Course Information

Class: GOVT 2306-33420/33421/93400/93414
Duration: January 20—May 14, 2015 (16 weeks)
Professor: David L. McCoy, J.D., Harvard Law;
           M.A., University of Texas
E-mail: dmccoy@ dcccd.edu
Phone/Fax: 214-808-7080
Office: Cedar Valley College, C216
Office Hours: By appointment (e-mail for appointment)
Certification Date: February 2, 2015
Drop Deadline: April 16, 2015
Class Meeting Time: Online at your convenience using Internet and eCampus (See course
 schedule for recommended/required completion dates.)
Tech Help/Support: 972-669-6402 or ecampus.support.edu@ dcccd.edu
Tech Requirements: 1. Computer with Internet access for eCampus and E-mail
       2. Microsoft Word for completing assignments
Division Information: Liberal Arts Division, C224 / 972-860-4129 / Dean Dr. Mickey Best

“Democracy is the recurrent suspicion that more than half the people are right more than half the time.”
   --E. B. White

“The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.”
   --Winston Churchill

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 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. (To ensure transferability, students should plan
       to take both GOVT 2305 and 2306 within the DCCCD.) (3 Lec.) Coordinating Board Academic
       Approval Number 4510025125
Required Text: Anthony Champagne and Edward Harpham, Governing Texas: An Introduction
used is of no consequence as long as you have the proper edition.
I. Course Method

This course asks you to think critically about the political system in the state of Texas. The course aims to not only promote a deeper understanding of American politics but to also enable students to participate more effectively in democratic society. The critical thinking and writing called for in this course are skills valuable to most careers. In place of classroom participation and face-to-face discussion, this course promotes an ongoing dialogue through discussion boards. You will be asked to respond to frequent questions and comment upon fellow students’ responses. In this fashion, students will become each other’s instructors and will develop confidence in their ability, not only to think more rigorously for themselves, but articulate their thoughts with greater precision in the (virtual) company of others. I hope that these formal discussions will be the beginning of an ongoing and more spontaneous dialogue about Texas politics among course participants.

II. Course Requirements

To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:

1. Participate in five required discussion boards—one “Meet and Greet” and four “thought sessions.”
2. Take fourteen lesson quizzes.*
3. Take four unit exams.*
4. Complete and submit the project/writing assignment.
5. Participate in one discussion board—the “Course Review” (for extra credit).

*Note: Questions for the quizzes and exams come from both the Readings and Interactive Lessons.

III. Instructional System

The eCampus materials and your instructor are the most important resources available to you and to your completing this course successfully.

Your instructor has developed, and placed on eCampus (under the “Assignments” tab), extensive content and other materials to help you learn the content. The primary content comes from the lecture notes, UT Texas Politics website and the interactive lessons. The interactive lessons include readings, video interviews, interactive exercises, and progress checks. They also include other resources and a glossary. In addition, supplementary materials include, by lesson, PowerPoint presentations, lecture notes, matching glossary exercises, lesson reviews, and practice quizzes. All of these materials were designed to provide further explanation of the content as well as to provide you with opportunities for application, feedback, and review. Use as much or as little as you need. In addition, you will find by unit the required discussion boards, quizzes, and exams.

Lastly, your instructor is here to guide you through the course, explaining procedures you should follow to complete each lesson, grading assignments, providing feedback on assignments and quizzes, answering
your questions about any aspect of the class, etc. Note: Since this is an online class, you will communicate with me by e-mail (dmccoy@dcccd.edu) and by completing and submitting class work through eCampus (http://ecampus.dcccd.edu). E-mail me when you have questions or need help. That’s why I’m here—to help you complete the course requirements and be successful in the class. Normally you can expect me to respond to your e-mails and grade class work within 24-48 hours. While this is my general and intended practice, it is subject to changes and life circumstances.

Most of the time you spend on this course will involve the following activities:

1. Familiarizing yourself with the syllabus and course layout and reading the not-so-obscurely titled tab, meant to introduce you to the course’s organization, “Read This First!”
2. Completing the discussion board “Meet and Greet.”
3. Using the primary sources (lecture notes, UT Texas Politics website, and interactive lessons) for the content.
4. Using the supplementary materials for each lesson under the eCampus “Assignments” tab (including PowerPoint presentations; matching glossary exercises, lesson reviews, and practice quizzes, etc.).
5. Participating in four (4) discussion board “Thought Sessions.”
6. Taking ten (10) lesson quizzes.
7. Preparing for and taking the three (3) unit exams.
8. Completing and submitting a class project.
9. Completing and submitting the discussion board “Course Review” (for extra credit).

IV. Course Outline

In this course you will learn about the three branches of the government and state and local government, primarily Texas government. The lessons are as follows:

Lesson 1: Texas Political Culture and Society (1)
Lesson 2: The Texas Constitution (2 and 3)
Lesson 3: The Texas Legislature; Organization (7)
Lesson 4: The Texas Legislature; Process (7)
Lesson 5: The Texas Governor (8)
Lesson 6: The Texas Executive Branch and Bureaucracy (8)
Lesson 7: The Texas Judiciary (9)
Lesson 8: Judicial Process in Texas (10)
Lesson 9: Texas Political Parties (4)
Lesson 10: Elections and Campaigns in Texas (5)
Lesson 11: Interest Groups in Texas (6)
Lesson 12: Local Government in Texas (13)
Lesson 13: Fiscal Policy in Texas (11)
Lesson 14: Public Policy in Texas (12)
V. Student Learning Outcomes and Course Objectives

Texas Core Objectives for Student Learning

The college defines essential knowledge and skills that students need to develop during their college experience. These general education competencies parallel the Texas Core Objectives for Student Learning. In this course, the following skills are in focus.

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. Empirical and Quantitative Skills—to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
4. Social Responsibility—to include the intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

Learning Outcomes

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.

Course Objectives

At the end of the GOVT 2305 and GOVT 2306 two-course sequence, you should be able to:
1. Identify the United States and its institutions along a spectrum of varying political systems.
2. Understand the origins of the United States and Texas Constitutions and possess the ability to explain structural similarities and divergences between the two.
3. Appreciate the modern development of varying strains of political culture (conservatism, liberalism and socialism) and their relative strength and impact in the United States and Texas.
4. Explain the theory of federalism and checks and balances, and understand its impact on government processes and current policy debates.
5. Recognize the key determinants of political participation and understand the mass media’s role in shaping and informing political knowledge.
6. Articulate the outcomes of different electoral systems and their impact on the role and strength of political parties.
7. Understand the vital role played by political parties and interest groups in the United States and Texas political processes. They should also appreciate the dynamics of electoral campaigns and the ongoing debate about campaign finance reform.
8. Have a more nuanced awareness of the interrelationship of federal, state and local government.
9. Appreciate the myriad functions and workload of local governments.
10. Confidently discuss a variety of contemporary policy issues relating to all the foregoing objectives and shall possess a heightened sense of their rights and duties as citizens. Students should also be able to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of the American and Texan political systems in light of changed historical circumstances.
Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies (CCC)
The GOVT 2305 and GOVT 2306 two-course sequence allows students to develop the following competencies:

1. Reading: The ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials—books, documents and articles—above the 12th grade level.
2. Writing: The ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience—above the 12th grade level.
3. Critical Thinking: The ability to think and analyze at a level where evaluation of the information along with reflection on its significance is included.
4. Computer Literacy: The ability to understand our technological society, use computer-based technology in communication, solve problems and acquire information.

CVC Learning Signature
CVC’s Learning Signature is *One College Transforming Lives*. Cedar Valley College establishes clear expectations for students through engagement and empowerment leading to excellence.

CVC Faculty and Staff expect students to:
1. Take responsibility for their own learning.
2. Commit to achieving high academic performance.
3. Be meaningfully engaged in the campus community.

CVC Faculty and Staff expect to:
1. Provide students a clear pathway of instruction
2. Establish clear learning outcomes
3. Serve as role models and mentors for students

Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEO) in Social and Behavioral Sciences
The GOVT 2305 and GOVT 2306 two-course sequence advances the following Exemplary Educational Objectives in social and behavioral sciences developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

1. To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social problems.
2. To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural and global forces on the area under study.
3. To comprehend the origins and evolution of the U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
4. To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.
5. To analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
6. 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.
7. To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.
VI. Grading System and Course Evaluation

The grading scale is based on a point system. There are a total of 1050 points possible in this class. Grades will be awarded according to the following distribution, which corresponds to approximately the standard grading scale where 90% to 100% earns an A, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Required</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>900 - 1050</td>
<td>90% - 105%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 - 899</td>
<td>80% - 89%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 - 799</td>
<td>70% - 79%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 - 699</td>
<td>60% - 69%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 599</td>
<td>0% - 59%</td>
<td>F</td>
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Note: Grades will not be "adjusted" favorably (or unfavorably) for students who are close to the cut-off between grades. Students may avail themselves of extra credit options (see below), as insurance against close calls.

The distribution and accumulation of points is illustrated in the evaluation scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Points:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board: Meet and Greet</td>
<td>1 @ 20 points</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board: Thought Sessions</td>
<td>2 @ 40 points each</td>
<td>80 points</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Quizzes</td>
<td>14 @ 20 points each</td>
<td>280 points</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>4 @ 100 points each</td>
<td>400 points</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Policy Analysis (Paper)</td>
<td>1 @ 200 points</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Lab Rat&quot; Guaranteed Points*</td>
<td>1 @ 20 points</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total required points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1000 points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Possible Extra Credit Points:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board: Course Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities at instructor’s discretion</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>105.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exams (4 @ 100 points each = 400 points)
Each of the four (3) exams will be worth 100 points (400 total points) and includes 80 multiple-choice questions. Each question is worth 1.25 points, and you will have 2 hours (120 minutes) to complete each exam. Each exam will cover a “Unit,” typically comprising three to four lessons from the reading assignments and Interactive Lessons, as well as any other materials assigned. Exams will not be cumulative, meaning that you will only be responsible for information covered between exams for any particular exam. Exams may be taken only once. Exams are located by unit under the eCampus “Assignments” tab. Note: Occasionally, technical problems can disrupt an exam attempt. This results in a lock on the exam. You will be allowed to reattempt the exam in such circumstances on the condition that you contact me requesting a re-take within three days of the first attempt.

Lesson Quizzes (14 @ 20 points each = 280 points)
You will take ten (10) quizzes, one for each lesson. The quizzes are designed to help prepare you for the examinations and keep you on track. Every lesson has its own quiz that must be taken prior to that Unit’s exam. Each quiz has 20 multiple-choice questions and is worth 20 points (280 total points). These quizzes make up 40% of the final course grade. Quizzes are taken online and have a 30-minute time limit. Each quiz must be completed once it is launched; you can’t save it and finish later. Five attempts are allowed per quiz. You will get some different questions each time, and the score on your last attempt is the one used in computing your final course grade. These quizzes are located by unit/lesson under the eCampus “Assignments” tab in the Graded Quiz folder. Note: There are practice quizzes preceding the graded quizzes. Unlimited attempts are allowed on the practice quizzes. You will be able to see the questions, your
answers, the correct answers and the score you earn on these practice quizzes; however, these scores are not used in computing your final course grade. The practice quizzes are simply for you to practice before taking the graded quizzes, which are limited to five attempts.

Discussion Board Participation - “Meet and Greet” and “Thought Sessions” (1 @ 20 and 2 40 points each = 180 points)
Read carefully! You will participate in five required online discussion boards (not counting the “Course Review,” which is for extra credit). The first “Meet and Greet” session, where you introduce yourself to the class, is worth 20 points. The other four are thought sessions and will be centered on a particular theme and are worth a possible 40 points each (160 total points). To receive credit for participation, you must make two posts for each thought session, with each post worth 20 points. The first post must respond to the original question, while the second post must respond to at least one other student’s response by the due date. The response to another student can indicate agreement or disagreement or other comment but must be substantive in explaining the reasons for the comments. Each post should be a “micro” essay of several thoughtful paragraphs. Students who post only 9 or 10 sentences in a single post will receive no credit at all. However, this is only a baseline and does not guarantee full credit or a passing score. Please see examples/model posts from prior course participants. They can be found under the eCampus “Course Information” and “Writing Resources” tabs. Note: No late discussion board postings will be accepted or graded. Period.

Paper: Texas Policy Analysis (200 points)
Two hundred (200) points of your final course grade will be determined by completing an analysis of a contemporary topic in Texas public policy. This consists of a 4 to 5 page paper using scholarly sources and addressing one of several possible topics. The details of the project will be posted later in Information and Submission folders located under the eCampus “Assignments” tab after Exam 3.

Extra Credit (50 points)
1. One option for extra credit will be a course review (20 points). I would appreciate your feedback so I may improve it. The Course Review extra credit is located under the eCampus “Discussion Board” tab.
2. There may be other extra credit opportunities made available as the semester progresses.

Instructions for Submitting Project and Any Written Assignments
To facilitate grading, written assignments (project) must be submitted through Safe Assignment as attachments under the proper Submission Area. (The information and submission area are located under the eCampus “Assignments” tab, following Exam 3.) In your submission, specify in the title of your file the nature of the assignment, your name, and course number, including the section number. (For example, name your file “Project-GOVT 2306-3420-John Garza). Attached documents must be submitted in a recent version of Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format. Warning: Academic dishonesty is a very serious matter and will not be tolerated in this class. In all writing assignments, any quotations used must be in quotation marks and the source cited. Close paraphrasing of others’ ideas should also be appropriately cited. Use Safe Assignment to check your work for plagiarism before submitting it. Any plagiarized paper, which includes work that is not your own and that does not properly identify quotes, will receive a grade of zero. See the DCCCD policy “Academic Dishonesty and Student Code of Conduct” on page 10.

Checking Grades on eCampus
All quizzes and exams are graded automatically upon submission and the score is posted to the eCampus Grade Center. For other work (discussion boards and project), your instructor will grade and enter scores manually. After you complete and submit these items, you will see a green exclamation point (!) in the Grade Center column until they are graded by your instructor.
Check your grades by going to the eCampus Tools tab and My Grades. To view details/feedback of graded items, click on the score. For practice quizzes, you will see the questions, your answers, the correct answers, and any available feedback. For graded quizzes and exams, you will see only the questions and your answers. For other work, you will see only the score. (Your instructor will usually provide general class feedback in an eCampus announcement about the thought sessions and the project.)

**Retrieving Your Final Grade and eConnect**
Grade reports are no longer mailed, and telephone grades are unavailable. Convenient access is available online through eConnect. Use your 7-digit student identification number to log in.

**To check your grades online:**
1. Go to the eConnect main menu.
2. Select “Current Credit Students Menu.”
3. Select Log In. Log in using your 7-digit student identification number.
4. Select "Check My Grades (GPA)" under "My Personal Information."
5. Select the grade type you wish to review.
6. Press the submit button. All Grades for the selected grade type will be displayed.

For more information about eConnect, go to [http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/](http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/).
Web site address for eConnect is [https://eConnect.dcccd.edu/eConnect/eConnect](https://eConnect.dcccd.edu/eConnect/eConnect).

**CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE**
VII. Class Schedule (Course Requirements and Deadlines)

A semester can pass in the blink of an eye if you are not careful. While the overwhelming majority of the coursework may be treated as "self-paced," I have included highly recommended unit deadlines to help you keep pace with the course. The only firm deadlines are the Meet and Greet and Thought Sessions since they require you to respond to at least one other student's post. All work must be completed and submitted by 11:59 pm of the last official class day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Activity/Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit One – Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;Deadline for all Unit One Work: February 22</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 1</td>
<td>Discussion Board: Meet and Greet</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22</td>
<td>Lesson 1 Quiz (Chapter 1)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22</td>
<td>Lesson 2 Quiz (Chapters 2 and 3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22</td>
<td>Lesson 3 Quiz (Chapter 7)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22</td>
<td>Lesson 4 Quiz (Chapter 7)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22</td>
<td>Exam 1 (Unit One Exam)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit Two – Lessons 5, 6, 7, and 8</strong>&lt;br&gt;Deadline for all Unit Two Work: March 22</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Discussion Board: Thought Session 1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>240</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Lesson 5 Quiz (Chapter 8)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>260</td>
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<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Lesson 6 Quiz (Chapter 8)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>280</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Lesson 7 Quiz (Chapter 9)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Lesson 8 Quiz (Chapter 10)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>320</td>
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<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
<td>Exam 2 (Unit Two Exam)</td>
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<td>420</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit Three -- Lessons 9, 10, and 11</strong>&lt;br&gt;Deadline for all Unit Three Work: April 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Apr 19</td>
<td>Discussion Board: Thought Session 2</td>
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<td>460</td>
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<td>Sunday, Apr 19</td>
<td>Lesson 9 Quiz (Chapter 4)</td>
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<td>480</td>
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<td>Sunday, Apr 19</td>
<td>Lesson 10 Quiz (Chapter 5)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Apr 19</td>
<td>Lesson 11 Quiz (Chapter 6)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>520</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, Apr 19</td>
<td>Exam 3 (Unit Three Exam)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>620</td>
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<td><strong>Unit Four - Lessons 12, 13, 14, and Project</strong>&lt;br&gt;Deadline for all Unit Four Work: May 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, May 12</td>
<td>Policy Analysis (4-5 page paper)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>820</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 14</td>
<td>Lesson 12 Quiz (Chapter 13)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 14</td>
<td>Lesson 13 Quiz (Chapter 11)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>860</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 14</td>
<td>Lesson 14 Quiz (Chapter 12)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>880</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 14</td>
<td>Exam 4 (Unit Four Exam)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>***</td>
<td>&quot;Lab Rat&quot; Automatic Credit</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1000</td>
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See Next Page
Extra Credit
DEADLINE: May 10 and May 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday, May 14</th>
<th>Discussion Board: Course Review (Extra Credit)</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>1020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 10</td>
<td>Discretionary Extra Credit</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1050</td>
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VIII. DCCCD Institutional Policies
Cedar Valley College and Dallas TeleCollege

Warning: Students Receiving Financial Aid
If you are receiving Financial Aid grants or loans, you must show participation in this class prior to the certification date by either logging on to eCampus or e-mailing your instructor. You must also continue participation after the drop deadline in order not to be marked as non-attending in the event that you fail the course. Do not drop or stop participating in any class without consulting the Financial Aid Office. Changes in your enrollment level and/or failing grades may have adverse consequences. Nonparticipation and dropping could cause you to be in a position of having to repay funds already received and may affect your eligibility to receive further financial aid. For additional information about paying for college, go to the DCCCD Paying for College web site. Note: See page 1 of this syllabus for the certification and drop deadlines.

Warning: Stop before You Drop
If you drop too many classes without having an acceptable reason, your GPA could be affected (Texas Education Code, Section 51.907). Be sure you understand how this law may affect you before you drop a class. The law applies to students who enroll in a Texas public institution of higher education (including DCCCD) for the first time in fall 2007 or later. Under this law, you may not drop more than six classes without an acceptable reason during your entire undergraduate career without penalty. If you drop or withdraw before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a grade of W (Withdraw) in each class dropped until the seventh unacceptable drop. You will earn a grade of WF for the seventh unacceptable drop, and each unacceptable drop after that. A grade of WF will be calculated in your GPA as an F. For additional information, please see Dropping a Course or Withdrawing from College in the DCCCD catalog, read Facts about Dropping Classes and/or contact your Advising/Counseling Center.

Warning: Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course
Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community College District now charges a higher tuition rate to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in higher tuition rate with few exceptions. Developmental Studies and some other selected courses will not have the higher tuition rate charged. Third attempts include courses taken Fall 2002 and after at any of the DCCCD colleges. For frequently asked questions and additional information, please see Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course.

Drop Date and Policy
The drop date for this class is April 16, 2015. If you are unable to complete this class, it is your responsibility to drop it. Your instructor will not automatically drop you. Dropping is a formal procedure that you must initiate. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an “F”.

The drop request must be received in the Registrar’s Office by the drop deadline. (See page 1 of this syllabus for the drop deadline.) If you drop before the official drop deadline, you will receive a “W”. For additional information about dropping, see Dropping a Course or Withdrawing from College. Note: Before making a decision to drop, carefully read the ‘Stop before You Drop,’ ‘Students Receiving Financial Aid,’ and ‘Third Attempt to Enroll in a Class’ sections of this syllabus. Also contact your instructor to discuss your plans. Students sometimes drop classes when help is available that would enable them to continue.
How can I drop this class?
Once you decide to drop the class, you can drop or withdraw from classes in three ways: (1) in person, (2) online, or (3) by mail or fax. For additional information and specific instructions on how to drop, see Dropping or Withdrawing from Classes.

Class Participation and Progress
Participation is important to any class, but this is doubly true of an online course. It is critical to the course’s instructional method and your mastery of the material. For this online class (or in this online course), participation and progress mean accessing eCampus regularly, keeping up with weekly assignments (thought sessions, quizzes, exams, analytical paper, extra credit, etc.), completing and submitting class work by the deadlines assigned, and communicating with your instructor. Some current events will be covered primarily through discussion boards, and I encourage you to participate fully in these discussions. Study after study demonstrates that participation is a strong predictor of academic performance. I invite you to test these studies at your own peril.

You are expected to regularly participate in all classes in which you are enrolled. Class participation and course progress are the responsibility of the student. It is your responsibility to consult with your instructor following a period of absence or inactivity. Once enrolled in the course, you are responsible for dropping the class should that become necessary. For additional information, see Attending Classes.

Warning: If you are receiving financial aid grants or loans, you must begin attendance in all classes. Do not drop or stop attending any class without consulting the Financial Aid Office. Changes in your enrollment level and failing grades may require that you repay financial aid funds.

Observance of Religious Holy Days
Absences for observance of religious holy days are excused (Texas Education Code, Section 51.911). If you observe religious holy days that will result in your missing class deadlines, please notify your instructor in writing (by e-mail) at least one week prior to the deadline. You will be allowed to make-up the missed work within a reasonable time of the missed deadline. For additional information, see Attending Classes.

Academic Dishonesty and Student Code of Conduct
The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to provide guidelines for the educational environment of the Dallas County Community College District. Such an environment presupposes both rights and responsibilities. Disciplinary regulations at the college are set forth in writing in order to give students general notice of prohibited conduct. Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students should be aware of disciplinary actions for all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic (scholastic) dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on assignments or exams, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct as published.

Academic dishonesty is a very serious matter and will not be tolerated in this class. In all writing assignments, any quotations used must be in quotation marks and the source cited. Close paraphrasing of others’ ideas should also be appropriately cited. Committing an act of academic dishonesty in any form will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and will usually result in a grade of “F” for this course. The incident will be immediately referred to the Vice President for appropriate disciplinary action under the DCCCD Student Code of Conduct. For additional information and the entire Student Code of Conduct and Hazing, see the DCCCD Catalog.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
The Disability Services Office offers a variety of accommodations for students with disabilities or special requirements. Services are coordinated to fit individual needs. You are responsible for documenting your needs and submitting a request to the Disability Services Office. Orientation and registration information will be provided. If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires ADA
accommodations, please contact your college Disability Services Office. For additional information about available services, see Disability Services.

Class Etiquette
Since the discussion board “thought sessions” require you to engage with other students, it is imperative that you use good class etiquette. To facilitate robust debate and honor academic freedom, you and the instructor will respect the views of others when expressed in online discussions. Current political events are inevitably controversial and often sensitive. Participants in the class will tolerate the views of others even though they may heartily disagree with them. While the professor will frequently direct class dialogue, the course format will be informal. While everyone is encouraged to have an open mind when listening to others, personal attacks are unacceptable, unhelpful, and are covered by the DCCCD Student Code of Conduct by which you are bound in this course as well as all others. For additional information and the entire Student Code of Conduct and Hazing, see the DCCCD Catalog.

Tutoring
Cedar Valley College may have tutors available. Contact them at 972-860-2974 or go to Room C206. For additional information, see Tutoring Center.

Change of Personal Information
If your personal information (name, e-mail address, telephone number, and/or mailing address) changes, notify your instructor and the Admissions/Registrar’s Office immediately to be certain that you receive all necessary information. This is important!

Intellectual Property Policy
All course materials created by the professor remain the intellectual property of David L. McCoy and any use of these materials other than for educational purposes by students currently registered in this class may be a violation of copyright laws.

Caveat
This syllabus is a set of guidelines for GOVT 2306, Texas Government. The instructor reserves the right to modify any course requirements and due dates as necessary to manage and conduct this class. The intent of the instructor is to promote the best education possible within prevailing conditions affecting this class. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor and seeking clarification of any requirement that is not understood.