS). This is the only part of the project you will turn in to the dropbox system.
- Your document should quickly explain how the President can take your advice and put it into action. He is a busy man, so keep it short and to the point.
- This document should quickly articulate (in 2-3 paragraphs) the relevance of the issue, the current policy position (citing the supporting evidence) and conclude with suggested reforms.
- The memo is to be 1.5 pages in your own words and a maximum of 2 full pages in length with citations. Keep citations to an absolute minimum. No more and no less is necessary for this activity. Failure to meet the minimum writing requirement will result in a zero for the entire assignment (no partial credit will be awarded as this is a formal institutional assessment).
- The formatting protocol for a memo requires single spacing. If you need help with the formatting, use the supplements provided for the project.
Finally, add a cover page to the front of the document and include the works cited page at the end. Submit all pages together as one file to the appropriate dropbox.

NOTE: Procrastination on this project has resulted in many students, who were otherwise passing, having to fail and repeat the course.

Fall 2014 DCCCD Institutional Policies

DROP/withdrawal policy: Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure which YOU must initiate; the instructor cannot do it for you. You may withdraw from a class in either the Admissions office or Advising Center. If you stop attending or are unable to complete this class and you do not withdraw before the official drop date, you will receive a performance grade, usually a grade of “F.” Students sometimes drop a class when help is available that would enable them to continue. Please discuss your plans with the instructor if you feel you need to withdraw. The [full drop and withdrawal policy](https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/oep/dw.cfm?use_nav=acad_info&loc=econ) is online in the college catalog.

STOP BEFORE YOU DROP: For students who enroll 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 college counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions. Remember that once you have accumulated six 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. The [full drop and withdrawal policy](https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops) is online in the college catalog.

FINANCIAL AID STATEMENT: Failure to attend classes could result in a 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.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: Students on an F-1 visa cannot withdraw from classes without jeopardizing their official status. If you are on an F-1 visa, you MUST NOT withdraw from any class without the permission of an International Student Advisor in the Multicultural Center, in Room S-136 or at 972-860-4192.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: A student shall be excused from attending classes, or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this provision may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

ADA STATEMENT: If you feel you may need special assistance or accommodation (such as help with taking notes, extra time on tests, etc.) because of any type of physical disability or learning difference, please contact the [Special Services office](https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/code.cfm) in Room S124 or at 972-860-4673.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and is punishable as stated in college policies. Please review the full [Student Code of Conduct](https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/code.cfm) as listed in the college catalog for additional information.
dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to provide guidelines for the educational environment of the Dallas County Community College District. This environment views students in a holistic manner, encouraging and inviting them to learn and grow independently. Such an environment presupposes both rights and responsibilities.

REPEATING THIS COURSE: Each college of the DCCCD charges 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 being charged. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts included courses taken at any of the DCCCD colleges since the Fall 2002 semester. The District’s policy for tuition charges relating to a third attempt is in the college’s catalog. https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/oep/third_attempt.cfm?loc=econ

GRADE REPORTS: Final grade reports are not mailed to students. You may obtain your final grades online at eConnect, https://econnect.dcccd.edu/. From the student menu, select “My Grades” under “My Personal Information.” If you are not already logged in, you will be prompted to do so. Select the grade type you wish to review. Press the submit button and all grades for the selected grade type will be displayed.

INSTRUCTOR’S RIGHT TO MODIFY: The instructor has the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course syllabus.

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. More information about the FERPA guidelines is available online in the college catalog at https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/about/privacy.cfm

IMPORTANT DATES FOR REGULAR SEMESTER LENGTH COURSES:

January 2 (F) College Buildings and Offices Open

January 12 (M) Faculty Reports

January 15-16 (R-F) eCampus Maintenance Time

January 19 (M) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday

January 20 (T) Classes Begin

February 2 (M) 12th Class Day

February 19 (R) Conference Day- day and evening classes will not meet.

February 20 (F) Professional Development Day- Friday day classes will not meet. Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday classes WILL meet.

February 23 (M) Classes Resume
March 9-13 (M-F) Spring Break- College buildings & offices will be closed for the week.

March 16 (M) Classes Resume

April 3 (F) Holiday

April 6 (M) Classes Resume

April 16 (R) Last Day to Withdraw

May 11-14 (M-R) Final Exams

May 14 (R) Semester Ends

May 18 (M) Last Day for faculty to submit grades electronically through eConnect to the Registrar's Office

May Graduation Ceremony dates may vary at the colleges depending on space available.