

# Introduction to Principles of Government and Public Policy

Houston Academy for International Studies, Rm. 111

## Basic Class Information

### Contact Information

**Teacher:** Avis Rodriguez

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**Tutorials:** Monday afternoons 3:30 to 5:00 PM; Lunch **by appointment**

### Course Description

The Houston Academy for International Studies (HAIS)'s mission is to prepare students for active roles as global citizens. Part of being an active citizen is being knowledgeable about governmental systems and how those systems work to shape the world around us. Introduction to Principles of Government and Public Policy aims to educate students on the different branches of United States government, the bureaucratic agencies that function within them, and the impact these have on the everyday citizen. Furthermore, students should be able to utilize that knowledge in simulations, MUN Conferences, and real-world situations to become active citizens in their communities and advocate for themselves and others on issues important to them.

### Course Goals

Students who complete this course successfully will:

- Be clear public speakers and be able to engage any audience in any setting (professional, meeting, or conversational);
- Have the necessary skills to collaborate with others;
- Be able to conduct research, formulate an opinion, and defend that opinion against arguments from opponents;
- Write a well-structured and coherent paper defending a particular position

### Required Texts, Materials, or Equipment

- #2 pencil
- Notebook
- Blue or black pen
- Planner
- Charged Laptop (Laptops are used **EVERYDAY** for assignments, research, and paper construction; a dead laptop is **NOT** an excuse for missing assignments or lack-of-participation)

# Course Grading

## Cycle Grade Calculation

### *Formative Assessments: 50% of grade*

Formative Assessments generally assess ONE skill or concept. Students will complete a variety of in-class presentations, quizzes, exit tickets, Kahoots, questions in and EdPuzzle lecture, questions of the day, article annotations, paper checkpoints, research checkpoints, etc. Good rule of thumb: if it is due by the next period, it is a Formative Assessment.

### *Summative Assessments: 40% of grade*

Summative Assessments generally assess MULTIPLE skills or concepts. For this course this is mainly done through simulations and written submissions.

**Simulations:** Each cycle students will participate in one simulation that relates to the unit for that particular cycle. This simulation allows students to take the theoretical knowledge discussed in class and apply it to real world scenarios. Simulations in class will include: legislative simulation, Cabinet Meeting simulation, Mock Trial, Mock Supreme Court, etc.

**Written Submissions:** Each cycle students will create at least one piece of written work (either a memo, position paper, case brief, primary source document breakdown, written arguments, etc.). Written submissions are submissions that students had **more than one class period** to complete.

### *Professionalism: 10% of grade*

Professionalism is a category of soft skills that must be taught, and each student is expected to have mastered by the time they enter college or any job. In order to learn this skill students will receive a variety of grades based on the skills found in this category. This includes: punctuality and completion of assignments and tasks, attendance to virtual class meetings, participation in all class meetings (virtual or in-person), decorum show during discussions, etc.

## Retakes/Resubmissions

### *Formative Assessments*

Students can resubmit assignments in this category for a higher grade. However, this must be done **at least ONE WEEK before the end of the cycle** (unless stated otherwise by Ms. Rodriguez) in which the written work is a grade (i.e. Resubmissions for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle must be submitted by Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>).

### *Simulations*

Due to the nature of simulations being collaborative, simulation grades cannot be changed nor be re-taken. However, students are able to schedule an appointment with Ms. Rodriguez during tutorials to learn how they could improve in the next simulation.

### *Written Submissions*

Once written work is graded, a student may attend tutorials with Ms. Rodriguez for in-person feedback and revise the submission at that time to receive a higher grade. However, this must be done **at least ONE WEEK before the end of the cycle** (unless stated otherwise by Ms. Rodriguez) in which the written work is a grade (i.e. Resubmissions for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle must be submitted by Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>).

## Final Exam

To Be Determined. An addendum to the syllabus will be added soon discussing expectations for the Final Exams.

## Grade Scale

The following grade scale will be used for each cycle and to determine GPA points AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER. A student's GPA is determined by the **SEMESTER AVERAGE**, **NOT** the cycle average. Furthermore, Principles of Government is an **ON-LEVEL** class, therefore it follows the **4.0 GPA scale**

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Semester Average</i>	<i>GPA Points</i>
A	89.5 - 100	4.0
B	79.5 - 89.4	3.0
C	74.5 - 79.4	2.0
D	69.5 – 74.4	1.0
F	< 69.5	0.0

## Course Policies and Information for Students

### Tutorials

Tutorials are offered **every Monday afternoon from 3:30 to 5:00 PM** and **during lunch by appointment**. These tutorials are meant to assist students that are struggling in class or give groups extra time to meet and work on upcoming assignments. They are **not** an opportunity for students to come and hang out on campus. If you wish to attend tutorials make sure to arrive with questions or a set agenda.

Morning tutorials **are not** available.

### Inclusive Learning Environment Statement

The best learning environment—whether in the classroom, studio, laboratory, or fieldwork site—is one in which all members feel respected while being productively challenged. At Houston Academy for International Studies, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive atmosphere, in which all participants can contribute, explore, and challenge their own ideas as well as those of others. Every participant has an active responsibility to foster a climate of intellectual stimulation, openness, and respect for diverse perspectives, questions, personal backgrounds, abilities, and experiences, although instructors bear primary responsibility for its maintenance.

A range of resources is available to those who perceive a learning environment as lacking inclusivity, as defined in the preceding paragraph. If possible, we encourage students to speak directly with their instructor about any suggestions or concerns they have regarding a particular instructional space or situation. Alternatively, students may bring concerns to another trusted advisor or administrator (such as an academic advisor, mentor, department chair, or dean).

## Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be in the classroom for 90% of the instructional time or else they will receive an **NG** on their transcript, will not receive credit for the course, and will have an “F” calculated for their GPA that semester. This translates to a student **missing less than 4 classes**. Below is the attendance policy for students either virtually or in-person

### *Virtual Learning*

However, this looks different while we are virtually learning. A student can be marked **present** for the class one-of-two ways:

1. Student attends and participates in the synchronous class meeting. This is the simplest way to be marked present for class and the method that is recommended. Synchronous class meetings are only 30 minutes twice a week and 15 minutes on Fridays.
2. Student completes the **Question of the Day** assignment in their **OneNote by 11:59 PM** the day of class and **marks the task “Completed” on the Hub**.

If one of those two options is not completed the student will be marked absent for the class that day.

### *In-Person Learning*

Student must attend class to be marked present when we are learning in-person. However, some students will also be contending with HCC courses that may require them to travel to and from HCC campus. As such, students will be accepted into the classroom 10 minutes late and be allowed to leave 10 minutes early with no penalty **if they can provide proof** they are coming from or going to an HCC course. Students arriving more than 10 minutes to class will be marked tardy (unless they have communicated that day about an extenuating circumstance). Students arriving to class more than 25 minutes late to class will be marked absent.

## Late Work Policy

An assignment is late if it is not turned in by the **assigned due date/time**.

### *Penalties*

- Assignment turned in late **by the end of the next day** will result in a **late penalty of 20%** (i.e. a maximum score of 80%).
- Assignments turned in **more than two days late** will be accepted up until **ONE WEEK** before the end of the cycle, but result in a **late penalty of 30%** (i.e. a maximum score of 70%).
- Missing assignments will be designated in HISD Connect with a marker and receive a grade of a 30.

### *Submissions*

- Once the late/missing assignment has been completed in the proper location the student must **EMAIL Ms. Rodriguez** to have the assignment graded. The email should include the **student's name, class period, and name of the assignment(s)** that are being submitted for late consideration.
- Any assignments that are completed, but the student has **not emailed** about will **NOT** be graded.
- Assignments **WILL NOT** be accepted late within the last week of the cycle.

Students may **request** an extension with no late penalty **before** an assignment is due by emailing Ms. Rodriguez. Ms. Rodriguez will determine whether or not such a request is granted on a case-by-case basis considering the circumstances of the request, and the frequency of a student's request. **Extensions will not be granted after the deadline has passed.**

## Policies on Make-Up Exams or Quizzes

If a student is absent the day an assignment is due it is expected that the student will **submit the assignment properly** or communicate why the assignment cannot be submitted properly. If the preceding actions are not taken the Late Work policy will go into effect.

If a student is absent the day of a test or a quiz it is their responsibility to schedule a make-up time with Ms. Rodriguez as soon as possible. If a test or quiz has not been rescheduled within a week of the students' return the student will receive a **50**.

## Technology Policies:

Technology is required for this course. However, if a student is caught utilizing technology in a manner that is not conducive to nor meant for instructional purposes the student will face consequences outlined in the classroom expectations.

### Ethics/Violations of Academic Integrity:

Ethical behavior is an essential component of learning and scholarship. Students are expected to understand, and adhere to, the school's academic integrity policy. Penalties for violating the policy can include failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or other penalties as determined by the school. If you have any doubts about what constitutes a violation of the Academic Integrity policy, or any other issue related to academic integrity, please consult the HAIS Student Handbook.

### Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to this syllabus throughout the year.