

Social Studies Adolescent Education

Goals and Philosophy

The Queens College pre-service social studies program in the Department of Secondary Education is committed to a goal of preparing critically minded prospective teachers who are knowledgeable in the history and social science fields they have chosen as their major and minors, and who are skilful practitioners of instruction balancing content and process to achieve thoughtfully formulated didactic, reflective, and affective goals for student learning. We seek to prepare prospective teachers who, whatever their specific major, are capable of stimulating and guiding their middle and secondary students to identify, analyze, and reflect on essential themes of American and World History, and the other social sciences which Social Studies draws upon. In the process of developing the intellectual, academic, social, and technological skills, secondary school students will have the opportunity to discover, debate, and research important past and current issues and problems. Our social studies teacher certification graduates will also be preparing their students to become active participants in a multicultural, democratic, urban society that is undergoing rapid social and technological change, and is increasingly connected to and part of a complex global network.

The program, at the pre- and in-service levels, focuses on the planning and design of classroom activities, instructional units and projects that address national and state standards in history and social studies. Prospective social studies teachers examine and experiment with teaching techniques and strategies that connect with and motivate students from diverse cultural backgrounds, varying skills and preparation levels, in an urban setting characterized by density, immigration, and language problems. Special attention is paid to working in inclusive, multicultural, urban classrooms.

During the course of the program, prospective social studies teachers develop competencies in the following areas: promoting student learning through activities, motivations, and curricula that take advantage of cognitive psychology research, fostering critical thinking through the consideration of key philosophical questions; encouraging social and citizenship skills by means of structured cooperative learning; developing an appreciation for history and the related social sciences; along with multicultural sources and approaches through mastery of diverse curriculum materials; supporting academic performance and literacy by means of designing and field testing activities and assessments; and fostering a reliable level of accomplishment in the use of technology as part and parcel of the entire curriculum. The goals of the Social Studies Program were designed to reflect the 3 core of the Queens College Division of Education, equity, excellence and ethics.

The Social Studies' Program goals are met through academic coursework and field experiences, including observing in schools and supervised student teaching experiences in the Middle School and High Schools. We also offer continuous reflection and advisement with our full-time faculty in order to fulfill, our goal to help you become a state-certified, effective, and ethical professional who is reflective and capable of independent practice and lifelong professional development.

The QC social studies program's knowledge base and practices were designed to align with National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Standards and New York State regulations. Completion of the course work and field experience provide the academic requirements for New York State certification as a 7-12 social studies teacher. It is expected that all candidates completing the program of study will be recommended for and attain New York

State certification as a social studies teacher upon completion of the licensing exams and state workshop requirements. The Queens College Office of Teacher Certification offers assistance and information regarding state certification.

In completing initial certification, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level you will produce a teaching portfolio based upon units, lessons, or semester-long plans prior to student teaching. As a student teacher you will compile a portfolio based upon your curriculum and assessment materials and your own student's work. In both cases your reflections upon this body of work will form a critical component of the final product.

In completing the MSED in Social Studies you will take graduate courses in the social sciences that require final exams and research papers, curriculum courses revolving around advanced course materials, and a final year-long research sequence (SEYS 783 and 784) that culminates in an original research project.

Undergraduate: Leading to Initial Certification

**Scroll up for full program description*

According to the registration agreement between the New York State Department of Education and Queens College, undergraduates who wish to complete the initial certificate in Social Studies must complete a major of at least 30 credits in either Anthropology, History, Economics, Political Science or Sociology or complete a 36 credit major in one of the following interdisciplinary programs: Africana Studies, American Studies, Jewish Studies, and Women's Studies. Students who choose an interdisciplinary major must complete at least 30 credits in one of the five social science majors. Non-history major candidates must complete 21 credits in History, including two courses in U.S. History and two courses in Non-U.S. History. History major social studies candidates must complete 12 credits in one other social science, either Anthropology, Economics, Political Science or Sociology. All candidates for the initial certificate in social studies, must also take two additional courses in any of the five core social sciences listed above that was not their major or their 12 credit social science block. Finally, all students must complete at least one economics course, one political science course and once course either in geography or one that incorporates essential concepts from the discipline of geography in its course description. Students are required to maintain a minimum of a 2.75 GPA in courses in Social Science content areas if your major is Economics and 3.0 in all other Social Science majors to qualify for the minor in Secondary Education Social Studies.

In order to enter the Program students must file a major declaration card in their subject area and meet with the content area advisor who is the liaison to the secondary education program. They must also file a minor declaration card for secondary education with the registrar, and meet with an advisor from the secondary education department. To be placed for

student teaching, SEYS 373.4, students must have passed SEYS 201, 221, 340, 350, and 363 with a 3.0 GPA. In addition, student teaching candidates must complete 24 credits in their Social Science major prior to student teaching. To complete the minor in secondary education undergraduates must complete the eight course sequence with at least a 3.0 GPA.

Graduate Program Admission Requirements

The graduate social studies program at Queens College is designed for candidates who already have a B.A. in a single social science (history, anthropology, sociology, political science, economics), although we can work with candidates who have not yet reached this point. Candidates lacking state certification can apply to our Initial Certificate Program, while candidates possessing initial certification can apply directly to the Masters Program.

In general, to be admitted to the program you need to have earned a BA with a 3.0 GPA in one of the following majors: anthropology, economics, history, political science, or sociology. You must write a cogent and professional personal essay. You need recommendations from two people. You do not need to take a GRE examination.

Graduate: Leading to Initial Certification

**Scroll Up for full program description*

The goal of students in the post-baccalaureate Initial Certificate program is to obtain initial New York State certification as a secondary social studies teacher, and to be in position to earn a masters degree and obtain professional certification as a secondary social studies teacher.

Students must maintain a 3.0 average in content area courses as well as education course to be retained in the post-baccalaureate program. Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certificate candidates exit from the program when they complete the seven-course sequence culminating in student teaching and have met the subject area requirements.

Subject Area Requirement

In order to be certified, you must have the following course credits on a transcript from an accredited college. These are certification requirements, not degree requirements — you may take them anywhere or have them already on your transcript before enrolling.

A major or the 30-credit equivalent in a single social science (history, political science, economics, sociology, anthropology are the majors offered at Queens College). An inter-disciplinary social science major is also acceptable.

- One course (3cr) in economics
- Twenty-one (21) CREDITS (about 7 courses) in history and geography. At least 6 credits (2 courses) must be in American History and 6 credits (2 courses) be in non-history
- Even if you take all of the education courses, you will not be certified until you meet the subject area requirements

MSED Program

**Scroll Up for full program description*

The QC Secondary Master's Degree program in Social Studies is designed to offer an integrated, theoretically grounded view of social studies education that addresses the needs of students and teachers in diverse communities. The social studies faculty focuses on preparing graduate candidates for their careers in roles as social studies teachers in school districts who can develop, implement, and evaluate social studies programs at schools and who can work with individual students and their families. We promote rigorous scholarship and research, contextualized learning and service in school and community settings, and opportunities for critical reflection on the role of social studies in society and about our responsibilities as educators. In addition to the graduate-level education course work, about half of students course work for the masters' degree will be in Social Studies related academic programs.

The MS degree consists of 18 credits (6 courses) in education and 15 credits (5 courses) in social studies subject area courses.

Completion of the Masters of Science in Secondary Education Social Studies fulfills the state requirements for full certification, although this certification must now be renewed with the New York State Department of Education periodically.

Admission Requirements

In general, to be admitted to the program you need to have earned a BA with a 3.0 GPA in one of the following majors: anthropology, economics, history, political science, or sociology. You must write a cogent and professional personal essay. You need recommendations from two people. You do not need to take a GRE examination.

In any admissions policy there is always some possibility for recognizing exceptional circumstances and we know that the world desperately needs good social studies teachers, so please address any exceptional circumstances directly in the essay, an additional letter, or through additional material. At the same time we do rely quite strongly on these guidelines, particularly the GPA requirement. These requirements, and some of the more common variations in preparation and their consequences are explained below.

Applying to the Program: Helping us to Know You

The application leaves room for us to get to know you beyond your transcript, and to understand why we should accept you. In particular, you have an opportunity to address matters such as grades, coursework and your true abilities in your essay, and in the letters of recommendation that you solicit. Your essay should explain why you are interested in teaching secondary social studies, and your strengths in the field. But it is also appropriate to address weaknesses in your preparation or in your record, and provide us with the information to more fully understand your record.

To obtain an application, or find out about application deadlines, please call the graduate admissions office. The number there is: 718-997-5200. The application is also available from the Queens College website.