Welcome to a New Way of Learning!
You must log in and participate in a class activity by August 29 or you will be removed from class, per HCC policy!

Learner Centered Teaching & Learning

This is not your usual college course. If intrigued by the possibility of learning differently, continue on. If you are searching for a traditional course, keep looking—this one is not for you!

Welcome to 21\textsuperscript{st} century learning. As you review this course orientation, please consider your responses to these questions:

- Are you a free thinker who likes to learn, to ask questions, to engage in conversations about important issues?
- Do you like being in charge of your life and your learning? Do you take your responsibilities seriously?
- When you come across something you do not understand, do you ask questions, go to the web to get information, think your way through to answers?
- Are you interested in learning about your own learning?

Your answers are important because this class will put you in charge of learning and reward you for your commitment to your own education. As we journey through the course curriculum you will apply what you are learning to real-world issues going on around us. You will develop your thoughts about these issues and express them constructively in conversations with your classmates.

This term our learning focus will be on the required curriculum of GOVT 2305 (as per state of Texas requirements), with a special focus on key concepts and hot topics in American politics. Rather than trying to teach you everything about American politics and government (not really feasible anyway), this class will emphasize deep learning about select concepts and hot-button issues that are sure to be part of the American agenda for years to come. You should leave the course having developed your own informed thoughts about these issues.

I hope you are as excited about this course design as I am. It is a work in progress, much like a piece of art. Together we will use it, shake it out, improve it, and test it. You are my partners in this undertaking and I look forward to a wonderful term with you.

Now for a little more information about me and my style of teaching:

I am a teacher who cares passionately about learning. To that end, and to assist you in your own self-directed learning, I provide discussion postings, announcements and emails to guide you. I am easy to contact and responsive to students. I assess your learning through written assignments. I want you to be an engaged learner, a student who wants to learn more about what is taking place politically, economically, socially and culturally around us. I will do my very best to maintain an engaging environment and to encourage your active learning.

My name is Cammy Shay. I have taught American Government and Political Science classes at HCC and other area universities for 35 years. I will post some more information about me in the class—and I hope you will join me in telling your own story. I have created an area called “Introductions Please” where we can all “meet” early in the term. There are a few things about me that I’d like to share right now.

I teach full-time at HCC – Eastside Campus and through the HCC Online department. I have written and published articles about teaching and learning and I am a regular conference presenter at national teaching and learning events.
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I have the very best job in world. I am an active teacher and learner, so we will engage together often this term. I am respectful of the diversity of viewpoints students bring to this class and expect all class members to pursue learning in an online environment built on a foundation of tolerance. We will not always agree with one another. In fact, the nature of politics is that we will disagree. However, we can converse and share and learn from one another in the true spirit of democratic cooperation. Please join me in this endeavor. The health of our democracy obligates us to try our very best to engage one another civilly.

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Your next steps:

This HCC online course uses Eagle Online, a Canvas Learning Management System product. You must go to https://eagleonline.hccs.edu to find log in instructions.

The Distance Education department requires you to complete the online orientation (http://www.hccs.edu/online/course-resources/). The syllabus you will review next introduces you to the course. Once in Eagle Online, be sure to review the syllabus again.

I also recommend checking out this resource offered by the HCC Online Department. Check out: DE Myths http://www.hccs.edu/online/about-us/

I look forward to hearing from you once you are in the class. You must actively participate in one or more of the Practice Assignments and/or post your introduction by August 29 or you will be marked absent and removed from the class, per the HCC Online Attendance Policy. Please go to the “Introduction Please” area and post some information.

“See” you in class beginning August 22 (you cannot log in before then)!

Dr. Cammy Shay