Eastfield College, Spring Scholarmester 2016
GOVT 2306: Texas Government (3 hrs.)
Social Sciences Division

CLASS TIMES: GOVT 2306 43434 and 93451 are 100% online
Class begins March 23 and ends on April 12

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Cindy Castañeda

E-MAIL: cindyc@dccc.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 am – 11:30 am
Tuesday and Thursday, 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm

MAILBOX: G-237 in the Social Science Division Office


The book is only available as an eText. Once you purchase an access code
you can access the book through:

https://www.webtexts.com/signin

**You must have your own access throughout the semester to complete required
graded assignments for this class. If your access expires prior to the last day of
class I will not be able to retrieve or record your grades.**

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:
All content and supplemental reading for the semester will be available via links on eCampus or Soomo
Learning. The supplemental readings may cover current events, content related reading and interesting
related information.

PREREQUISITE:
One of the following must be met: (1) DREA 0093 AND DWRI 0093; (2) English as a Second Language
(ESOL) 0044 AND 0054; or (3) have met Texas Success Initiative (TSI) in Reading and Writing standards

CORE OBJECTIVES:
Core objectives for GOVT 2305 and 2306:

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. **Personal Responsibility** - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and
consequences to ethical decision-making
4. **Social Responsibility:** to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility,
and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GOVT 2306:
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 government.
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.

COMMUNICATION
I know it can seem difficult (and maybe even a bit intimidating) to contact your professor. I hope that it won't be as difficult by the end of the semester. I am here to help you meet your educational goals. Let me know if you would like to have a phone conference and we can arrange for it together. Another easy way to reach me is to send me an e-mail message. I will answer as quickly as I can, usually within 24 hours unless it is a holiday or weekend, in which case it will take me longer to respond.

Email - You are required to have an email address in order to enjoy full participation in this class. You will be asked to provide an email address on eCampus.

Note to Yahoo! Mail users: If you do not receive email from me regularly, check your Spam Folder as email from @dcccd.edu is often routed there.

eCampus (ecampus.dcccd.edu) & Soomo Learning (www.webtexts.com)—
Having reliable access to the internet and a computer will be essential to your success in this course as you will need to log into eCampus & Soomo Learning multiple times each week. There are a wide range of assignments including textbook materials, discussion boards, PowerPoint presentations, videos, taking practice quizzes, tests, and various assignments that depend on having internet access. If you do not have a computer at home to work on, you can use the Computer Labs on campus in L-108 or locate another computer you can use off-campus. Possible sites might be your local library, internet cafe, or at a friend's house.

Grades, readings, instructor notes, tests, presentations, assignments, and more will be available on eCampus & Soomo Learning. It is your responsibility to become familiar with both and use them regularly.

***The computer lab on the Eastfield campus is located in L-108.***

If you have trouble with eCampus call technical support at: 972/669-6402 or 1-866-374-7169 (toll free). The knowledgeable folks at the drop in computer labs are not responsible for supporting this software and may not be able to help you.

24 Hour Technical Support for Using eCampus: Click on Help in the top center of your screen to access the DCCCD Technical Support Center. The center offers a variety of "knowledge base" solutions to common problems, as well as live chat with a service representative and online help via a "trouble ticket."

Soomo Learning Support - Technical support is available through the eText.
INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

✓ I believe that you value your education and that you have the potential to do excellent work. This includes your written work which will be graded on content mastery as well as writing mechanics including spelling, grammar and composition.

✓ I believe each of you has had experiences that can add to our understanding of democracy and of American and Texas government.

✓ I will try to find ways to foster an environment of tolerance and mutual respect where a free exchange of ideas can occur and we learn together even if there are divergent viewpoints.

✓ I believe that each of us has something to contribute as both teachers and learners. We will be doing a lot of work, some of which will put each of you in the role of teacher.

✓ I recognize there are a variety of learning styles represented in class and I will try to use numerous strategies on-line to make the class valuable to you. I will use written materials, audio and video recordings, manipulatives, and discussion boards to help you learn the material.

✓ Your assignments are designed to make you conduct research in order to think critically about the topic and apply your new learning to contemporary political issues.

✓ I will treat you with respect and will expect you to treat your classmates and me accordingly.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

➢ I recognize that for most of you this may not be the only class you are taking this semester, and that you have many demands on your time. I hope you will recognize the value of this class, and include it as one of your priorities.

➢ Deadlines are firm and are posted in the syllabus and on eCampus. It is your responsibility to keep track of the deadlines and submit your assignments on time or early.

➢ It is your responsibility to have reliable and convenient access to the internet beginning on the first day of class. Without this it will be difficult, if not impossible for you to succeed in this class.

➢ It is your responsibility to secure the required materials for this class for the entire duration of the class. Without access to the eText you will be unable to pass the class.

➢ I ask that you log into class regularly, spend time daily studying in order to be prepared, participate by reading and commenting on other’s posts, and try to use the knowledge and insights you gain to understand government better.

➢ I ask that the work you submit be your own, that you abide by the rules of academic integrity outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and that you properly cite any works which you reference.

➢ Academic work will be checked for originality using SafeAssign. Plagiarized work will receive a grade of zero.

➢ I expect all written work submitted to me including papers, tests, discussion boards, article analyses and the like to be written in standard written English and to follow all rules of grammar, style and composition.

Changes may be made to the syllabus by the instructor in response to unforeseen needs and events.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

All assignments due at midnight (actually 11:59 pm) on Sunday except Deadline 4 as noted. Answer every question in the eText.

Click on Course Calendar in our eCampus Course to see a Calendar View.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Day 1 March 23| Introduction to Course
|               | Read the Syllabus
|               | Complete Syllabus Quiz in eCampus
|               | Post Discussion Board #1 in eCampus
|               | Sign up for class on Soomo Learning                                          |
| Day 2 March 24| Ch. 1: Political Culture                                                     |
| Day 3 March 25| Ch. 2: The Texas Constitution                                               |
|               | Discussion Board #2                                                          |
|               | Unit Test 1 – on eCampus covers Chapters 1 & 2                               |
| **DEADLINE 1: March 27** | all assignments from Days 1 – 3 due at 11:59 pm |
| Day 4 March 28| Ch. 3: The Texas Legislature                                                 |
| Day 5 March 29| Ch. 4: The Legislative Process                                               |
|               | Unit Test 2 – on eCampus covers Chapters 3 & 4                               |
| Day 6 March 30| Ch. 5: The Executive Branch                                                  |
|               | Discussion Board #3                                                          |
| Day 7 March 31| Ch. 6: The Governor of Texas                                                 |
|               | Unit Test 3 – on eCampus covers Chapters 5 & 6                                |
| Day 8 April 1 | Ch. 7: The Justice System                                                    |
|               | Discussion Board #4                                                          |
| **DEADLINE 2: April 3** | all assignments from Days 4 - 8 due at 11:59 pm |
| Day 9 April 4 | Ch. 8: Elections, Voting and Campaigns                                       |
| Day 10 April 5| Unit Test 4 – on eCampus covers Chapters 7 & 8                               |
| Day 11 April 6| Ch. 9: Political Parties                                                     |
| Day 12 April 7| Ch. 10: Interest Groups                                                      |
|               | Unit Test 5 – on eCampus covers Chapters 9 & 10                              |
| **April 7:**  | Last Day to Drop the Course with a “W”                                      |
| Day 13 April 8| Writing Assignment                                                           |
| **DEADLINE 3: April 10** | all assignments from Days 9 - 13 due at 11:59 pm  |
| Day 14 April 11| Ch. 11: Public Policy                                                        |
|               | Discussion Board #5                                                          |
| Day 15 April 12| Ch. 12: Local Government                                                     |
|               | Unit Test 6 – on eCampus covers Chapters 11 & 12                             |
| **DEADLINE 4: April 12** | all assignments from Days 14 & 15 due at 11:59 pm  |
**GOVT 2306 EVALUATION PROCEDURES***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Tests – 7 total</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Tests 1-6 (4% each). Highest five scores will be used. Two attempts.</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding Plagiarism Certificate</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td></td>
<td>2, 3, 4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board #1</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td></td>
<td>2, 3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board #2 – 5 (7% each)</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment</td>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td>1 – 8</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All work in Webtext including: Get the Gist, Investigations, Multiple Choice, Short Answer, Your Turn and Polls. Top 10 of 12 Chapters used for a grade. (10 x 3% each)</td>
<td>Soomo Learning</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UNIT TESTS (Six highest scoring, 6 x 5% = 30% OF TOTAL GRADE)**

There will be seven unit tests in this course. All of the tests will be administered on eCampus. You may take the test at any time before the due date. Once the due date has passed you may not take the test. (All assignments are in the eText except for Syllabus Quiz, Discussion Boards, and the Writing Assignment)

- Test questions will be derived from the content that has been provided to you in this course from the textbook.
- The lowest unit test will be dropped and only the 6 highest scores will be used to calculate your final grade.
- A grade of zero will be entered for any test or assignment not completed by the due date and time.
- If you are disappointed with your test grade, be sure to talk with me. I can offer suggestions for improving your work and direct you to opportunities for increasing your study skills.

**ASSIGNMENTS (70% OF TOTAL GRADE)**

All written assignments are evaluated on content and accuracy as well mechanics (grammar, style, spelling, organization) and must be word processed. Assignments are completed both in the eText as well as on eCampus. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism and any assignments that contain plagiarism, either intentional or unintentional, will receive a grade of zero (0). Plagiarism violations may also result in a referral for a Student Code of Conduct violation.

**Grading Scale:**

For your course grade, I will round your average up to the next highest grade if it is .5 or higher. For example, 89.5 will be considered an A. You can track your progress throughout the semester on eCampus. Grades will not be discussed on the phone or through email. After the semester is over you can check your grades on-line using eConnect.

\[ A = 90-100\% \]
Extra Credit

Passing this course requires meeting the minimum expectations of competency on the basic concepts of government. Any extra credit offered will be at the discretion of the instructor and is not intended to make up for missed assignments.

Technology Statement—If you are taking an exam or completing an assignment and you experience a technology failure, take a picture with your phone or other device and send it with an explanation to me immediately. Do not wait until the next day. If there is still time before the exam/assignment deadline when I receive the email I will reset the attempt and allow you to complete the assignment within a window of time I determine to be fair and adequate.

Attendance Policies—Student performance is directly linked to class attendance. For a lecture class this means both coming to class and logging into and working on eCampus assignments weekly. For an online class that means logging into class multiple times per week. Therefore, the most important thing you can do is to attend/log in class regularly. Try to work on the class every day.

Support Services—If you have difficulty with this course, please contact me as soon as possible. I may be able to offer suggestions on reading, studying, note taking or test taking or assist you in finding help elsewhere on campus. I want you to succeed in this class and have an enjoyable experience. If there are difficulties, please talk with me as soon as possible. Eastfield College offers Academic Skills Centers, such as the Math Spot (in C-201), the LINK (a Language and Learning Lab in the Library) and the Science Corner (on 2nd floor mezzanine of the S building) which are free resources that can help you hone your study skills, improve your writing and assist with assignments.

Student Conduct—Each student is expected to conduct himself/herself with regard for the rights of others. Behavior that is rude, annoying to others, or disruptive may result in the student being directed to leave the class, failing the course, and/or being referred to the Dean. Please do not talk during class—it really makes it hard on other students as well as the instructor. And of course, it is just not acceptable for students to receive or make telephone calls, sleep, smoke, listen to music, read the newspaper, or eat during class. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in making this class one where there is an atmosphere of respect and friendliness.

Classroom Etiquette:
Keep your comments civil and cordial even when you disagree with a classmate’s perspective. A key part of your development in college is being able to disagree agreeably and to engage in robust intellectual discussions with people who hold opposing or different viewpoints.

Record Keeping—Please keep all papers that are returned to you. Although I will try to keep accurate records, I do sometimes make mistakes. I want to be certain that my failure to record a grade (or record it incorrectly) does not work against you. The easiest solution when I fail to record your work or record it incorrectly is to send me an email indicating the error! It is a great help and I appreciate it. All grades will be available on eCampus and you can verify your grades as recorded to ensure accuracy.

COLLEGE POLICIES

Withdrawing From or Dropping Class—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 the Withdrawal Date on the Course Calendar. 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.
**Students with Disabilities**—It is the policy of the Eastfield College and your instructor to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act and to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Students requesting accommodations due to a disability must identify themselves in a timely fashion and demonstrate/document the need for accommodation with the Disability Services Office (DSO). Students with a physical, mental or learning disability who require accommodations should contact the college Disability Services Office in C237. Call 972.860.8348 or email efcdso@dcccd.edu. For more information: http://www.eastfieldcollege.edu/SSI/DSO/index.html

**Absences for Religious Reasons**
Eastfield College supports the free exercise of religious beliefs. Please contact me as soon as possible about anticipated absences for religious reasons so that I may seek appropriate accommodations.

**Academic Dishonesty**—Eastfield College adheres to a strict policy on cheating and plagiarism. 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. Please remember that rules against cheating apply to homework, papers, and attendance sign-in as well as tests. 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://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm and attached to this syllabus. Please read the attached statement from the Student Code of Conduct and bear in mind the penalties for such actions. The usual minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is failure in the course and notification to the Dean of Humanities.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA):**
In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the College may release information classified as “directory information” to the general public without the written consent of the student. Directory information includes: (1) student name, (2) student address, (3) telephone numbers, (4) date and place of birth, (5) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (7) dates of attendance, (8) educational institution most recently attended, and (9) other similar information, including major field of student and degrees and awards received. Students may protect their directory information at any time during the academic year. If no request is filed, directory information is released upon written inquiry. No telephone inquiries are acknowledged. No transcript or academic record is released without written consent from the student, except as specified by law.

**STOP BEFORE YOU DROP:**
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

**Repeating This Course- Third Attempt to Enroll in a 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/

**Financial Aid Statement:**
Students who are receiving any form of financial aid 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.
The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.

★★ Thank you for your cooperation in making this an interesting and rewarding semester for all of us. ★★

A Note about Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is a very serious offense and will result in a grade of ‘F’ on the assignment. The student will be given a chance to improve their work and will receive the average of the first and second grades. A second offense of plagiarism will result in an immediate ‘F’ for the course and possible referral to the Student Discipline process.

sources: If you are not sure what plagiarism is or how to cite properly, I have provided some resources for you in the External Links section of our course’s eCampus site. This is also the point of the Plagiarism Certificate which is a required assignment during Week 1.

Student Code of Conduct

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

STUDENT CONDUCT

"Cheating on a test" shall include:

a. Copying from another student's test paper.
b. Using test materials not authorized by the person administering the test. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and collusion.
c. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator.
d. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.
e. The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the unadministered test.
f. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one’s self, to take a test.
g. Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.

"Plagiarism" shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own written work.

"Collusion" shall be defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.

Discipline

Any student violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions including suspension. A "violation" means an act or omission which is contrary to a published college regulation or policy.

Sanctions for violations of prohibited conduct …may result in suspension.