

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED THE “RECLAIMING COLLEGE EDUCATION ON AMERICA’S CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE ACT” OR THE “NC REACH ACT.”

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

TITLE OF ACT

SECTION 1.1 This act is known and may be cited as the “Reclaiming College Education on America’s Constitutional Heritage Act” or the “NC REACH Act.”

SECTION 1.2 Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding Article 10 – Required College Course on America’s Founding Documents for Associate Degree:

G.S. 115D-106: Required College Three-Credit-Hour Course on America’s Founding Documents for Associate Degree

(a) Each community college of the North Carolina Community College System must provide associate degree students instruction on the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Dr. Martin Luther King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail. No community college may grant a diploma for any Associate degree program to any student unless the student successfully completes the requirements described in subsection (b).

(b) Each community college must require each associate degree student, except a student eligible for the exemption provided in subsection (c), to complete no fewer than three credit hours, or their equivalent, in the subject of American government. This American government course of three credit hours, or their equivalent, must, at a minimum, require each associate degree student to:

- (i) read the United States Constitution in its entirety;
- (ii) read the Declaration of Independence in its entirety;
- (iii) read a minimum of five essays in their entirety from the Federalist Papers as selected by the course instructor;
- (iv) read the Emancipation Proclamation in its entirety;
- (v) read Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Letter from Birmingham Jail in its entirety; and

(vi) pass a cumulative final examination at the conclusion of the course, testing for student proficiency in the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail. This cumulative final examination must comprise at least twenty percent of the total grade of the three-credit-hour course.

(c) Exemptions for Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrolment, and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses taken in high school and qualifying stipulations:

(i) A community college may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in an Advanced Placement course in the subject of American government and passes the accompanying Advanced Placement exam, provided the Advanced Placement course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(ii) A community college may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in a dual enrolment course in the subject of American government, provided the dual enrolment course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(iii) A community college may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in an International Baccalaureate course in the subject of American government, provided the International Baccalaureate course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(d) Each community college must ensure that the requirements of subsection (b) are incorporated into the degree requirements of all associate degree programs in a manner that does not add to the total number of credit hours for any associate degree program.

(e) The State Board of Community Colleges must ensure each community college complies with the provisions of G.S. 115D-106. The State Board must annually collect information and compile it into a report on the compliance status of each community college with G.S. 115D-106. This report must contain copies of all syllabi from each section of each course that any community college allows to fulfill the course requirement of subsection (b). This report must be submitted annually to the Chairman of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House of Representatives Education - Universities Committee, the Chairman of

the Senate Appropriations on Education/Higher Education Committee, and the Chairman of the Senate Education/Higher Education Committee.

SECTION 1.3. G.S. 115D-107: Penalty for Noncompliance with G.S. 115D-106

Failure on the part of any president of any community college within the North Carolina Community College System to enforce the provisions of section G.S. 115D-106 is sufficient cause for the removal of the community college president from his position.

SECTION 1.4 Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding Article 38 – Required College Course on America’s Founding Documents for Baccalaureate Degree:

G.S. 116-315: Required College Three-Credit-Hour Course on America’s Founding Documents for Baccalaureate Degree

(a) Each constituent higher education institution of the University of North Carolina System must provide undergraduate students instruction on the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Dr. Martin Luther King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail. No constituent institution of higher education may grant a diploma for any baccalaureate degree program to any student unless the student successfully completes the requirements described in subsection (b).

(b) Each constituent institution of higher education must require each undergraduate student, except a student eligible for the exemption provided in subsection (c), to complete no fewer than three credit hours, or their equivalent, in the subject of American government. This American government course of three credit hours, or their equivalent, must, at a minimum, require each undergraduate student to:

- (i) read the United States Constitution in its entirety;
- (ii) read the Declaration of Independence in its entirety;
- (iii) read a minimum of five essays in their entirety from the Federalist Papers as selected by the course instructor;
- (iv) read the Emancipation Proclamation in its entirety;
- (v) read Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Letter from Birmingham Jail in its entirety; and

(vi) pass a cumulative final examination at the conclusion of the course, testing for student proficiency in the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail. This cumulative final examination must comprise at least twenty percent of the total grade of the three-credit-hour course.

(c) Exemptions for Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrolment, and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses taken in high school or during an associate degree program, qualifying stipulations:

(i) An institution of higher education may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in an Advanced Placement course in the subject of American government and passes the accompanying Advanced Placement exam, provided the Advanced Placement course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(ii) An institution of higher education may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in a dual enrolment course in the subject of American government, provided the dual enrolment course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(iii) An institution of higher education may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, during an associate degree program in a community college course as stipulated in G.S. 115D-106.

(iv) An institution of higher education may exempt a student from the requirements of subsection (b) who has successfully completed three credit hours, or their equivalent, in an International Baccalaureate course in the subject of American government, provided the International Baccalaureate course satisfies the requirements of subsection (b).

(d) Each University of North Carolina System institution of higher education must ensure that the requirements of subsection (b) are incorporated into the degree requirements of all baccalaureate degree programs in a manner that does not add to the total number of credit hours for any baccalaureate degree program.

(e) The University of North Carolina System Board of Governors must ensure each constituent institution of higher education complies with the provisions of G.S. 116-

315. The Board of Governors must annually collect information and compile it into a report on the compliance status of each institution of higher education with G.S. 116-315. This report must contain copies of all syllabi from each section of each course that any institution of higher education allows to fulfill the course requirement of subsection (b). This report must be submitted annually to the Chairman of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House of Representatives Education - Universities Committee, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations on Education/Higher Education Committee, and the Chairman of the Senate Education/Higher Education Committee.

SECTION 1.5. G.S. 116-316: Penalty for Noncompliance with G.S. 116-315

Failure on the part of any University of North Carolina System constituent institution of higher education chancellor to enforce the provisions of section G.S. 116-315 is sufficient cause for the removal of the college chancellor from his position.

SECTION 1.6. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, then such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 1.7. NC REACH Act applies to future freshmen classes of associate degree and baccalaureate degree programs after the effective date of this act:

G.S. 115D-106 applies to the first incoming associate degree class entering a community college of the North Carolina Community College System after the effective date of this act and each subsequent associate degree class thereafter. Nothing contained in Section G.S. 115D-106 may be construed to prevent an associate degree student enrolled in a community college associate degree program on the effective date of this act from receiving a diploma.

Section G.S. 116-315 applies to the first incoming baccalaureate freshman class entering a University of North Carolina System institution of higher education after the effective date of this act and each subsequent baccalaureate class thereafter. Nothing contained in Section G.S. 116-315 may be construed to prevent an undergraduate baccalaureate student enrolled in an institution of higher education

baccalaureate degree program on the effective date of this act from receiving a diploma.

SECTION 1.8. This act becomes effective for the 2024-2025 academic year.