Local governments, primarily municipalities and regional districts, have broad authority to regulate a wide range of activities in communities. They also operate many services and own substantial assets. Local governments are arguably the most visible form of government as they regulate the physical development of cities, towns, and the countryside, and take care of day-to-day services such as water, liquid and solid waste, business regulation, and parks. The way in which local governments exercise this broad authority has a significant impact on the sustainability of communities.

This course explores the parameters of the legislative, administrative and quasi-judicial powers of local governments. The purpose of this course is to provide students with an introduction to, and understanding of, the primary principles of municipal law in Canada, with a particular focus on the legislative regime in B.C. The central focus of the course will be on the diverse powers of municipal governments, and how the courts review and define municipal action. Consideration will also be given to the structural problems in the operation of local governments.

SUBJECT MATTER TO BE COVERED

1. The nature of local government.
2. Statutory basis and governance.
4. Zoning and land use control.
5. Business regulation and licensing.
7. Municipal revenue and borrowing.
8. Actions against municipalities.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Lectures, classroom discussion. It is expected that students will have read assigned materials prior to class and will be prepared to discuss them. In addition to the cases, articles and legislation set out in the syllabus, a lecture outline and overview of each topic will be posted on the course web site for most weeks.

EXPECTED EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

1. A short assignment 35%
2. Class presentation (related to the short assignment) 15%
3. A choice of:
   - Open book final examination 50% or
   - Paper (5,000 words maximum) 50%

May 23, 2018