WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE TITLE: State and Local Government
COURSE NUMBER: LES 205
PRE-REQUISITES: ENG121, English Comp I (minimum GPA 2.0/C)
ENG122, English Comp II (minimum GPA .67/D-)
LEGAL SPECIALTY: ☐ Yes ☒ No

I.  COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the complexity of the 50 state governments and numerous local governments in the United States. The issue of authority in the three forms of government found throughout the United States - unitary, confederate, and federal - is examined.

II.  COURSE OBJECTIVES

GOAL A: Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and operation of state and federal government

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:
A-1 Identify the three levels of government and the three branches within each level
A-2 Describe the function and responsibilities of each branch of government
A-3 List the similarities and differences between the structure of the federal and state governments
A-4 Define “federalism”
A-5 List some sources of friction in federal-state-local relationships
A-6 Identify similarities and differences between state constitutions and the U.S. Constitution

GOAL B: Demonstrate an understanding of the electoral process

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:
B-1 Compare state differences in election administration, voter turnout, and election results
B-2 Differentiate between primary election types, general elections, and nonpartisan elections
B-3 Describe the function of political parties in state government
B-4 Summarize the role of interests groups in states and localities
B-5 Compare state and federal legislation related to campaign finance

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GOAL C: Demonstrate an understanding of the dynamic relationship between law and policy

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:
C-1 Describe with some specificity the process of legislative lawmaking
C-2 Describe the interaction between the executive branch and the legislature to enact policy
C-3 Describe the factors that influence judicial decision making

GOAL D: Demonstrate an understanding of the budgetary process and financial management of state and local governments

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:
D-1 Describe the state budgetary process including key actors and critical processes
D-2 Summarize the principles of finance for governments
D-3 List various sources of revenue for state and local governments
D-4 Describe the financial relations between state and local governments

GOAL E: Demonstrate the ability to identify a problem in state or local government, research, evaluate solutions, and present a recommendation.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:
E-1 Present a clearly formulated and precise statement of the problem
E-2 Gather and evaluate relevant information
E-3 Consider possible solutions within the confines of state or local law and institutional practices
E-4 Draw conclusions rationally related to the evidence presented acknowledging potential implications and consequences
E-5 Properly cite references and sources in compliance with APA standards