

Foundations of American Democracy requirement

*Presentation to Faculty Council
September 13, 2024*

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College of Arts and Sciences

Foundations of American Democracy course: quick history

- Board of Governors requirement for graduation for all students at all UNC system universities starting AY 2025-26
- Learning outcomes from BOG
 - a. [BOG outcome #1] Evaluate key concepts, principles, arguments and contexts in founding documents of the American republic, including the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and a representative selection of the Federalist Papers.
 - b. [BOG outcome #2] Evaluate key milestones in progress and challenges in the effort to form “a more perfect Union,” including the arguments and contexts surrounding the Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Letter from Birmingham Jail, as well as other texts that reflect the breadth of American experiences.

College approach

Form an ad hoc committee of faculty to make recommendations to the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) and faculty

Committee composition:

- Gregory Copenhaver (chair) Biology
- Elizabeth Engelhardt, SAD for fine arts and humanities
- Noreen McDonald, SAD for social sciences and global programs
- Abigail Panter, SAD for undergraduate education
- Meredith Petschauer, associate dean for undergraduate curricula
- Jed Atkins, director and dean of SCiLL
- Mark Crescenzi, chair of political science
- Gary Glish, professor of chemistry
- Miguel La Serna, chair of history; Jocelyn Neal, chair of music
- Mariana Olvera-Cravioto, professor of statistics and operations research.

College approach

- Own it. Make this a quality course up to Carolina standards.
- The committee met over the summer and presented its recommendations on July 22.
- Frequent communications from the dean
- All communications posted on college website

Committee Recommendations

Learning outcomes:

- a. Identify and analyze the political, historical, and cultural impact of founding documents on governance and democracy in America.
- b. Identify and analyze the political, historical, and cultural impact of key milestones in American history on the evolution of democratic republicanism in America.
- c. [BOG outcome #1] Evaluate key concepts, principles, arguments and contexts in founding documents of the American republic, including the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and a representative selection of the Federalist Papers.
- d. [BOG outcome #2] Evaluate key milestones in progress and challenges in the effort to form “a more perfect Union,” including the arguments and contexts surrounding the Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Letter from Birmingham Jail, as well as other texts that reflect the breadth of American experiences.

Committee Recommendations

- FAD courses required to meet one of the Focus Capacities as defined in the IDEAs in Action curriculum.
- Course would double count as meeting the FAD and one of the FC requirements so as not to add to the Gen Ed course load
- FAD courses be coded as interdisciplinary courses
- Do a pilot this spring using modified versions of POLI 100 and HIST 127
- Evaluate course outcomes after the pilot
- All future FAD courses reviewed by regular process.

Course delivery plan

- Need courses for about 5,000 students per AY, including transfers.
- Anticipate that about half of students will test out using AP tests (>40% qualify now)
- Use modified versions of existing courses in HIST and POLI to meet about 25% of need (large lecture classes with recitations)
- Create new courses to meet the remaining need. (e.g. 40 courses of 40 students each)
- Creative ideas already emerging:
 - dramatic art course on “Theatre, Law and American Values”
 - music course on “Hamilton and History: Recasting the Past.”

Process

- Presentation to the GEOC on August 23, 2024
- GEOC approval same day
- Next step: review by Educational Policy Committee.
- Ongoing faculty review via the course committee of Ad Board.
- Look for our next communication very soon with calls for course proposals, guidance, etc.