

Why We Need Oath of Office and Founding Principles Training

By Jeff Utsch

Bottom Line Up Front (BLUF):

America's civic unity and moral foundation are eroding because generations of citizens, leaders, and even military members have not been taught the meaning, origin, or moral gravity of the Constitutional Oath of Office and its connection with the Declaration of Independence. A national re-education effort rooted in America's founding ideals is essential to restore trust, defend liberty, and preserve the Republic.

The Problem

For decades, false narratives and selective retellings of history have dominated our educational institutions from K-12 through universities. These distortions—often emphasizing America's sins while ignoring its virtues—have weakened national pride and fractured the shared ideals that once united Americans.

Citizens shaped by these narratives increasingly doubt the moral legitimacy of their own nation. Many no longer believe in America's founding vision, nor understand the moral truths that guided it. Even among patriots willing to serve and sacrifice, too few can articulate America's founding ideals and why they are worth defending.

Erosion of Shared Ideals

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence—our “American Creed”—once united Americans under common truths: that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights. Today, few can recite these words, and many reject their divine foundation. Even national leaders publicly deny that our rights come from God, a stark departure from the worldview of the Founders.

Consequences of Historical Amnesia

- Less than 10% of students, professionals, or civic leaders I've taught over two decades believe Jefferson meant “all men are created equal” as universal truth.
- Projects like the 1619 Project portray America as a “slaveocracy,” diminishing the unprecedented leap in human liberty achieved through our founding ideals.
- The COVID era exposed a populace and leadership class more concerned with safety and comfort than liberty—forgetting that our Revolution was fought over representation and consent, not convenience.
- Modern ideologies like DEI, CRT, and systemic oppression frameworks divide citizens into victim and oppressor classes, rejecting Dr. King's dream of a color-blind society and moral accountability based on character.

When our leaders no longer understand the Constitution or the sacred duty of their oath, overreach becomes inevitable. The misuse of emergency powers, disregard for consent, and erosion of personal liberty are symptoms of a civic culture that has forgotten its founding principles.

The Solution

1. Teach Truth, Not Ideology

The question “What is truth, and where do I find it?” defines our time. We must deliberately teach historical and moral truth to reawaken national pride and correct distorted perspectives. America’s story—complete with flaws and redemption—is one of continual striving toward the highest ideals ever proclaimed by a nation.

2. Reconnect Citizens to the American Creed

Our founding documents: the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, should again serve as unifying anchors for civic identity. They remind us that “E Pluribus Unum” means more than 13 states united; it means one people bound by shared values, priorities, and structure.

3. Educate Those Who Swear the Oath

Leaders, military members, and law enforcement officers must understand:

- Why they swear to support and defend the Constitution.
- The meaning of that oath as a moral and civic covenant.
- How to apply the founding principles of limited government, liberty, and accountability when making decisions.

4. Quantify America’s Moral and Practical Achievements

Demonstrate the “5,000-Year Leap”—the explosion of human progress following the birth of the American Republic. Our greatest export has been the ideals of liberty, equality under law, and the pursuit of happiness. These have lifted billions worldwide, proving the moral worth of our founding philosophy.

5. Build an Army of Informed Patriots

We must empower citizens with the tools to discern truth from propaganda, challenge misinformation, and defend American ideals confidently and respectfully. Each educated citizen becomes a multiplier of civic virtue and unity.

The End State

By restoring understanding of our founding principles and the Oath of Office, we will:

- Reignite a national sense of purpose rooted in liberty, virtue, and moral courage.
- Equip leaders to act with integrity under constitutional authority.
- Heal division by reuniting Americans around timeless truths rather than transient ideologies.

Thomas Jefferson warned, “If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.” To remain free, we must once again teach and live the truths that made us so.

Implementation

It is not enough to just stop DEI and other anti-American miseducation that weaken and divide our military, federal agencies, law enforcement and the nation at large. A deep hole has been dug for more than a generation, and it will not be filled overnight. **Mandatory Oath of Office and American Founding training should be implemented as soon as possible at the federal level to everyone who has taken the oath at some point in their careers.** This could be accomplished with a minimum of 16 hours of education, but any amount is better than what we have currently. Yes, this can be done just like the mandatory toxic indoctrination of DEI of the past administration. And state and local leaders should implement the same for police departments, sheriff departments, and anyone else in the public service sector. With increased knowledge our nation will be defended and led by people who better understand their role and purpose, thus making principle/value-based decisions that will ultimately produce better outcomes.

Making this training available to public, private and home schools will expedite the goal of rediscovering and reestablishing the American Mindset across the nation.

Train-the-trainer type instruction can be implemented to qualified, patriotic educators who would lead the charge in teaching this in an effective in-person classroom setting.

Some questions that everyone trained should be able to answer include:

- What are the key ingredients that helped make America (or any team) great? Which ingredients do we still have and how do we rediscover and implement the ones that have diminished or have been lost? What effect have the revolutionary American ideals had on individual opportunity and human flourishing throughout the world?
- What does it mean to be an American? What do we have in common that could better unite us as we strive to live by our original nation motto of “E Pluribus Unum” (out of many one)?
- When have we been great and when have we failed? Why?
- Why do we take the oath of office, what does it mean, and how do we better support and defend the Constitution? What is the connection between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and what does that have to do with the Oath?
- What lessons from the founding era can we learn and apply to ourselves today? How can we better learn from our dearly bought lessons of the past to guide us in our decisions, instead of using only the narrow dim light of our own experiences.
- What is the minimal knowledge and common beliefs that every citizen, military personnel, and especially elected leaders need to know so as not to be a liability, but an asset to our republic?

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