

Section I – Context

1. Description of any state or institutional policies that may influence the application of NCSS standards.

The Secondary Social Studies Education program at Keene State College prepares teacher candidates for certification to teach social studies in New Hampshire in grades 5-12. New Hampshire is not a partnership state with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) nor does it require meeting National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) standards for state program accreditation or licensure. The New Hampshire Department of Education requires for licensure the passing of the Pre-Professional Skills Exam (PRAXIS I) with the following minimal scores: Reading (172), Math (170) and Writing (171) and with a composite total of 518 for all who seek teacher certification. The state of New Hampshire also requires that all candidates who seek licensure pass the PRAXIS II, Social Studies Content Knowledge (0081) and Social Studies Analytical Essays (0082) with a minimum score of 155 for both assessments. Since New Hampshire is a member of the Interstate Certification Contract, Keene State College graduates are eligible to earn certification in other Contract states as well.

In June, 2005, the Secondary Social Studies program at Keene State College was reviewed and approved by the state's accrediting body—the NH Council of Teacher Education. In New Hampshire the only certification in the area of Social Studies is the comprehensive Social Studies certification and not the individual disciplines within the Social Studies (i.e., history, geography, economics, government, etc.) In order to meet licensure requirements, New Hampshire requires candidates to demonstrate competencies in areas of Social Studies content, as well as pedagogy and professionalism related to the Social Studies. In the area of content, New Hampshire requires an “in-depth” understanding of at least two of the major disciplines (history, civics/government, geography, and economics), and the “methodology” of at least one of the disciplines. This is also expected from at least one of the behavioral sciences (anthropology, sociology, and psychology). The rationale and importance of all these disciplines is expected. New Hampshire also requires competencies be met within the Social Studies pedagogy and professionalism.

At the institutional level, a teacher candidate in Secondary Social Studies education may follow four different pathways toward a recommendation from Keene State College for licensure. A Secondary Social Studies teacher candidate may major in Geography, History, Social Science, or Sociology. *The teacher candidates do not major in Education.* Each of these pathways contains a Teacher Certification Option. All four majors address the state competencies in terms of content breadth and depth as seen in **Attachment C** as well as the specific major requirements. All teacher candidates complete General Education requirements, major requirements, and Teacher Education requirements in order to be eligible to be recommended by Keene State College for New Hampshire certification.

Teacher candidates complete a progression of coursework and field experiences in the Teacher Education program that develops the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a Secondary Social Studies classroom teacher. The first three courses (ESEC 100, 150, and 200) are taken by those seeking all areas of certification. ESEC 282 (*Literacy in the Content Area*) is specifically for secondary education teacher candidates in all certification areas. ESEC 320 (*Educational Environments/Practices*) is again for all certification area at all levels. This coursework and initial field experience culminates in a Secondary Social Studies Methods course with extensive fieldwork and finally a 14-week student teaching experience under the tutelage of a certified mentor teacher and the supervision of one of the Keene State College Social Studies educators.

2. Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program, including the number of hours for early field experiences and the number of hours/weeks for student teaching or internships.

The first three Teacher Education courses (ESEC 100, 150, and 250) orient teacher candidates to the theories of teaching and learning. Field experiences offer the opportunity to put theory into practice and this occurs for the Secondary Social Studies teacher candidate in ESEC 282 (*Literacy in the Content Area*). The students are required to spend a day in a secondary social studies classroom and make structured observations.

Following ESEC 282, teacher candidates must be admitted into the Teacher Education program. This is followed by one more practical course, ESEC 320 (*Educational Environments/Practices*) that focuses on designing and implementing instruction including assessment, use of technology, and application to diverse learners. This experience is followed by ESEC 385 and 386 (*Secondary Social Studies Methods and Secondary Social Studies Field Experience*) which are taken concurrently. The field experience consists of a minimum of three hours per week in a Secondary Social Studies classroom. While only three hours per week are required by Keene State College, Methods students are encouraged to spend as much time as possible in their assigned classroom and most students spend at least all of one day or two half days in the field. This Methods field placement is made by the instructor with consideration given to the developmental readiness and disposition of the teacher candidate, academic major, and personal considerations of the teacher candidate (e.g., commuting issues, preferences for high school/middle school, etc.) Depending upon the developmental level of the Methods student, he/she will perform a variety of functions in the classroom from clerical work through individual mentoring. Designing and teaching three lessons are a minimal instructional piece.

The Methods course is conducted in seminar style and is the first education coursework taken by teacher candidates that specifically addresses social studies content and pedagogy. The curriculum is both state and national standards-based. Along with Methods content, the seminar format allows for considerable discussion of the students'

field placements. The purpose of this course is to create a professional learning community with the intent of successfully initiating the teacher candidate into their chosen profession. The Methods course is taught in the evening to maximize student time in the field experience.

The culminating teacher preparation experience of student teaching is, by far, the most significant contribution to the teacher candidates' training. The teacher candidates are carefully placed in their student teaching experience by the Social Studies educators who have been their instructors in the Methods course. The instructors have established a growing network of very competent cooperating teachers who are able to mentor and support the teacher candidates through this vital experience. Placements are made using multiple criteria such as location of student teacher and the field placement, content expertise, preferences of both student teachers and cooperating teachers. Placements are made in high schools, middle schools, or small K-8 schools where the student teacher would work with grades 5-8. Interviews are held between the student teacher and cooperating teacher prior to finalizing the placement. The teacher candidates complete 14 weeks of full-time student teaching with the student teacher having full responsibility for the teacher's teaching load for at least three weeks. The college supervisor makes at least four formal observations of the student teacher during the semester using an assessment based on the Charlotte Danielson framework (Danielson, 1996) and stays in constant contact with both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. The Social Studies Education program feels strongly that the triad relationship of student teacher, cooperating teacher, and college supervisor is effective and allows for close monitoring of progress for all three members of the triad.

1. Description of the criteria for admission, retention, and exit from the program, including required GPAs and minimum grade requirements for the content courses accepted by the program.

During the first two years of the Secondary Social Studies program, the students focus on their General Education coursework, their content major coursework, and the initial education courses (ESEC 100, ESEC 150, ESEC 250, and ESEC 282. These courses prepare them for application of theoretical knowledge in the field experiences to come. At the end of their second year or start of their junior year, the students prepare for and must pass the PRAXIS I – Pre-professional Skills Exam and make application for admission to Teacher Education. In addition to successful completion of PRAXIS I, the teacher candidates must demonstrate basic skills and proficiencies gained in their initial coursework and personal and professional behaviors as measured through a dispositions checklist completed by candidates and faculty members.

Admission to Teacher Education

- Complete initial education courses (ESEC 100, ESEC 150, ESEC 250) with a grade of C or better.
- Complete 36 credits (for transfers, at least 12 at Keene State College)
- Meet grade point requirements (2.5 or higher overall cumulative average)
- Achieve PRAXIS I scores at or above NH state standards

- Choose certification option and content major
- Submit personal references (including dispositions assessments)
- Complete application form & pay fee (currently \$30.00)

After admission to Teacher Education teacher candidates seeking the Secondary Social Studies option continue their content major and complete one more education course, ESEC 320 (*Educational Environments/Practices*). At this point, the teacher candidates are ready for ESEC 385/386, *Secondary Social Studies Methods and Secondary Social Studies Field Experience* which are taken concurrently.

Admissions to Methods

- Minimum GPA of 2.5 in ESEC
- Minimum GPA of 2.5 in content major of Geography, History, Social Science, or Sociology
- Overall GPA of 2.5 or higher
- C or better in all ESEC courses
- Positive disposition ratings
- Declaration of Major

Upon successful completion of the six combined credits of ESEC 385 and 386 the Secondary Social Studies teacher candidates embark upon student teaching either the first or second semester following Methods. Application to student teach is completed the semester prior to student teaching. The application packet includes a professional identity statement as well as other transcripts, program planning sheets, and other relevant paperwork. The Methods instructor works with the soon-to-be student teacher toward the end of the semester prior to student teaching to achieve an optimum field placement for this experience.

Admission to Student Teaching

- Completion of at least 90 credits
- Completion of all content major requirements
- Minimum GPA of 2.5 in ESEC
- Minimum GPA of 2.5 in content major of Geography, History, Social Science, or Sociology
- Overall GPA of 2.5 or higher
- No grade lower than a C in ESEC courses

As part of the application process, Student Affairs records are checked and a criminal records check is completed through the NH State Police and FBI.

Exit

Toward the end of student teaching, the Secondary Social Studies teacher candidates complete preliminary applications for NH Secondary Social Studies certification. The teacher candidates must:

- Successfully pass student teaching (ESEC 460) which is pass/fail
- Successfully pass ESEC 450 (*Seminar*) which is a graded seminary that is taken concurrently with student teaching and must be completed with a grade of C or better.
- Successful completion of content major and all academic program requirements
- Clearance from the College for graduation.

Recommendation for certification rests with the Director of Teacher Education and Graduate Studies (TEGS).

4. *Description of the relationship¹ of the program to the unit's conceptual framework.*

Keene State College Teacher Education Program is built on an integrated foundation of its mission, vision and conceptual framework. The mission is:

To prepare competent, reflective, classroom teachers, and other professional school personnel, who utilize effective teaching practices and who create developmentally appropriate educational environments for diverse learners. We integrate liberal arts knowledge and professional preparation for each program we offer, and incorporate state and national standards for each specialty area.

The vision is:

To graduate professionals in the field of education who will be advocates for social justice and equality, who possess intellectual and personal integrity, and who are responsive to the needs of students in a changing, multicultural world.

The conceptual framework for our Teacher Education program, in keeping with our vision and mission, was formulated by KSC education faculty in conjunction with professional educators in the field and resulted in the creation of four themes that weave throughout the education curriculum. KSC education programs strive to prepare education professionals who:

- Understand the world from multiple perspectives
- Explore the dynamic nature of the teaching and learning process

¹ The response should describe the program's conceptual framework and indicate how it reflects the unit's conceptual framework

- Demonstrate professional and ethical behaviors that meet high expectations and standards
- Contribute to a just and equitable world

In addition to using these four themes as our guiding principles, we adhere to the national standards of each of our program areas. We have also incorporated the Charlotte Danielson (1996) framework, *Enhancing Professional Practice*, as a key component for assessing the clinical work of our teacher candidates.

The Secondary Social Studies education program at Keene State College has developed a program that is both congruent with the KSC Education conceptual framework as well as specifically addressing the content necessary for future secondary Social Studies teachers. Our program’s conceptual framework has created six essential elements of Social Studies content that describe the well-prepared secondary Social Studies teacher as a person who demonstrates:

- the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in our nation’s democratic life and the increasingly interdependent world.
- the knowledge, skills, and values that lead to economic self-sufficiency.
- an understanding of the legacy of our human experience and its enduring themes.
- the insights into the political process and the rule of law.
- an appreciation of the environment and the limits it places on choices.
- an understanding of the role of the individual in the tapestry of the society.

When these elements are integrated with the themes of the Education Department’s conceptual framework, Danielson’s framework, and state and local standards for content, pedagogy, and professional practice, students are provided a strong foundation in the Secondary Social Studies program.

5. *Indication of whether the program has a unique set of program assessments and their relationship of the program’s assessments to the unit’s assessment system².*

The assessments developed by the Secondary Social Studies program are based on NCSS and NCATE standards as well as being congruent with the Education’s unit-wide assessments. The Clinical Observation (Assessment #4) and Dispositions Assessment (Assessment #6) which are unit-wide assessments were first developed and piloted in the Secondary Social Science program. In addition, the program has developed content specific assessments.

² This response should clarify how the key assessments used in the program are derived from or informed by the assessment system that the unit will address under NCATE Standard 2.