WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
BASIC COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE NUMBER: POL 300
COURSE TITLE: AMERICAN POLITICS

RATIONALE:
The course provides the student with a basic framework leading to an understanding of the United States government, fostering an awareness of his/her relationship to the political organization that allocates scarce resources to society. The understanding should lead to responsible political participation on the part of the student. For those involved in business negotiations and employed by governmental agencies, the understanding should lead to greater understanding of the complexities of the interface between the levels of government and the public and private sectors.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1) The student will demonstrate an understanding of the history of the United States' system of government, from its founding through today:
   a) Examine the roots of the federal system and assess the challenges in balancing national and state powers.
   b) Examine the roots of the legislative branch and the powers of Congress.
   c) Trace the growth and development of the federal bureaucracy and determine how bureaucracy makes policy.

2) The student will demonstrate an understanding of the philosophy and rationale that drives the United States' system government
   a) Describe American political culture and identify the basic tenants of American democracy.
   b) Recognize the differences between basic freedoms and equalities as addressed in American politics.
   c) Appreciate the rights and duties of citizens of the U.S.
   d) Analyze the evolution of health, economic, foreign and defense policy in the U.S.

3) The student will demonstrate an understanding of the structure of the United States' system of government
   a) Describe the basic governmental institutions of the United States at the federal and local levels.
   b) Enumerate the powers of the various branches of the federal government granted by the constitution and those powers subsumed.
   c) Identify and describe the constitutional powers of the President.
   d) Assess the role of the federal judiciary in the policy-making process.
e) Appreciate the role of interest groups and the media in the political socialization process, the formation of public opinion, and the public policy process.

f) Appreciate the role of independent governmental bodies/agencies such as the National Labor Relations Board, Federal Reserve Board, etc.

4) The student will demonstrate effective mastery of these objectives through proficient written and oral expression of ideas through tests, projects, papers, and/or presentations.