

# AMERICAN CIVIC LITERACY REQUIREMENT

**Effective Date:** Fall 2026  
**Last Reviewed:** Fall 2026  
**Last Revised:** Spring 2026  
**Next Review:** Fall 2036

## Policy Statement

All students seeking a bachelor's degree at Kent State University must complete a course in American civic literacy that includes comprehensive study of the American economic system and capitalism. This requirement applies to students graduating in spring 2030 and thereafter.

## Requirements

- As part of the requirements to earn a bachelor's degree at Kent State, students must satisfy the American civic literacy requirement.
- The requirement must be fulfilled by a 3-credit hour, undergraduate course designated by Kent State University and approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.
- As part of the course, students must read and demonstrate proficiency in the following foundational documents:
  - Constitution of the United States
  - Declaration of Independence
  - Five or more essays from the Federalist Papers
  - Emancipation Proclamation
  - Gettysburg Address
  - "Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
  - Writings of Adam Smith, including principles in *The Wealth of Nations*
- Students must pass a comprehensive final exam that assesses their proficiency with all required documents and course content. Failure to pass the exam will result in a failing grade for the course.

## Approved American Civic Literacy Courses

Code	Title	Credit Hours
HIST 12061	AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS: FROM PRE-COLONIZATION TO CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION (DIVD) (KHUM)	3
POL 10101	AMERICAN GOVERNMENT (KSS)	3

## Exemptions

An exemption to the requirement may be granted by the Kent State University president (or designee) if the student has completed one of the following:

- A College Credit Plus course satisfying the content requirements and approved by the chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education
- An Advanced Placement (AP) course and examination (minimum 3 score) that satisfy the content requirements as approved by the chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education

- A 3-credit hour (or equivalent) course in American history or American government that includes the required readings listed above (this exemption does not apply after the 2030-2031 academic year)

The American civic literacy requirement does not apply to students pursuing an associate degree.

## Reason for Policy

This policy implements Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.382, which mandates that all state institutions of higher education develop and require an American civic literacy course for bachelor's degree recipients. The fundamental purpose of this statutory requirement is to foster a comprehensive understanding of the foundational documents, civic principles and economic system of the United States among graduates.

## Procedures

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

## Forms/Instructions

There are no forms/instructions associated with this policy.

## Additional Resources

- Academic Advising
- Financial, Billing and Enrollment Center

## Frequently Asked Questions

- I passed all of the requirements/assignments/exams for the class but did not pass the American civic literacy comprehensive exam. Can I still pass the course?**  
No. Regardless of the grade earned in the other portions of the course, if you did not pass the comprehensive American civic literacy exam you will fail the course.
- I passed the American civic literacy comprehensive exam. Can I still pass the course?**  
Passing the American civic literacy exam does not mean you will automatically pass the course. It will be determined by your instructor based on the requirements and grading scale listed in the syllabus.
- I graduate in May 2030 (or beyond) but started in fall 2025 (or prior). Does this policy apply to me?**  
Yes, regardless of when you start, or your declared catalog year, if you graduate in spring 2030 or later, per state law, you must pass an approved American civic literacy course in order to graduate.

## Definitions

**Academic Advising:** Advising helps students clarify their career goals, reach their maximum educational potential and achieve academic success. Academic advisors address student needs related to learning, personal development and career aspirations; recognize and respond to diverse individual needs and differences among students; and help students plan and implement academic programs of study in a manner that will ensure timely progress toward graduation.

**Catalog Year:** A term identifying the catalog that contains the requirements defining a student's academic program. Initially, it is the Catalog in force during the student's first semester at Kent State University.

**Catalog in Effect:** The University Catalog for the current academic year.  
Example: In fall semester 2025 and spring semester 2026, the Catalog in effect is the 2025-2026 University Catalog.

**Requirement:** Course or condition that must be fulfilled as part of a particular program.

**Undergraduate:** A term applied to students who are pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree or undergraduate certificate.

## Related Information

- Kent Core (General Education Requirement)

## Revision History

**Effective Fall 2026:** Establishes policy to comply with Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.382.