**Wilkes University Co-Hosts Event to Educate Students on Political Redistricting and Gerrymandering**

Wilkes University, in partnership with Draw The Lines PA, a nonpartisan civic education initiative, will host an event designed to engage students in the political redistricting process. The event, “Eat Pizza, Save Democracy” will be held from
7 to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 19. It will take place in the Henry Student Center Ballroom, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre. It is free and open to the public.

The event will serve as a regional introduction to a redistricting competition sponsored by Draw The Lines PA. The challenge is to draw a valid, 18-district congressional map of Pennsylvania using District Builder, a new open-source mapping platform. The official contest begins on Sept. 17, with an entry deadline of Dec. 14. Regional winners will go on to compete for state grand prizes of up to $4,500.

During the event on Sept. 19, attendees will learn about gerrymandering, the process by which political boundaries are drawn to give one party or another numeric advantage over the opposing party. While learning how to draw their own district lines, and become an active participant in the redistricting process, attendees will play games and earn prizes.

The competition has three divisions: school, higher education and adult. The competition will be judged first in three regions, West, Central and East. Winners will be recognized at an event in Harrisburg next January.

Draw The Lines is a project of the Committee of Seventy, a government nonprofit based in Philadelphia. Its three-year initiative is to inform and engage Pennsylvanians about the topic of gerrymandering and democratic reform. Each Draw The Lines region has its own nonpartisan steering committee, made up of civic, education and business leaders from that region.

For more information about the Wilkes event, contact Thomas Baldino, professor of political science, at (570) 408-4474. For more information on Draw The Lines PA, contact Linda Breitstein, eastern Pa. coordinator, at (610) 945-7105.

**About Wilkes University**:

Wilkes University is an independent institution of higher education dedicated to academic and intellectual excellence through mentoring in the liberal arts, sciences and professional programs. Founded in 1933, the university is on a mission to create one of the great small universities, offering all of the programs, activities and opportunities of a large, research university in the intimate, caring and mentoring environment of a small, liberal arts college, at a cost that is increasingly competitive with public universities. The Economist named Wilkes 25th in the nation for the value of its education for graduates. In addition to 47 majors, Wilkes offers 25 master’s degree programs and five doctoral/terminal degree programs, including the doctor of philosophy in nursing, doctor of nursing practice, doctor of education, doctor of pharmacy, and master of fine arts in creative writing. Learn more at www.wilkes.edu.

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