



NORTH CAROLINA

CERTIFICATION

The State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction in North Carolina is responsible for licensure. According to its Title II report, the state offers Type A and Type B certification. North Carolina recognizes four teacher education and reciprocal licensing approaches:

- ❖ completion of an education program accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE);
- ❖ completion of an education program that follows National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification;
- ❖ reciprocity based on interstate agreements; and
- ❖ completion of a state-approved program not accredited by NCATE, approved through the interstate agreement, or based on NASDTEC guidelines.

Elementary Certification

North Carolina has developed Guidelines and Competencies for its teachers at the elementary level. These guidelines first emphasize the importance of an elementary teacher education program developing students' knowledge of human growth and development, curriculum planning, and instructional strategies. Guidelines specific to content areas are then articulated. Social studies is addressed in Guideline 7. The state requires that "study under this guideline should focus on knowledge and understanding of the social studies concepts, generalizations, and experiences that are developmentally appropriate for elementary school children with opportunities provided for the planning of integrated cross-curricular activities using citizenship transmission, social science inquiry, and reflective inquiry to aid in the acquisition and maintenance of social studies skills, concepts, and attitudes." The state then identifies what graduates of an approved program will be able to do in regard to social studies.

Middle-Level Certification

In order to receive middle school licensure (grades 6–9) candidates must take 18 hours of concentration in a specific area (beyond the social studies general education requirements and excluding instruction in materials and methods). Guidelines and competencies have been established, and middle school teacher preparation must include the study of North Carolina, the United States, and the Western and non-Western world.

Secondary Certification

Preparation programs for high school licensure in social studies should constitute a minimum of one-third (excluding instruction in teaching methods) of the candidate's total undergraduate program. Guidelines have been established and competencies defined in individual content areas. To be able to teach economics, geography, history, political science, or sociology specific competencies must be demonstrated. Competencies fall into major categories:

- ❖ United States history;
- ❖ world history;
- ❖ world cultures;
- ❖ physical geography;
- ❖ cultural geography;
- ❖ significant current issues;
- ❖ economics;
- ❖ political science;
- ❖ social institutions and their influence;
- ❖ foundations of human behavior;
- ❖ knowledge of current trends in social studies curriculum;
- ❖ awareness of instructional materials and resources;
- ❖ skill in design, detection, and implementation of appropriate learning strategies; and
- ❖ social studies computer and technology competencies (for Level II).

In order to teach history, a candidate must demonstrate the first six and last four competencies.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Content standards for teachers are represented by the competencies outlined in the above section on certification.

Standards for Students

On April 6, 2001, the State Board of Education in North Carolina approved the revised Social Studies Standard Course of Study. These standards are scheduled to be implemented during the 2003–04 school year. According to the state's web site, the curriculum that corresponds with these standards is currently being used.

The revisions in North Carolina entailed the creation of a new *Social Studies Standard Course of Study Framework* and a support document entitled *Teacher Handbook—Social Studies K–12*. According to the overview provided by the social studies consultants of the Instructional Services and Accountability Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the framework’s goals and objectives are aligned closely with the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) curriculum standards. These consultants also explain that North Carolina’s framework reflects national content standards in history, geography, civics and government, and economics and provides guidance for implementing the strands in each of the social science disciplines contained in the framework. The influence of the National Council for the Social Studies is evident in the “Purpose and Philosophy” section of the curriculum, as NCSS’s 1992 definition of social studies is placed in the forefront.

The introductory section of the curriculum articulates the purpose and philosophy of social studies in North Carolina, the framework goals, a rationale for social studies, and a content overview. The content section on history includes essential questions for the discipline and explains general expectations for students at the primary/elementary, middle, and secondary levels. These expectations are drawn from the NCSS standards.

Goals and objectives in the framework and handbook are identified for each grade, K–12. In the framework, introductions are provided for the scope and sequence in each grouping. Grades are grouped as primary (K–3), elementary (4–5), middle (6–8), and secondary (9–12). Then competencies and goals are outlined and skill application examples are provided. North Carolina history is studied in grade 4. Grade 5 studies the Western hemisphere, grade 6 examines Europe and the former Soviet republics, and grade 7 focuses on Africa and Asia. Grade 8 introduces students to their first encounter with study devoted largely to the discipline of history. In 8th grade students examine the role of North Carolina in the history of the United States.

The secondary curriculum consists of multiple social studies frameworks. United States history and world studies are included. The world studies program establishes three distinct approaches. World history, world geography, and world cultures are included in the world studies program.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Multiple graduation courses of study were approved in North Carolina by the Board of Education in 1999. These courses of study include: career prep, college tech prep, college/university prep, and occupational. Three social studies credits are required for the first three courses of study, and two credits are required for the occupational plan. United States history and a world studies credit are required in the first three plans. The occupational plan requires students to take Social Studies I (government/U.S. history) and Social Studies II (self-advocacy/problem-solving).

Exit Exam

The exit exam is on hold indefinitely. The following description refers to the planned exit exam. North Carolina students who will graduate in 2005 or later will be required to take an exit exam that measures content learned in grades 7 through 11. Skills learned in social studies, including United States history and economic, legal, and political systems, will appear on the test. The exam will be composed of four tests: communication, processing information, problem solving, and using numbers and data. Matrices have been provided that indicate the correlations between the exit exam competencies and the content objectives of high school courses in the Standard Course of Study.

ASSESSMENT

The state of North Carolina was recognized, along with Texas, “for having the most comprehensive accountability program in the country.” End-of-grade and end-of-course (EOC) testing is required in North Carolina. The state provides a detailed handout that describes precisely what information is tested at each grade. K–2 students are assessed through a portfolio while students in grades 3–12 take multiple-choice and writing tests on various content information. Some fourth graders and eighth graders participate in the NAEP test. End-of-grade tests in grades 3–8 assess reading and mathematics. Mathematics and reading also receive heavy emphasis at the secondary level. A competency test and a comprehensive test are required. An end-of-course test in U.S. history is administered in 11th grade. EOC tests in civics and economics are also administered.

The North Carolina State Board of Education commissioned a Joint Portfolio Study Committee to investigate and consider adding portfolios to the state’s assessment system in grades 9–12. According to a timeline, the state is moving toward using portfolios as part of its assessment system. During the 2002–03 school year a statewide training of teachers is scheduled, implementation will begin based on readiness, and policies will be finalized. The 2003–04 school year is the first scheduled year of implementation, for the graduating class of 2007. Graduates will be required to demonstrate proficiency in six competency areas: communication, using numbers and data, problem solving, processing information, teamwork, and using technology.