

PROGRAM SUMMARY – SOCIAL STUDIES (RX)

Section 2

a. Describes the philosophy, rationale, and objectives of the program.

Philosophy & Rationale

The social studies program for elementary education at Oakland University is based on studying each standard in the Michigan Social Studies Framework via theories of child development. It is our belief that pupils in elementary and middle schools acquire their knowledge of the social work in a constructivist way. Consequently, teacher candidates learn relevant theories and learn how to apply them. This approach distinguishes itself from one in which the program relies exclusively on the social sciences as understood by social scientists.

Objectives

The seven objectives that follow are the same for both the School of Education & Human Services and for the Elementary Education program. Courses within the Elementary Education program are responsible for all goals; however, each course has been assigned primary responsibility for specific goals. The first goal is achieved through the Social Studies major/minor courses. Goals 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 are primary responsibility of EED 470, Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School. They guide course development and appear in the course syllabus:

1. Knowledge Base: Demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.
2. Performance Excellence: Demonstrates appropriate teaching practices including effective communication and classroom/group management skills.
3. Diversity and Collaboration: Demonstrates respect and value for human diversity and the ability to work with others (parents, colleagues, and community professionals) to meet the needs of diverse populations.
4. Technology: Demonstrates an ability to use information technology to enhance student and personal learning and productivity.
5. Continuous Improvement: Uses assessment to evaluate and improve student learning and personal professional performance.
6. Conceptual Framework: Articulates a personal conceptual framework or philosophy based on research, best practice, and reflection when speaking to current educational issues.
7. Leadership and Outreach: Demonstrate an intention to continue professional growth and make on-going contributions to the profession

b. Describes the sequence of courses and/or experiences so that candidates develop an understanding of the structures, skills, core concepts, ideas, values, facts, methods of inquiry, and uses of technology.

Before entering into the elementary education program candidates must complete *IST 396: Educational Uses of Microcomputers and Related Technologies*. This is a basic microcomputer course. It focuses on educational applications. It prepares teacher candidates to use microcomputers and related technologies for career and personal goals.

In *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate competence in using information technology to both inform and enhance their developing teaching practices.

c. Describes how candidates are prepared to utilize a variety of instructional approaches to address the various learning styles of students.

Upon admission into the elementary education program candidates must complete *FE215: Educational Psychology for Elementary Teachers*. This course incorporates and places into perspective learning theories, developmental theories, biological theories and evaluation, with emphasis on the effects of varied qualities of experience during childhood and early adolescence.

As they consider and develop their repertoire of strategies for teaching social studies, teacher candidates in *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* are expected to demonstrate an awareness of the needs of students with diverse learning styles.

d. Describe any differences that may exist between elementary or secondary preparation to teach in each major or minor area (e.g. instructional resources, field placements, instructional techniques).

Oakland University does not offer teacher certification in secondary social studies.

e. Describes how the program incorporates gender equity, multi-cultural, and global perspectives into the teaching of the subject area.

In order to obtain a minor in social studies education at Oakland University, a teacher candidate must take a number of courses that relate to gender equity, multi-cultural, and global perspectives in social studies. *GEO 210: Introduction to China*, *GEO 210: Introduction to Japan*, *GEO 230: Introduction to Africa*, and *GEO 250 Introduction to Latin America*, all satisfy the university's general education requirement in international studies. *HST 114: Introduction to American History Before 1877* and *HST 115: Introduction to American History since 1877* are both required courses for the elementary education candidate who seeks a social studies minor. Each of these two courses satisfies the university's ethnic diversity requirement.

Upon admission into the elementary education program candidates enroll in *EED 420: Interaction Lab for Teacher Development*. This course acquaints them with the importance of human interactive skills, including sensitivity to cultural differences. It provides understanding of the flexible line separating personal and professional behavior. It examines classroom management objectives and strategies. It includes student involvement in role-playing and action-oriented problem solving.

Teacher candidates in *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* are expected to use global and multicultural perspectives to critique and enrich social studies curricula.

f. Describes how the program covers multiple methods of student assessment appropriate to the content area.

Upon admission into the elementary education program candidates must complete *EED 354: Instructional Design and Assessment for Teachers*. This course prepares prospective teachers to design instruction based on best practices including effective use of formal and informal teacher-created assessment techniques in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating instruction based on standards and benchmarks.

Teacher candidates in *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of multiple forms of assessment as they apply to learning content and skills in the social studies.

Section 4

b. Content (Michigan Test for Teacher Certification pass rates)

Full-time social studies faculty members study the pass-fail rate for students who report their MTTC results in social studies to Oakland University. Even though we are unable to distinguish between students who have taken their teaching major/minor at Oakland (rather than at other universities and community colleges), their scores are analyzed as if social studies content courses were taken at Oakland. If more than 25% fail in any of the four quarterly administrations of the MTTC, the elementary social studies faculty reviews courses that comprise the teaching major/minor.

We would find it useful if the data were available in other formats from the MDE other than how they are currently presented. We would be interested in finding out the scores of particular students who had completed all of their course work within our institution. We would like to be able to examine scores by area performance such as history, geography, civics and economics. We would also like to be able to compare students' test performances to grades in their respective courses.

In recent years the number of Oakland University students reporting scores on the MTTC for social studies has increased dramatically. Whereas eight students reported their scores in the academic year 1996, in the 2000 academic year 87 reports were made. Pass rates on the social studies test across those and intervening years were 88%, 88%, 87%, 79%, and 86%.

Section 5

a. Field Experiences

Entry to *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* requires that teacher candidates have completed three semesters of 30 hours in schools. They are required to prepare and teach social studies lessons in their field placement classrooms as a part of course requirements in EED 470.

c. Collaboration

The Instructors of *EED 470: Teaching Social Studies at the Elementary-Middle Levels* work with **Junior Achievement of Southeastern Michigan Inc.** to ensure that all student candidates have seen the materials that are available to them through that organization. Junior Achievement is a non-profit organization designed to provide young people with the necessary skills to advance successfully in the business world. It endeavors “to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise, business and economics in order to improve the quality of their lives.” (Information on the Junior Achievement Program is available at www.ja.org). Teacher candidates have the option of teaching Junior Achievement lessons in their field placement schools.