

HB 1740 -- AMERICAN HISTORY COURSES FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

SPONSOR: Richey

This bill requires that beginning in the 2025-26 school year the assessment tools for American history competencies shall include "document-based questions" that present excerpts of and are focused upon historical documents and that use primary source documents to ascertain student knowledge. The bill requires annual assessments for courses of instruction outlined in the bill (Section 160.518 RSMo).

The bill requires that beginning in the 2025-26 school year school districts and private schools must offer courses of instruction in the development of Western civilization to freshman, American History from the Age of Discovery through the 19th century to sophomores, American History in the 20th century and beyond to juniors, and American Civics & Government, to seniors.

Courses must be two semesters in length and students beginning ninth grade must complete all four courses before they may graduate. The bill requires that the course of instruction in the development of Western civilization shall include: Greek history, philosophy, and literature, with the study of specified Greek works; literature written by Roman authors, with the study of specified works by Roman authors; and the works of early church fathers and literature written from the Early Medieval period through the Early Modern period that the framers of the United States Constitution referred to specifically as having influenced the philosophical and political thought of such framers (Section 170.011).

This bill is similar to HB 595 (2023).