

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL DRS35053-MT-21A

Short Title: NC REACH Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Sanderson, Perry, and Galey (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE AT LEAST THREE CREDIT HOURS OF INSTRUCTION IN
3 AMERICAN HISTORY OR AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO GRADUATE
4 FROM A CONSTITUENT INSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
5 CAROLINA WITH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE OR A COMMUNITY COLLEGE
6 WITH AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8
9 **PART I. TITLE**

10 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the "North Carolina
11 Reclaiming College Education on America's Constitutional Heritage Act" or the "NC REACH
12 Act."
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14 **PART II. REQUIRE THREE CREDIT HOURS OF INSTRUCTION IN AMERICAN
15 HISTORY OR AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AT CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS OF
16 THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

17 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 116-11 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

18 "(15) The Board of Governors shall adopt a policy requiring each constituent
19 institution of The University of North Carolina to require at least three credit
20 hours of instruction in American history or American government, in
21 accordance with G.S. 116-11.5, in order to graduate from the institution with
22 a baccalaureate degree."

23 **SECTION 2.(b)** Article 1 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by
24 adding a new section to read:

25 "**§ 116-11.5. American history or American government instruction required for**
26 **graduation with a baccalaureate degree.**

27 (a) Each constituent institution of The University of North Carolina that offers a
28 baccalaureate degree shall require as a condition of graduation with a baccalaureate degree that
29 all students complete at least three credit hours of instruction in American history or American
30 government that provides a comprehensive overview of the major events and turning points of
31 American history and government. A course required pursuant to this section shall meet the
32 following criteria:

33 (1) Require each student to read at least the following documents in their entirety:

34 a. The Constitution of the United States of America.

35 b. The Declaration of Independence.

36 c. The Emancipation Proclamation.



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- 1 d. At least five essays from the Federalist Papers, as determined by the
 2 instructor.
 3 e. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s letter from Birmingham Jail.
 4 f. The Gettysburg Address.

5 (2) Include a cumulative final exam on the principles in the documents listed in
 6 subdivision (1) of this subsection. The final exam shall meet the following
 7 criteria:

- 8 a. Comprise at least twenty percent (20%) of the student's total course
 9 grade.
 10 b. Focus substantially on the provisions and principles of the documents
 11 listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the perspectives of the
 12 authors of the documents, and the relevant historic contexts at the time
 13 the documents were written.

14 (b) The chancellor of each constituent institution, or his or her designee, may exempt a
 15 student from the requirements of this section if the student has successfully completed at least
 16 three credit hours of instruction, or their equivalent, in a postsecondary-level course provided
 17 outside the constituent institution that satisfies the requirements of this section, including an
 18 Advanced Placement course with a passing score on an Advanced Placement exam, an
 19 International Baccalaureate course, and a dual enrollment course.

20 (c) The Board of Governors and the board of trustees of each constituent institution shall
 21 ensure that the requirements of this section are incorporated into the degree requirements of all
 22 baccalaureate programs and do not do any of the following:

- 23 (1) Add to the total number of credit hours required for a degree.
 24 (2) Conflict with the accreditation process for any constituent institution.

25 (d) The Board of Governors shall ensure that each constituent institution complies with
 26 the requirements of this section. No later than November 15, 2024, and annually thereafter, the
 27 Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on compliance with
 28 this section by each constituent institution. The report shall include, at a minimum, a copy of the
 29 syllabus for each course that is offered to comply with this section.

30 (e) The Board of Governors, in its discretion, may remove the chancellor of a constituent
 31 institution for willful neglect or failure to comply with this section over more than one academic
 32 year."

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 34 **PART III. REQUIRE THREE CREDIT HOURS OF INSTRUCTION IN AMERICAN**
 35 **HISTORY OR AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AT NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY**
 36 **COLLEGES**

37 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115D-5 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

38 "(z) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy requiring each
 39 community college to require at least three credit hours of instruction in American history or
 40 American government, in accordance with G.S. 115D-10, in order to graduate from the
 41 community college with an associate degree."

42 **SECTION 3.(b)** Article 1 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by
 43 adding a new section to read:

44 "§ 115D-10. American history or American government instruction required for
 45 graduation with an associate degree.

46 (a) Each community college shall require as a condition of graduation with an associate
 47 degree that all students complete at least three credit hours of instruction in American history or
 48 American government that provides a comprehensive overview of the major events and turning
 49 points of American history and government. A course required pursuant to this section shall meet
 50 the following criteria:

- 51 (1) Require each student to read at least the following documents in their entirety:

- 1 a. The Constitution of the United States of America.
2 b. The Declaration of Independence.
3 c. The Emancipation Proclamation.
4 d. At least five essays from the Federalist Papers, as determined by the
5 instructor.
6 e. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s letter from Birmingham Jail.
7 f. The Gettysburg Address.
8 (2) Include a cumulative final exam on the principles in the documents listed in
9 subdivision (1) of this subsection. The final exam shall meet the following
10 criteria:
11 a. Comprise at least twenty percent (20%) of the student's total course
12 grade.
13 b. Focus substantially on the provisions and principles of the documents
14 listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the perspectives of the
15 authors of the documents, and the relevant historic contexts at the time
16 the documents were written.
17 (b) The president of each institution, or his or her designee, may exempt a student from
18 the requirements of this section if the student has successfully completed at least three credit
19 hours of instruction, or their equivalent, in a postsecondary-level course provided outside the
20 constituent institution that satisfies the requirements of this section, including an Advanced
21 Placement course with a passing score on an Advanced Placement exam, an International
22 Baccalaureate course, and a dual enrollment course.
23 (c) The State Board of Community Colleges and the board of trustees of each institution
24 shall ensure that the requirements of this section are incorporated into the degree requirements
25 of all associate degree programs and do not do either of the following:
26 (1) Add to the total number of credit hours required for a degree.
27 (2) Conflict with the accreditation process for any institution.
28 (d) The State Board of Community Colleges shall ensure that each community college
29 complies with the requirements of this section. No later than November 15, 2024, and annually
30 thereafter, the Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on
31 compliance with this section by each community college. The report shall include, at a minimum,
32 a copy of the syllabus for each course that is offered to comply with this section.
33 (e) The State Board of Community Colleges, in its discretion, may remove the chancellor
34 of a constituent institution for failure to comply with this section over more than one academic
35 year."

36 37 **PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**

38 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning in the
39 2024-2025 academic year to students accepted for initial enrollment in a baccalaureate program
40 at a constituent institution or initial enrollment in an associate degree program at a community
41 college.