

Sul Ross State University - Rio Grande College  
Political Science 3304  
Integrated Social Sciences  
Fall 2015

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course meeting times: This is a web course and does not have class meeting times.

Course Description: This course is designed for students preparing for careers in elementary education focusing on the EC-6 Social Studies competencies for Texas teacher certification. It will also be useful for students preparing for certification at 4-8 and 7-12 in history and the social sciences, as well as students in related social science fields. At the conclusion of this course, the student will have the requisite content based knowledge in the integrated social sciences to recognize the value of the social sciences, to effectively integrate the various social sciences disciplines, and to use the knowledge and skills of social sciences, as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), to plan and implement effective curriculum, instruction assessment and evaluation. The social studies discipline competencies covered in this course include: (1) history, (2) geography, (3) economics, (4) government, (5) citizenship, (6) culture and (7) science, technology and society (including the environment).

Required Texts:

Kathy Checkley, *The Essentials of Social Studies, Grades K-8* (ISBN 978-1-4166-0645-1)

Primary Learning Objectives:

At the successful conclusion of this course, through performance on a short research paper, class presentation, and objective multiple choice examinations, the student will be able to

- Apply knowledge of significant historical events and developments, as well as multiple historical interpretations and ideas, in order to be able to facilitate understanding of relationships between the past, the present and the future;
- Apply knowledge of people, places and environments in order to be able to facilitate understanding of geographic relationships in Texas, the United States and the world;

- Know how people organize economic systems to produce, distribute and consume goods and services and to be able to use this knowledge to enable students to understand economic systems and make informed economic decisions;
- Know how governments and structures of power function, provide order and allocate resources and to use this knowledge in order to be able to facilitate student understanding of how individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems;
- Understand citizenship in the United States and other societies and to be able to use this knowledge to prepare students to participate in our society through an understanding of democratic principles and citizenship practices;
- Understand cultures and how they develop and adapt and to be able to use this knowledge to enable students to appreciate and respect the cultural diversity in Texas, the United States and the world; and
- Understand developments in science and technology and to be able to use this knowledge to facilitate student understanding of the social and environmental consequences of scientific discovery and technological innovation.

\*To complete the requirements of this course successfully, you must have a Sul Ross Blackboard account and be able to access documents attached to this course. See below for further details

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Course requirements, course objectives, and course grade breakdown:

\*Short Paper (30%): In 4-5 pages, write a formal, organized essay based on the APA format used by educators that addresses the following questions:

1. What are the social sciences and what do they have in common?
2. What important questions can the social sciences address and answer?
3. Why have the social sciences been historically neglected particularly at the EC-6 level and what has been done to address this neglect?
4. What are the special challenges in teaching the social sciences at the EC-6 level, particularly to a socio-economically and culturally diverse demographic?

The essay must be written in a college/professional level appropriate tone and style. It is strongly recommended that you make use of appropriate resources, including the writing center. The essay must use appropriate APA, MLA or Chicago style citation and include a works cited page. To build your research base, you should start with the textbook. I am fairly flexible on your use of sources, as long as they are college/professional level appropriate sources. (Internet sources are acceptable.) This essay will be submitted twice. The first submission (which you should treat as a final, polished produced) will receive commentary from me and a rubric. You will then have the opportunity to rewrite the essay for an improved grade.

\*Presentation (10%): The student should prepare a formal presentation using PowerPoint or other appropriate medium on a topic relevant to the Social Sciences. The presentation should be uploaded to the appropriate assignment window on Blackboard. The presentation should be appropriate for its intended audience. Examples of appropriate presentation topics might include:

- The Americas before Columbus
- The arrival of Europeans in America
- The American Revolution
- The American Constitution
- The American Civil War
- The Civil Rights Movement
- The World Wars
- The American Economy and how it works
- The American Government and how it works
- Important features of American Geography
- The impact of technology on American life
- An Ancient, Medieval or Modern World Civilization of your choice
- A modern event of world significance of your choice
- Important features of the world's geography

- The geography and environment of Texas
- The history of Texas (you may wish to focus on a specific event)
- America's cultural diversity
- The cultural heritage of Texas

\*Four practice multiple-choice examinations based on the seven social sciences competencies (40%): The examinations will be 100 points each. They will cover

1. World History, Cultures and Geography
2. American and Texas History, Cultures and Geography
3. The Constitution of the United States and the Institutions of the American Government
4. The Economy, Science, Technology and the Environment

You may take these examinations under the conditions of your own choosing using whatever resources are available to you (including collaboration with other students) and there will be no time limit. You can submit your answers to me, and I will give you a second opportunity to take these tests after I identify the incorrect answer choices. Your grade on your second submission will stand as your grade for the test. We will also have the opportunity to discuss these examinations in class.

The practice tests will include sample questions from (among other places)

- The Core Subjects, EC-6 Texas test [http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/6614/1027/0774/core\\_subjects\\_ec\\_6\\_291.pdf](http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/6614/1027/0774/core_subjects_ec_6_291.pdf)
- Texas test, Social Studies, 4-8 [http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/5713/1404/3767/118\\_ss4\\_8\\_55018\\_web.pdf](http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/5713/1404/3767/118_ss4_8_55018_web.pdf)
- Texas test, History, 7-12 [http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/2313/6698/7446/history\\_7\\_12\\_233.pdf](http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/2313/6698/7446/history_7_12_233.pdf)
- Texas test, Social Studies, 7-12 [http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/5413/6698/7482/social\\_studies\\_7\\_12\\_232.pdf](http://cms.texas-ets.org/files/5413/6698/7482/social_studies_7_12_232.pdf)
- I will also use questions of my own. I understand that the questions on many of these tests will be substantially more difficult than the questions you will likely encounter on the actual EC-6 exam. It is my feeling that if you can earn passing grades on these tests you will then be well prepared and confident about your chances of passing the social sciences component of the actual test.

\*Final Examination (200 points) (20%). The final examination will consist of 100 questions drawn at random from the four practice examinations. This test will be taken online using the Blackboard testing tool and submitted under actual testing conditions. The testing window will open at the beginning of final examination week and close at the end of final examination week. Once you open the testing window on Blackboard, you will have 120 minutes (2 hours) to complete the examination.

Grading methodology: All assignments for this course will be graded on a 100 point scale as follows

90-100 (A) 80-89 (B) 70-79 (C) 60-69 (D) <60 (F)

All required work must be submitted no later than the last day of instruction

Writing Rubric

Student:

Class: Integrated Social Sciences

Term:

Assignment: Short Research Paper

	Inadequate (<14)	Adequate (14-15)	Good (16-17)	Excellent (18-20)
Thesis/Argument				
Development: Reasons & Evidence				
Organization				
Grammar and Mechanics				
Research/ Documentation In-text citation				
Total (out of 100))				

	Inadequate <14	Adequate 14-15	Good 16-17	Excellent 18-20
<b>Thesis/ Topic</b>	No clear thesis/topic, or thesis/topic doesn't relate to purpose & audience.	thesis/topic is not stated early; it is unconvincing because it is too broad/vague/unrelated to purpose/audience.	Thesis/topic is good and relates to purpose, although it could be revised to be more precise.	Thesis/topic is precise and clear and related to purpose; it is original and challenges reader's thinking.
<b>Development: Reasons &amp; Evidence</b>	The essay does not offer clear reasons and evidence to support thesis/topic. It may offer only reasons unsupported by evidence	The paper lists reasons & evidence but they are unconvincing &/or undeveloped. Lack of critical discussion of evidence.	The paper offers reasons and evidence that support thesis/topic; but more supporting details & other kinds of evidence would have demonstrated mastery.	Reasons and evidence are accurate, precise, and relevant. Thesis/topic is fully and convincingly developed.
<b>Organization of entire paper and of paragraphs</b>	An overall logical structure is lacking. Paragraphs lack cohesion. No transitions.	Overall logical structure is evident, but paragraphs may lack cohesion and transitions may be lacking.	The paper is supported with adequate overall structure and paragraph cohesion; there are some transitions; sequence of ideas or transitions could be improved.	The paper is logically structured so thesis & reasons are effectively communicated. Paragraphs are coherent & unified, & connected with effective, eloquent transitions.
<b>Style, Vocabulary, Grammar &amp; Mechanics</b>		The often must reread because of distracting patterns of error in word choice, sentence structure, grammar, & usage.		
<b>Documentation -In-text citations &amp; bibliography page (MLA &amp; APA)</b>	The reader cannot understand the paper because of	Author does not cite in-text sources accurately or consistently and/or does not format bibliography at end accurately/consistently.	The writing successfully communicates ideas through effective	The writer chooses words aptly, creates sophisticated and effective sentences, and

<p><b>- footnotes or endnotes (CMS)</b></p> <p><b>Total (out of 100):</b></p>	<p>distracting patterns of error in word choice, sentence structure, grammar, and usage.</p> <p>Author does not cite in-text sources or the bibliography at the end of paper.</p>		<p>grammar &amp; mechanics, except for one or two patterns of error in word choice, grammar, or usage.</p> <p>Author documents sources consistently with one or two minor inconsistencies or mistakes that do not damage writer's ethos.</p>	<p>observes the conventions of written English (correct grammar and usage).</p> <p>Author documents sources accurately and consistently.</p>
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