



## TEXAS

### **CERTIFICATION**

According to its Title II report, the state of Texas offers Type B and Type C certification for its teachers. A standard certificate serves as the initial license in Texas and is valid for five years. It may be renewed for five-year periods provided that the teacher has met the renewal requirements. In order to receive an initial certificate, candidates must complete the requirements of a teacher preparation program at a university approved by the State Board for Educator Certification. The SBEC does not require specific courses or numbers of hours of course work for certification. Each university designs its own program, although guidelines are provided.

### **Elementary Certification**

The state of Texas suggests that teacher education programs offer four options for candidates. The first option (grades 1–6) includes two 12 semester hour academic specializations (6 hours of upper-division course work in each area) and 12 hours in a combination of subjects taught in the elementary grades. The second option (grades 1–8) requires one 18-hour academic specialization (9 hours in upper-division courses) and 18 hours in a combination of subjects taught at the elementary level. The third option (grades 1–8) requires one 24-hour (12 upper-division hours) delivery system or academic specialization in life-earth science, physical science, or social studies and 6 hours in a combination of subjects taught in the elementary grades. This option does not apply for the delivery system in generic special education. In social studies, this option must include, but is not limited to, 6 hours each in history, government, geography, and economics with a minimum of 6 hours in upper-division courses. The fourth option (pre-K–6) requires one 24-hour (12 upper-division hours) delivery system emphasizing areas for early childhood education and 6 hours in a combination of subjects taught in the elementary grades. Six hours of reading is a requirement for each of the four options.

## Middle-Level Certification

No specific recommendations have been located as of yet.

## Secondary Certification

Secondary certification candidates may pursue one of four options recommended by the state of Texas. The first option (grades 6–12) requires one 36-hour teaching field (21 upper-division hours) with 12 hours in a field that supports the major teaching field directly. The second option (grades 6–12) requires two 24-hour (12 upper-division hours) teaching fields, delivery systems, or a combination of the two. The third option (grades 6–12) requires one 48-hour broad teaching field (24 hours in upper-division courses). The fourth option requires one 48-hour composite teaching field (24 hours in upper-division courses, 12 of which are in a single area). Six hours are required in each area. Courses must include economics, geography, government, and history.

*\*\*It should be noted that new certification policies went into effect in Texas in fall 2002. This information is as current as possible. Please see the web pages for the most up-to-date information.*

## STANDARDS

### Standards for Teachers

The Texas State Board for Educator Certification has recently created new sets of standards for teachers. These standards are based on the statewide curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The first certificates based on these standards were issued in fall 2002. They serve as the framework for the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TEES). The state of Texas has content standards for teachers in both history and social studies. These standards overlap; that is, the history standards are part of the social studies standards. The standards address thoroughly teacher knowledge and application at different grade levels, early childhood through grade 12.

- ❖ Standard I: The social studies teacher has a comprehensive knowledge of the social sciences and recognizes the value of the social sciences.
- ❖ Standard II: The social studies teacher effectively integrates the various social science disciplines.
- ❖ Standard III: The social studies teacher uses knowledge and skills of social studies, as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), to plan and implement effective curriculum, instruction, assessment, and evaluation.
- ❖ Standard IV: History: The social studies teacher applies knowledge of significant historical events and developments, as well as of multiple historical interpretations and ideas, in order to facilitate student understanding of relationships between the past, the present, and the future (knowledge and application pertaining to history is specified).
- ❖ Standard V: Geography.
- ❖ Standard VI: Economics.

- ❖ Standard VII: Government.
- ❖ Standard VIII: Citizenship.
- ❖ Standard IX: Culture.
- ❖ Standard X: Science, Technology, and Society.

## Standards for Students

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies are organized by grade level for students in grades K–8 and by course for students in grades 9–12. For each grade (K–8) and course (9–12) the state provides an introduction that explains the content included in the standards for that level. Texas also makes recommendations regarding supporting material that can assist teachers in teaching the content.

Eight strands provide the framework for the standards in Texas. These strands include

- ❖ history;
- ❖ geography;
- ❖ economics;
- ❖ government;
- ❖ citizenship;
- ❖ culture;
- ❖ science, technology, and society; and
- ❖ social studies skills.

These strands are intended to be integrated, and the state advises that “skills listed in the geography and social studies skills strands ... should be incorporated into the teaching of all essential knowledge and skills for social studies.” The content in the strands was designed to help students understand the importance of patriotism, to function in a free enterprise society, and to appreciate the basic values of the state and nation as stated in the Texas Education Code. The following scope and sequence is observed in Texas.

- ❖ Kindergarten: Focus is on the self, home, family, and classroom.
- ❖ First Grade: Students’ relationship to the classroom, school, and community.
- ❖ Second Grade: Focus is on the local community and the impact of significant individuals and events on the history of the community and the state and nation.
- ❖ Third Grade: Students learn how individuals have changed their communities and the world.
- ❖ Fourth Grade: Students examine the history of Texas from the early beginnings to the present within the context of influences of the Western Hemisphere.
- ❖ Fifth Grade: Students learn about the history of the United States from its early beginnings to the present with a focus on colonial times through the 20th century.

- ❖ Sixth Grade: Students study people and places of the contemporary world.
- ❖ Seventh Grade: Students study the history of Texas from the early times to the present.
- ❖ Eighth Grade: Students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction.

High school standards are organized by courses, including

- ❖ United States history studies since Reconstruction;
- ❖ world history studies;
- ❖ world geography studies;
- ❖ United States government;
- ❖ psychology;
- ❖ sociology;
- ❖ special topics in social studies;
- ❖ social studies research methods;
- ❖ social studies advanced studies; and
- ❖ various AP courses and International Baccalaureate courses.

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Three graduation options are available for students in Texas. The minimum graduation plan requires twenty-two credits. The recommended high school program requires 24 credits, and the distinguished achievement program requires twenty-four credits. In social studies, the requirements for the recommended and distinguished programs are the same: Three and one-half credits are required consisting of

- ❖ world history studies—one credit;
- ❖ world geography studies—one credit;
- ❖ U.S. history studies since Reconstruction—one credit; and
- ❖ U.S. government—one-half credit.

The minimum graduation plan requires two and one-half credits in social studies consisting of

- ❖ world history studies or world geography studies—one credit;
- ❖ U.S. history studies since Reconstruction—one credit; and
- ❖ U.S. government—one-half credit.

### Exit Exam

Students who will graduate from high school in Texas in 2004 or earlier can satisfy testing requirements for graduation in one of two ways: the Exit Level TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) or the End-of-Course Tests. The Exit Level TAAS consists of reading, writing, and mathematics. The End-of-Course Tests require students to pass examinations in Algebra I, English II, and either biology

or U.S. history. Students who will graduate in 2005 or later must take an exit exam in English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. The social studies portion includes early American history and United States history.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) was first administered at the beginning of the 2002–03 school year. The TAKS measures the statewide curriculum in grades 3–9. Social studies is tested in grade 8, 10, and 11. The blueprints for the TAKS in social studies indicate that students are assessed in history, geography, economic and social influences, political influences, and social studies skills.

