

Foundations of American Democracy Proposal October 17, 2024

Proposal Description

This Proposal adds a three-credit Foundations of American Democracy requirement (“Foundations”) to the Undergraduate Core Curriculum.

Rationale/Purpose for Change

On 04/18/24, the UNC Board of Governors amended the UNC Policy Manual, 400.1.5, to add a requirement that

For students entering on or after July 1, 2025, UNC institutions will require, as a condition of awarding a baccalaureate degree, that students successfully complete a course or courses covering the foundations of American democracy.

A course or courses that is required for all students seeking a baccalaureate degree is by definition a Core course, and FSU embraces that definition.

The Policy specifies that

- a. The course or courses that fulfill this requirement must include substantively the following student learning outcomes:
 - i. 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; and,
 - ii. 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.

The Policy further states that “The student learning outcomes may be met in a single course, or each student learning outcome may be met separately in a total of two courses.”

This proposal specifies that the requirement is to be met in one course. Any course approved to satisfy the requirement must fulfill both required student learning outcomes. This specification minimizes the effect of the requirement on undergraduate degree completion. It also avoids the potential for students to complete one course of a two-course sequence and mistakenly think they have satisfied the entire requirement. Such mistakes may only be discovered in the semester of

intended graduation, possibly requiring an additional term of enrollment to complete the requirement.

To further mitigate the effect on degree completion, the requirement allows a course to satisfy the Foundations requirement in addition to any other Core requirement the course may satisfy. Students must use a Foundations course to fulfill another Core requirement. This will avoid the need to add credits to their degree program.

The Foundations requirement may be fulfilled by any courses reviewed and certified by the Core Curriculum Committee to satisfy the requirement, namely

- a. That the course include in its course learning outcomes the UNC-mandated student learning outcomes.
- b. That the course devote at least 20% of the course content and 20% of the course assessments to Foundations of American Democracy-related material, including at a minimum the UNC-specified documents.

Only lower-division (100- and 200-level) courses will be considered to satisfy the requirement.

Foundations learning outcomes will be considered course learning outcomes rather than Core learning outcomes for the purposes of assessment. For example, HIST 212, U.S. History since 1865 is currently assessed under the Scientific Literacy Core learning outcome. If it is approved to satisfy the Foundations requirement, it will continue to be assessed under Scientific Literacy. The Foundations requirement does not create a new Core learning outcome.

For a course to fulfill the Foundations requirement, faculty must submit an academic proposal using the appropriate Curriculog Form. The Task Force will issue guidance on what must be included in those proposals.

To minimize the impact on transfer students, students transferring 60 or more credit hours will be exempt from the Foundations requirement. For students transferring fewer than 60 credits, a course equivalent to a Foundations course should be accepted as satisfying the Foundations requirement, without further inquiry into the content or learning outcomes of the transfer course.

Additional Resource Justification

No additional resources will be needed. The requirement will be met using existing faculty and, for the most part, existing courses.

Additional Documents

Call for Proposals

Undergraduate Core Curriculum

Foundations of American Democracy

The Core Review Task Force requests proposals for courses to satisfy the new Foundations of American Democracy requirement created by the UNC System. The UNC Board of Governors has amended [Policy Manual section 400.1.5 - Policy on Fostering Undergraduate Student Success](#) to require that

For students entering on or after July 1, 2025, UNC institutions will require, as a condition of awarding a baccalaureate degree, that students successfully complete a course or courses covering the foundations of American democracy.

The Task Force proposes to include this requirement in the Undergraduate Core Curriculum. To avoid adding credits to the Core, a course may satisfy the Foundations requirement *in addition to* any other Core requirement the course may fulfill.

Proposals are sought for

- existing Core courses that can be adapted to satisfy the Foundations requirement,
- existing non-Core courses that can be adapted to satisfy the requirement, and/or
- new courses that could satisfy the requirement.

Although the UNC policy permits the requirement to be distributed over two courses, FSU will only consider one-course solutions. Only lower-division (100- and 200-level) courses will be considered at this time.

Proposals must demonstrate that the course

1. Includes the following UNC-mandated course learning outcomes:
 - i. 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; and,
 - ii. 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.
2. Demonstrates through the syllabus and assessments that the learning activities and assessments will lead to proficiency in these learning outcomes.
3. Devotes at least 20% of the course activities and course assessments to the Foundations learning outcomes.
4. Addresses and will be assessed under one Core Learning Outcome in addition to the Foundations course learning outcomes.

Proposals must be submitted in Curriculog using the appropriate Form:

- Undergraduate Course Change Form (for existing courses)
- Undergraduate New Course Form (for new courses)

Proposals must include the following:

1. Answer the following Curriculog form questions as indicated:
 - a. Does this course impact the core curriculum? Yes
 - b. Is this a substantive proposal? Yes
2. Include the following in the Proposal Description:
 - a. All Courses: “This course is intended to satisfy the proposed Foundations of American Democracy requirement of the Undergraduate Core Curriculum.”
 - b. New Courses: “This course will also fulfill the xxx requirement in the Undergraduate Core Curriculum and will be assessed under the xxx Core Learning Outcome.” See the [Undergraduate Core Curriculum - Fayetteville State University - Modern Campus Catalog™ \(uncfsu.edu\)](https://uncfsu.edu) for Core requirements and learning outcomes. The Foundations requirement is a course learning outcome, not a Core Learning Outcome for the purposes of assessment. New courses or existing courses that are not currently part of the Core must include an assessment plan.
3. Include the following in the Rationale/Purpose for Change:
 - a. Demonstrate how the course learning activities and assessments will lead to proficiency in the Foundations course learning outcomes.
 - b. Demonstrate how the course devotes at least 20% of learning activities and assessments to the Foundations learning outcomes.
4. Additional Resource Justification: The course will be taught by existing faculty. No additional resources will be needed.
5. List of Accompanying/Supporting Documents
 - a. Syllabus
 - b. Assessment plan (for courses new to the Core Curriculum)
 - c. Sample assessments for Foundations learning outcomes

To be considered for inclusion in the 2025-2026 undergraduate catalog, **proposals must be submitted in Curriculog no later than December 31, 2024.**