

SOCIAL STUDIES

What is Social Studies?

What is Social Studies? Is it history? Geography? Current events? Well, yes, it is all these things and more. According to the National Council for the Social Studies, “Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.” The Unit 5 Social Studies Department agrees with the National Council’s definition, and we also adopt the following statement of purpose:

The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

What goes on in Social Studies classes?

Clearly, social studies is much more than the dry memorization of facts and dates. We believe that in order for students to become effective citizens, they must do more than sit passively in our classrooms. We want students to be actively and thoughtfully involved. Visit a social studies class and you are likely to observe students doing a variety of things, such as: analyzing and making maps, debating controversial issues, participating in a mock trial, asking questions of a guest speaker from another country, defining important ideas like justice, courage and interdependence, role-playing in simulations of historical events, and so on.

Who takes Social Studies courses?

Since all students will soon assume the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship, social studies is for everyone. We are very proud of the fact that our students receive high scores on achievement tests. We are also proud that so many of our graduates do well in social studies related fields in colleges, but these are by-products of our primary goal, which is to develop good citizens. There is no tracking in the social studies program, and we work hard to successfully challenge all students in a diverse classroom environment.

What are the Social Studies courses, and when should they be taken?

The courses in the social studies program reflect our intent to provide a varied and comprehensive curriculum. Students are required to earn two credits of social studies for graduation. Most students, especially those considering college, will earn three credits and many will earn four.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- About 90% of ninth grade students will enroll in REGIONAL WORLD STUDIES (1 credit), a study of both world history and world geography.
- All students are required to take U.S. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY (1/2 credit) and U.S. SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY (1/2 credit). Nearly all students take these courses as tenth grade students.
- Several challenging and interesting elective social studies courses are available for eleventh and twelfth grade students: GEOGRAPHY, PSYCHOLOGY, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, SOCIAL ISSUES, ECONOMICS and SOCIOLOGY.
- During the second semester of the junior or senior year, qualified students may choose assisted study for an Advanced Placement exam in a social studies related field by enrolling in a specific AP course.

What is the Social Studies Club?

In addition to the courses in the curriculum, the teachers at each high school sponsor active Social Studies Clubs. The clubs, which are open to all students, provide opportunities for students to learn more about social studies, to volunteer to serve the wider community and to have fun. Popular activities include visiting nursing homes on the holidays, participating in “make a difference day,” conducting mock elections, observing state government in Springfield, playing kickball and challenging the faculty in Trivia Pursuit.

Who are the Social Studies teachers?

The teachers in the Social Studies Department are dedicated, hard-working professionals. We enjoy the subjects we teach, but more importantly, we care about our students. We want each student to reach his or her full potential as a thoughtful, informed and responsible person.



SOCIAL STUDIES

SOC 103 REGIONAL WORLD STUDIES (Yearly 1 Credit) (9)

In this course, 9th grade students study about people, places and events in different parts of the world. Three major goals of the course are for students to (1) learn about the history of major world regions--Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and South America; (2) learn about the geography of these regions; and (3) gain a better understanding of world issues and problems.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

SOC 133 REGIONAL WORLD STUDIES (Yearly 1 Credit)

ENG 221 WRITTEN & ORAL COMMUNICATION (Semester 1/2 Credit)

ENG 162 LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION (Semester 1/2 Credit) (9)

The purpose for offering block scheduled classes is to reduce the number of courses students are taking at one time and to provide longer class periods for discussions and activities. Students selecting this option will alternately be enrolled in Regional World Studies and Written and Oral Communication for two class periods for nine weeks during the first semester and Regional World Studies and Literature and Composition for the second semester. See the descriptions of the individual courses to determine the content and objectives of the courses.

*** COMBINED CLASS ***

SOC 143 REGIONAL WORLD STUDIES ENG 143 WRITTEN & ORAL COMMUNICATION LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION (Yearly 2 Credits) (9)

This class is designed to integrate the material from social studies, literature and written and oral communication classes. Taking a multicultural, multi-sensory approach (including field trips), this team-taught class considers the material of the courses through a thematic approach. Themes studied include religion/death, war, the arts, romance/marriage, etc. This class meets for two periods each day with two teachers for the entire year. Enrollment is limited to one section.

SOC 201/202 U.S. POLITICAL & ECON. HISTORY (Semester 1/2 Credit) (10, 11, 12)

In this course, students study the history of three major topics: American foreign policy and wars, American capitalism, and the U.S. Bill of Rights. As students study these topics, they examine important historical, constitutional and ethical issues related to each topic. This

course is required for graduation along with U.S. Social and Geographic History.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

SOC 241 U.S. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (10)

ENG 241 AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION I

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (10)

In this course, students will be enrolled in either U.S. Political and Economic History or American Literature and Composition I for two class periods for nine weeks. At the end of nine weeks, students will be enrolled in the other course for the second nine weeks of the regular semester. The purpose for offering Block courses is to reduce the number of courses students are taking at one time and to provide longer class periods for discussions and activities. A reminder: one semester of work will be completed in nine weeks. See the descriptions of the individual courses to determine their content and objectives.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

SOC 242 U.S. SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY

(Semester 1/2 Credit)

ENG 242 AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION II

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (10)

In this course, students will be enrolled in either U.S. Social and Geographic History of American Literature and Composition II for two class periods for nine weeks. At the end of nine weeks, students will be enrolled in the other course for the second nine weeks of the regular semester. The purpose for offering Block courses is to reduce the number of courses students are taking at one time and to provide longer class periods for discussions and activities. A reminder: one semester of work will be completed in nine weeks. See the descriptions of the individual courses to determine their content and objectives.

SOC 251/252 U.S. SOCIAL & GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY (Semester 1/2 Credit) (10, 11, 12)

In this course, students study the history of three major topics: the American family and social life, settlement and land use patterns in American history, and race relations in American history. As students study these topics, they examine important historical, constitutional and ethical issues related to each topic. This course is required for graduation along with U.S. Political and Economic History.

SOCIAL STUDIES

*** COMBINED CLASS ***

SOC 283 U.S. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY
U.S. SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY

ENG 283 AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION I
AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION II

(Yearly 2 Credits) (10)

Prerequisite: 9th Grade English

This one-year course integrates themes of American Literature with U.S. History topics. The course is team-taught and examines war, settlement, race and gender relations, individual rights and responsibilities, courage, economic change and conflict, and the issues of rebellion. Students meet with two teachers in small and large group settings for two consecutive periods each day for the entire year. Enrollment is limited to one section.

SOC 301/302 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS **(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)**

The purpose of International Relations is for students to study the conflicts and relationships among the nations of the world during the Twentieth Century. Particular emphasis is placed on analyzing the foreign policy of the United States and our role in shaping the world order. Students study and defend positions on a variety of contemporary foreign policy issues.

SOC 401/402 GEOGRAPHY **(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)**

The purpose of Geography is to help students understand the physical and cultural features of places and their natural settings on the surface of the Earth. Students will learn to identify geographical patterns, to recognize and understand relationships between people, places, and environments, to acquire and use geographic skills, and to apply geographic perspectives to life situations. Students use the geographer's tools (maps, globes, aerial photographs) and participate in field studies.



BLOCK SCHEDULE

SOC 451 PSYCHOLOGY

(Semester 1/2 Credit)

ENG 451 GEMS OF LITERATURE I

(Semester 1/2 Credit) - 1st Semester Only (11)

In this course, students will be enrolled in either Psychology or Gems of Literature for two class periods for nine weeks. At the end of nine weeks, students will be enrolled in the other course for the second nine weeks of the regular semester. The purpose for offering block courses is to reduce the number of courses students are taking at one time and to provide longer class periods for discussions and activities. See the descriptions of the individual courses to determine their content and objectives of the courses.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

SOC 452 SOCIOLOGY

(Semester 1/2 Credit)

ENG 452 GEMS OF LITERATURE II

(Semester 1/2 Credit) - 2nd Semester Only (11)

In this course, students will be enrolled in either Sociology or Conflicts in Literature for two class periods for nine weeks. At the end of nine weeks, students will be enrolled in the other course for the second nine weeks of the regular semester. The purpose for offering block courses is to reduce the number of courses students are taking at one time and to provide longer class periods for discussions and activities. See the descriptions of the individual courses to determine their content and objectives of the courses.

SOC 501/502 SOCIAL ISSUES

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)

The basic purpose of this course is to help students gain a better understanding of social issues and the ability to make intelligent decisions regarding social policy and personal behavior. Issues to be studied will vary with student interest and contemporary concerns. Skills, such as decision-making, logical thinking and value analysis will be stressed.

SOC 601/602 PSYCHOLOGY

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)

Psychology is the study of how biological and environmental factors influence individual behavior. In order to gain a "psychological" perspective for describing and explaining why people act the way they do, students examine a variety of psychological theories and research related to perception, development, personality and psychological disorders. Students also learn to "do" psychology by becoming familiar with and utilizing the methods of psychological research.

SOCIAL STUDIES

SOC 701/702 SOCIOLOGY

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)

Sociology is the study of group behavior, including similarities and differences in culture, changes in society, group organization and interaction, and social conflict. A special focus is placed on the influence of society on the individual in terms of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior.

SOC 801/802 ECONOMICS

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)

This course includes a variety of topics related to the study of economics, in general, and the American economic system, in particular. Economics is intended to be helpful for college-bound students as an introductory course in economic theory and also to be helpful to non-college bound students in understanding our economic system and living more efficiently.



ADVANCED PLACEMENT SOCIAL STUDIES OPTIONS

(Semester 1/2 Credit) (11, 12)

The Social Studies Department Advanced Placement program is a unique opportunity for students to complete work toward the May AP Test. Since there are multiple Social Studies AP tests, the department offers students the opportunity to pursue a variety of test topics. Each class is a continuation of the prerequisite course(s). Topics studied will be those recommended by the College Board for each AP program. Students enrolled in the classes will develop a plan of action with the instructor to complete a course of study focused on AP test preparation. The AP instructor or Social Studies Department Building Chair can provide further information about each course. A student may select this option in both the junior and senior year.

General Prerequisites (apply to each course):

- 1) Earned at least 2.5 credits in Social Studies
- 2) Grade average at least 4.0 in previous Social Studies classes.
- 3) Successfully completed the specific preliminary course as listed below with a grade of A or B
- 4) Or consent of social studies building chair and associate principal

Specific Prerequisites:

SOC 612 AP Psychology
(Completed Psychology)

SOC 812 AP Macroeconomics
(Completed Economics)

SOC 852 AP U.S. History
(Completed U.S. Social & Geographic History AND U.S. Political & Economic History)

SOC 862 AP Government & Politics U.S.
(Completed U.S. Social & Geographic History AND U.S. Political & Economic History)

SOC 912 AP Geography
(Completed Geography)