

SOCIAL STUDIES (SSTX)

SSTX 501 America During the Thirties: The Great Depression, Dust Bowl, and The New Deal 3 credits

The economic crash of the late 2000s caused a renewed interest in the events and conditions of 1930s America. What was the Great Depression like, and how did Americans cope with it? How did the Dust Bowl exacerbate the economic woes of the time, and did the New Deal actually help in the way the federal government intended? In this course, you will examine the answers to these questions and more, and receive practical tools to help teach your students about this unique time in American history. You'll analyze and determine the causes of the 1929 Stock Market Crash, how Americans coped with the Great Depression, the hardships people experienced during the Dust Bowl, and the recovery efforts of the New Deal. In addition, you will create an artifact that you can start using in your classroom immediately to help students understand the impact of these events in America's history. With the knowledge and resources you gain from this course, you will be able to help make the events of this decade come alive for your students so they can better understand pre-World War II America. This course is offered through Advancement Course.

SSTX 502 America's Wars: From the Civil War to Vietnam 3 credits

The United States, a nation founded by war, has started, supported, avoided, and ended many wars throughout history. However, despite the incredible personal and national upheaval that war causes, students often consider learning the causes and details of war to be dull and unwieldy. In this course, you will create specific strategies for teaching about the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War, including the major causes and events, the key players, and how each war served as a turning point in American history and policy. You will help students examine these events from a variety of perspectives, using techniques such as debate, critical discussion, and examining lesser studied issues such as antiwar efforts. These activities will not only deepen students' critical-thinking and perspective-taking skills, but also encourage them to engage in the topics beyond basic facts. Using the knowledge and techniques from this course, you will be able to teach about America's wars in a high-interest, interactive, and engaging way that goes well beyond memorizing battle dates and political speeches. This course is offered through Advancement Course.

SSTX 503 Ancient Greece 3 credits

Between approximately 600 and 400 B.C., the world saw the rise, golden age, and fall of one of the greatest societies in history: ancient Greece. The ancient Greeks made tremendous lasting contributions in the fields of politics, philosophy, art, architecture, sport, theater, science, and math. Their way of life served as an important foundation for all of Western civilization. In this course, you will examine the culture of ancient Greece so that you can make historical information meaningful and relevant to students. You'll cultivate concrete strategies for demonstrating the lasting impact of ancient Greece on the modern world through engaging classroom activities that bring the past to life. In addition, you'll explore resources you can use to teach the best of ancient Greek culture, including its mythology, innovations, architecture, and philosophy. Using the knowledge and techniques from this course, you'll be able to help students see the amazing contributions and advancements of ancient Greece in the context of their own time and how they still impact our culture today. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 504 Ancient Rome: Rise of an Empire 3 credits

Ancient Rome—considered by many to match only Ancient Greece in terms of historical contributions to politics, warfare, and culture—is one of the most fascinating and paradoxical cultures in history. The struggle to balance freedom and representative government with conquest and autocratic rule shaped this culture for nearly 1,000 years. The ancient Romans also made significant contributions to engineering, mathematics, architecture, philosophy, and language that are still with us today. In this course, you will learn about the mythological foundations of Rome, through the shift to republican rule, and finally, to the rise of the mighty Roman Empire. By learning about the lives of Julius Caesar, Emperor Augustus, Roman soldiers, and average citizens, you will gain robust classroom strategies for bringing ancient Roman history to life. You'll be able to show students what daily life was like in Rome for different socioeconomic groups and how Roman civilization spread through military conquest, advances in architecture and engineering, and cultural practices and traditions. Using the resources and techniques from this course, you will be able to teach your students not only about this essential part of Western history, but also how its legacy still impacts political and cultural traditions in our society today. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 505 Civics and Government 3 credits

The United States has the longest-running democracy in the modern world, but many people in our nation are abrogating their rights and responsibilities through a lack of knowledge of and involvement in our democracy. As educators, we are a primary resource to guide the next generation in understanding both the content and the active practices that citizens need to know to maintain our nation as a republic and a democracy. In this course, you will develop strategies for engaging grade 6–12 students in civics and democratic practices. You'll learn techniques for teaching essential standards such as the purpose and nature of government, how to read our founding documents, the interplay between the three branches of government, how our election system works, and how to express beliefs and differences in a productive manner. In addition, you'll explore a myriad of resources you can start using in your classroom today to encourage your students to engage in civic processes. Using the resources and methods from this course, you will be able to guide your students to become knowledgeable, contributing members of our country who work to preserve our freedoms for the next generation. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 506 Endangered Species and Mass Extinction Events 3 credits

Over the course of history, Earth has experienced five mass extinction events (MEEs), which have wiped out a total of 96% of all species through natural disasters such as meteors, volcanoes, and ice ages. Earth is now in the middle of a sixth mass extinction—this one caused by human actions. Through the destruction of habitats for industrial and commercial use, illegal poaching, pollution, and the shrinking of fresh water supplies, humans have greatly impacted the environment and placed major stressors on species all over the planet. In this course, you will gain strategies for teaching students about how Earth supports an interconnected web of living things, in which every species relies on others to keep the natural world in balance. You'll examine how animal species become endangered or extinct, the negative ripple effects of extinctions on Earth's habitats, and the crucial importance of reversing this trend. In addition, you'll learn about the contributions of major scientists to our understanding of MEEs, including Georges Cuvier, Charles Lyell, and Charles Darwin. Finally, you'll explore the interconnectivity of ecological systems, how plant and animal groups become endangered or extinct, and how humans accelerate this phenomenon. Using the resources and strategies from this course, you will be equipped to teach students the benefits of protecting Earth's habitats and species, and provide opportunities to work toward conservation. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 508 History of Slavery in America: 1600s-1800s 3 credits

Slavery is inexorably entwined with the history of American economics, politics, culture, and race relations. For students to fully understand America in the past and today, they must grapple with the institution and practices of slavery, how and why Americans brought slaves to the colonies, the hardships of slavery, and the key people and events involved in fighting—and perpetuating—slavery. In this course, you will examine the history of slavery from the early 17th century to the brink of the Civil War. You'll review the early slave trade, the inequities and horrors of slavery, and slaves' and abolitionists' struggles to end American slavery. In addition, you'll learn techniques for teaching students about the experiences of slaves in Africa, on plantations, and during resistance and escape, as well as how slavery influenced American culture, politics, and economic structures. Finally, you'll gain concrete and actionable instructional strategies to help students grasp the experience and suffering of slaves, understand the rationalizations of proslavery Whites, and trace how slavery finally came to an end. Using the resources and methods from this course, you will be able to engage your students in this difficult topic in American history with sensitivity and objectivity. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 509 Never Judge a Book by Its Cover: Perspectives on Social Justice Education 3 credits

Most teachers recognize that though they may control their classroom culture, they do not control the world students encounter when they step outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, it's imperative that they provide their students with the necessary tools and guidance so when they do come in contact with some of the harsh realities of society, they are able to make informed choices and work through their challenges. In a social justice classroom, students learn how to ask difficult questions, think critically and freely, learn from multiple perspectives, and learn to care about themselves, their peers, communities, and the world in which they live. Moreover, many practices that demonstrate a social justice orientation are also reflective of teaching best practices and can help teachers maintain high-quality instruction and create classrooms where students feel safe and supported in their growth. This course provides strategies for building a classroom community, linking instruction and assessments to students' lives and the real world, and helping students develop critical thinking skills and expand their worldviews. By the end of the course, you will be able to understand the history of social justice theory and education and design a learning environment and instruction that supports all of your students, regardless of their backgrounds and needs. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 510 Respect, Educate, and Protect: Cultivating Digital Citizenship in 21st Century Learners 3 credits

Today's students are digital natives, meaning that they use technology on a daily basis both at school and at home. Therefore, it is imperative that we prepare them to communicate and collaborate in a safe and responsible manner online. A comprehensive digital citizenship curriculum in schools will enhance achievement and empower students to behave responsibly and think critically when utilizing digital content. In this course, you will learn how to embed digital citizenship lessons in your core content material regardless of what grade or subject you teach. You'll develop strategies for teaching the nine essential elements of digital citizenship, including how to use proper online etiquette, find online resources for research and learning, appropriately report and prevent cyberbullying, and protect one's identity online. In addition, you'll cultivate techniques for integrating digital citizenship lessons into instruction and assessments to help students make informed and responsible decisions when using technology. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to instill in your students important 21st-century skills and empower them to use technology in a safe and responsible manner throughout their lives. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 511 Teaching American Colonial History 3 credits

The arrival of the early colonists in North America set the stage for the rise of a nation built upon the ideals of freedom, independence, and liberty. This is a story of dominance, pride, ambition, and risk. This is also a story of those who would fight to preserve their way of life and of those who would fight to create a new path. It is the complex job of history teachers to help their students understand the interactions of these diverse cultures and peoples in building what would become the United States of America. In this course, you will build upon the traditional narratives of early colonial history by examining the contributions of Native Americans, Africans, women, and the foreign colonial powers that challenged English dominance in the “New World.” You’ll develop strategies for teaching the events surrounding cultural conflict and the exchange of crops, animals, and human beings. In addition, you’ll expand your own historical understanding by analyzing the archeological evidence of this early period and its key figures. With the resources and techniques from this course, you will be equipped to help your students explore the complexity of America’s diverse colonial period. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 512 Teaching Social Studies K-5: An Interdisciplinary Approach 3 credits

The recent focus of high-stakes standardized testing on literacy and mathematics has led to a lack of emphasis on social studies. More and more, teachers are having to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to continue teaching this important subject area. This practice allows teachers to maximize their use of instructional time while instilling civic competence in their students. In this course, you’ll examine the themes of the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies and explore how you can teach social studies and English language arts together using read-alouds, reader’s theater, and other strategies. You’ll also explore connections between social studies and mathematics, science, the arts, and technology. In addition, you’ll learn how to use interdisciplinary approaches such as learning centers or stations, interactive notebooks, foldables, and project-based learning to address social studies standards. Using the techniques and resources from this course, you’ll be able to integrate social studies into interdisciplinary lessons or units to ensure that your students receive a well-rounded education while still performing well on standardized tests. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 513 Teaching the American Civil War 3 credits

The American Civil War is arguably the most important event in American history. It challenged the very principles on which the country had been founded just 100 years earlier and altered the direction of the nation’s culture, societal structure, and laws. Four million slaves were freed after the war, but the path to abolition and preserving the union was filled with economic and political crises, interstate strife, and debates about the ethics of an institution that dehumanized and enslaved millions of people. In this course, you will take an in-depth look at the economic, societal, and political causes of the Civil War; the major battles and events of the war; the most significant people and historical developments from this time; and the impact of the Civil War on American history. You’ll develop exercises and techniques for teaching students how to critically examine both sides of the war, and for showing them what life was like on the battle line for men and women (both black and white). In addition, you’ll learn how to introduce students to primary documents such as the Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with actionable strategies for implementing meaningful classroom instruction on the Civil War. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 514 Teaching the American Presidency 3 credits

Regardless of who is in office at the time, news about the president of the United States often dominates news cycles and hashtags. However, many Americans often struggle to describe what defines the office of the presidency and how past presidents have impacted the office and our nation. In this course, you will examine the history and role of the U.S. presidency as well as the successes and failures of U.S. presidents and their impact on the nation. You’ll learn how to show students the relevance of the presidency to their lives and give them a framework to judge different presidents’ effectiveness in an unbiased way. In addition, you’ll cultivate resources you can start using in your classroom immediately, and create a practical lesson plan or project that will support you in teaching this important topic. Using the knowledge and strategies from this course, you’ll be able to prepare your students to be knowledgeable citizens who can interpret current and past events in light of the entire history of the U.S. presidency. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 515 Teaching the American Revolution 3 credits

The American Revolution was unique in world history. In the 1700s, no one would have dreamed that anyone could defeat the soldiers of the well-ordered, well-equipped British Empire—much less a ragtag group of militiamen. However, a set of volatile social and economic conditions emboldened just enough American colonists to dissolve their ties with Britain, igniting a war whose outcome changed the course of Western civilization. In this course, you will examine the key events of the American Revolution from colonial America through the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. You will learn techniques for teaching your students about the contributions and experiences of all Americans during the Revolution, including those who did not want to break from Britain. In addition, you’ll create an artifact that you can start using in your class immediately to teach the causes and results of the American Revolution, as well as the people who experienced it. Using the knowledge and techniques from this course, you will be able to tie together the nuances and details of the Revolutionary War era in a way that engages your students and gives them a foundational understanding of how our country began. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 516 Teaching the Constitution and The Bill of Rights 3 credits

The United States stands apart in human history as a country founded by the people, for the people. In the past, most leaders or conquerors were concerned with how to sustain their own power, but the Founding Fathers were determined to limit the power of the government so that all citizens could live free. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights are the manifestations of their philosophies and desires for this country, and are thus essential for every citizen to understand and appreciate. In this course, you will gain the background knowledge and techniques you need to teach your students about these important documents. You’ll review the origins of the U.S. Constitution, what motivated the writing of the Constitution, and the process of creating the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. You will also develop engaging activities to teach the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and to teach students about the rights these documents afford them as citizens of this country. With the strategies you learn in this course, you’ll be able to bring life to the centuries-old founding documents of our country and instill in students why they matter beyond the walls of your classroom. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 517 Teaching Western Civilization Part 1 3 credits

To kids, something that happened a year ago often seems remote and unimportant—much less historical events that took place hundreds or even thousands of years ago. However, as a teacher, you know that history makes us what we are today, and no history more so than Western Civilization. In this course, you will review the important events, people, and eras from the time of the Ancient Near East civilizations (4000 B.C.) through the age of the Renaissance. The course provides documents and resources that you can start incorporating in your instruction today. You will cultivate ideas for activities and lesson plans that will help students understand the chronological evolution of Western Civilization and how it has shaped today's world. Using the knowledge and techniques from this course, you'll be able to build a Western Civilization curriculum that engages students and gives them a unique insight into our culture today. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 518 Teaching Western Civilization Part 2 3 credits

It's hard to believe all the milestones and advances that have taken place in the last 100 years, let alone the last 500. The period from the European Renaissance to the present Digital Age has seen some of the highest and lowest points of Western Civilization, and it is essential that your students understand this foundation that undergirds the world in which they live. In this course, you will engage in a thorough overview of the resonating events, people, and eras from the last half-century of Western Civilization. You'll cultivate a variety of resources you can use to teach your students about this important period of history, and build lesson plans and activities that you can start using in your class immediately. In addition, you'll examine the legacy and impact of Western Civilization on the rest of the world and how to encourage your students to analyze this topic from an unbiased historical perspective. With the knowledge and tools you gain from this course, you'll be able to produce students who understand the legacy that has shaped the world around them and its ongoing impact in the modern world. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 519 The American Civil Rights Movement 3 credits

In the 1950s, just 90 years after the end of the Civil War, equal rights for all existed only in America's founding documents. Throughout much of the South, African Americans were denied the right to vote, were forced to use separate public facilities, went to segregated schools, and faced rampant discrimination in housing, employment, and many other areas. In response, the Civil Rights Movement aimed to eliminate segregation and guarantee equal rights for all Americans regardless of skin color. In this course, you will review the major events of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s, including the Montgomery bus boycott, sit-ins and other nonviolent demonstrations, and the galvanizing leadership of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. In addition, you'll develop strategies for teaching students what life was like in segregated cities and discussing issues of prejudice of racism with sensitivity and respect. Using multimedia resources and creative lesson plans, you'll be able to bring to life events such as the March on Washington and the passage of major legislation that spelled victory for the ongoing battle for equal rights. Using the techniques from this course, you will be equipped to teach students about this crucial period of American history and how it continues to shape our country today. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 520 Read Between the Lines: Developing a Critical Historical Perspective 3 credits

Reluctant students of history often come to class with the idea that the subject is focused only on memorizing dates and monotonously rehashing the same long-ago events. However, a historical mind-set involves much more creative and critical thinking. When taught properly, this mind-set can help students engage more deeply and develop their own rich interpretation of historical events. In this course, you will learn best practices for helping students build critical historical perspectives and apply objective reasoning to historical analysis. You will cultivate techniques for teaching students how to ask good historical questions, analyze primary and secondary sources, and critically examine historical and current events so that they can think like historians and engage authentically with the past. Using Common Core and National History Standards, you will be able to create an environment of open, unbiased discussion in which your students can rationally evaluate even difficult topics such as race, gender, and class inequality. With the strategies you gain from this course, you will be equipped to shift your students' mind-set from memorizing dry facts to participating in authentic historical interpretation. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 521 Ellis Island and Immigration in the 19th and 20th Centuries 3 credits

The story of Ellis Island is the story of what it means to be an American. It is the symbol of American immigration, standing alongside other great monuments as part of our nation's founding mythos. For more than 60 years, Ellis Island was the gateway for millions of our ancestors into the United States. In this course, you will develop strategies for teaching about this time and place of unparalleled immigration in American history from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. You'll cultivate resources and lesson ideas to help your students understand the intense and bittersweet accounts of all the people who came through Ellis Island, including the immigrants, officials, interpreters, and social reformers. In addition, you'll examine the untold story of the Ellis Island Hospital, where the germs of the world converged—a fateful crossroads for hundreds of thousands of hopeful immigrants, which had untold effects on public health. Using the techniques from this course, you will be equipped to help your students authentically connect to this dynamic period in history and how it shaped the nation America would become. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

SSTX 523 Achieving Equity through Courageous Dialogue 3 credits

When difficult topics arise, our tendency sometimes is to avoid them; or, if we do confront them, emotions and strong opinions can sometimes overrun the conversation, leaving us no better off than we were before. Learning how to talk about difficult topics is a skill that's often overlooked in the classroom. However, when teachers take the time to foster courageous dialogue about hard-to-discuss topics, students will become more empathetic and equipped to be part of the solution. In this course, you will confront your personal feelings and biases about difficult topics such as poverty, racism, LGBTQ+ issues, gun violence, entitlement, and more. Once you understand how your own feelings impact your teaching, you will be able to address your weaknesses and leverage your strengths to discuss these topics with your students and teach them how to do the same. You'll examine the root causes of the most pressing problems facing our society and how these problems impact individuals on an emotional level. Finally, you'll explore how these problems impact your school and how to effect change on the classroom and staff level. With the strategies from this course, you'll be able to teach students the value of listening and honest sharing, and promote a culture of courageous, inclusive, and empathetic conversations in your school. Note: This course presents an honest and frank discussion of some of the most troubling issues facing students and teachers in 21st-century classrooms. Our aim is to help educators facilitate productive conversations with students about these issues. However, given the difficult nature of these topics, please be aware that course topics and language may be unsettling for some participants.

SSTX 524 Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies 3 credits

One of our country's greatest strengths is the number of cultures represented in our citizenry. No other time or place in history has brought together such a diverse array of cultures, backgrounds, and identities. However, with that diversity comes a great deal of responsibility, particularly for educators. Teachers must be able to communicate effectively with this wide array of cultural backgrounds and lead their students to celebrate diversity as well. In this course, you will explore the importance of culture; how it impacts thinking, learning, and behavior; and how to embrace cultural differences and become a culturally responsive teacher. To help you implement culturally responsive practices, you'll re-examine familiar concepts like mindfulness and social-emotional learning to see how they can help make your classroom and your school a more inviting place. In addition, you'll learn specific communication skills and leadership strategies to encourage parent involvement and promote culturally responsive practices throughout your school. Whether you're looking to make your classroom and lesson plans more culturally inclusive or start a schoolwide initiative, this course will give you the tools you need to be truly inclusive, culturally responsive, and capable of understanding and reaching all children.

SSTX 525 Using Data to Understand Inequities in Schools 3 credits

Inequities in education are sometimes easy to spot, like when a special education classroom has a disproportionate number of boys or minorities. But more frequently, inequity is not so apparent. Looking closely at student data points such as demographics, enrollment, attendance, and discipline can often tell a deeper, richer story about inequities that may exist in your school that you may not otherwise be aware of. In this course, you will learn about the systemic inequities students often face, and strategies for talking about them with school leaders, teachers, and parents. Through a range of data sets, you'll explore common areas of inequity at a national level, and reflect on your own school or community's practices to support all students. You'll also discover several tools and strategies you can use to uncover potential issues of inequity in your own district, school, or classroom; how to interpret data findings through an equity lens; and how to design an action plan based on these findings. With the tools and strategies from this course, you'll be able to uncover hard-to-see inequities in your school or district and create data-driven solutions that inspire everyone involved to help students succeed.