

School of Education (SOE) **Vision and Mission**

The School of Education prepares educators and leaders who transform lives through learning. Through excellence in teaching, scholarship, innovation, and partnership, we strengthen the educator workforce, advance educational opportunity, and improve outcomes for learners, schools, and communities across East Texas and beyond.

Course: ELED4312 – 80452 Fall 2026

Elementary Social Studies Methods

Instructor:	<i>Matt Stevenson, Professor</i>	<i>Phone: 407-314-3535</i>
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Office Hours:	BEP 237, 8am-10am or 4pm-5pm Tuesday and Thursday and by appointment	
Class Meeting times:	Asynchronous	

Course Description

Selected strategies, methods, materials, and technology for teaching social studies in the elementary and middle school.

Below you will find more information about course objectives, specific assignments, grading scale, and procedures and policies. Please feel free to reach out to me via email (dstevenson@uttyler.edu) if you ever have any questions or concerns at all.

Course Objectives

The purpose of the course is to present pre-service teachers with learning opportunities based on the Texas Licensure Standards (See full list at the end), Nation Council for the Social Studies C3 Framework, and available Library of Congress resources of educators

Assigned Readings

- National and State Curriculum Standards
- Library of Congress Resources of Educators

- Articles and Resources to be provided on CANVAS
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DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):

For this semester, teacher candidates will be organized into small groups referred to as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Groups will be assigned at random via CANVAS. It is the responsibility of every member of their PLC to coordinate and collaborate throughout the semester to complete assignments. Failing to coordinate with your PLC could result in missed assignments, which will penalize your grade. Any issues with PLCs that cannot be resolved through communication should be relayed to me. Let's address problems before they become crises.

Teaching is a highly collaborative profession. Regardless of where or what subject(s) you teach, you will need to work with others to prepare your courses, support your classroom throughout the year, and reflect on successes and failures in ways that help you improve your skills as an educator.

Working with fellow educators can be very rewarding, particularly for new teachers, as it allows for a shared effort in designing classroom strategies, developing assignments and assessments, accessing and utilizing the abundance of materials already available for teachers, and navigating local, state, and national content standards. It can also be a frustrating process, as schedules may conflict, personalities may clash, and (let's face it) not everyone will bring the same work ethic to the group. Despite any issues that might arise, administrators will expect quality work that is completed on time. That is the approach I take when assessing the products of your PLC. PLC submissions only need to be submitted by one member of the group; however, everyone is responsible for ensuring that submission has occurred.

Individual assignments will be either recorded or typed and submitted on CANVAS. See corresponding assignments on CANVAS for full descriptions. See course calendar on CANVAS for specific due dates.

1. Introductions and Discussion of Social Studies Autobiography (10 pts.)
2. Social Studies Theory: Introduction to Samuel Wineburg's *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* (Methods)
3. Understanding and Assessing Standards: TEKS and C3 Framework
4. Public Issues in the Social Studies Classroom: Divisive Concepts Laws

5. Introduction to Library of Congress (LOC) Educator Resources
6. The Role of Film in the Social Studies Classroom
7. PLC LOCNFR Lesson Plan, Presentation, and Self-Evaluation
8. Individual LOCNFR Lesson Plan and Presentation 2
9. LOCNFR lesson TEKS Peer Evaluation
10. Reflection TEKS Lesson Plan and Presentation 2 with Course Evaluation

Evaluation and Grading

Letter Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

COURSE POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

- **Assignment Submission & Grade Dissemination:** **All assignments are to be submitted through Canvas** unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Grades and instructor comments can be viewed at any time using the Grade Book function of Canvas.
- **Attendance Policy (In-person courses only):** Any candidate who misses 2 or more classes is subject to receive a failing grade in the course. Arriving 5 minutes late or leaving 5 minutes early constitutes an absence. This class is part of your professional preparation. Appropriate attitude, demeanor, and diligence are required. Attendance and participation in class is expected and very important. Candidates are responsible for all material covered when absent.
- **Late Work Policy:** All assignments are expected to be submitted by the due date and time. **Late work will NOT be accepted**, except for documented emergency situations and still this is at the discretion of the instructor.
- **Extra Credit Policy:** There is no extra credit for this course.

- **Formatting Policy:** All written assignments should be completed using **Times New Roman size 12 font** and **double-spaced**. Unless otherwise stated by the instructor.
- **AI Policy:** UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

For this course, AI is a tool we will utilize, explore and assess in terms of its value in classroom planning and organization. It is expected that you will utilize generative AI tools to ensure your work is clear; however, do not rely on AI to create content. Generative AI does not replace your teaching practices and therefore you should never trust AI to "tell you how to teach." Moreover, Generative AI should never be used for your reflection assignments. I would rather a messy expression of your thoughts and perspectives than a clean essay that masks who you are.

- **Email:** Email will be the primary mode of out-of-class communication. Personal information will only be released using the official UTT email account. Course announcements may be disseminated by UTT email and/or through Canvas, and it is the teacher candidates' responsibility to stay up-to-date with these messages. When sending an email **please allow 24 hours for a response**. Emails sent on Friday evenings, Saturday, Sunday, and/or Holidays will be answered the following business day.
- **Students with Disabilities:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services assists students with disabilities in eliminating barriers so that they may have access to all academic, social, cultural, and recreational opportunities of the University. Documentation from an attending physician or the Student Health Center regarding the disability is required. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is the designated office that obtains and files disability-related documents, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for the provision of such accommodations.

In post-secondary settings, it is the student's responsibility to request in advance any individual assistance. It is important to understand that not every student with a disability requires accommodations. It is equally important to understand that even though two individuals may have the same disability, they may not require the same accommodations. The University of Texas at Tyler is a caring and supportive community with high academic and personal expectations for each student. The goal of the University and ODS is to enable each student to achieve a full and productive life.

- **Professionalism Disposition Policy:** All teacher candidates at UTT are expected to demonstrate commitment to the Professional Dispositions (<https://www.uttyler.edu/academics/colleges-schools/education-psychology/departments/education/undergraduate/dispositions/>) in coursework and field settings related to their preparation program. Instructors for targeted courses are asked to document that students have shown behavior indicating appropriate dispositions at the conclusion of the course. Instructors, supervisors, and mentors (both public school and university) can report dispositional deficiencies at any time through the procedures at the web site indicated above. Candidates and others are encouraged to visit the website cited above for additional information about the dispositions and/or procedures pertaining to them.
- **Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If one is uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult the Honor Statement in the University of Texas at Tyler Student Handbook for further details. It is the aim of the faculty of the UT Tyler to foster a spirit of complete honesty and high standards of integrity. The attempts of students to present as their own any work not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty administration as a most serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences.
- **Flexibility Clause:** The aforementioned requirements, assignments, policies, and evaluation procedures, etc... are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor as long as they fit within the greater university and college policies. Reasonable written and/or email notification will be provided to all teacher candidates if such occurrences should happen.

*****The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter or amend this syllabus as necessary. Students will be notified in writing / email of any such changes.***

Appendix: List of Texas State Standards touch up on in this course

Instructional Preparation - Teachers understand how students learn, and they prepare for instructional delivery by designing lessons, evaluating instructional materials, leveraging their knowledge of students, and engaging in a thorough process for lesson internalization.

Teachers apply basic principles of lesson plan design from the learning sciences to prepare for instruction.
Teachers understand learning as an active and social process of meaning-making that results in changes in student knowledge and behavior based on connections between past and new experiences.
Teachers prepare instruction that uses research and evidence-based teaching strategies for eliciting and sustaining attention and motivation and supporting encoding, such as use of multimedia learning principles, reduction of extraneous cognitive load, use of worked examples, interleaving, and deep integration of new experiences with prior knowledge.
Teachers prepare instruction that uses research and evidence-based strategies for memory and recall such as interleaving, spacing, retrieval practice, and metacognition.
Teachers recognize misconceptions about learning, the brain, and child and adolescent development, including myths such as learning styles, personality traits, and hemispheric dominance, and avoid unsupported instructional practices based on these misunderstandings.
Teachers evaluate instructional materials and select or customize the highest quality district-approved option to prepare for instruction.
Teachers identify the components of high-quality instructional materials, such as a logical scope and sequence, clear learning objectives, grade- or course-level content, explicit instruction, student engagement, academic language, deliberate practice, and assessment, appropriate to the discipline.
Teachers identify the benefits of using high-quality instructional materials.
Teachers apply knowledge of the components of high-quality instructional materials to select or customize materials when appropriate.
Teachers analyze instructional materials and digital resources to ensure quality, rigor, and access to grade- or course-level content.
Teachers use high-quality materials to plan instruction that connects students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts.
Teachers understand initial lesson plan design and, when district-approved materials are not available and when directed by their district, engage in initial lesson plan design using science of learning concepts.
Teachers design lessons based on the components of high-quality instructional materials, such as a logical scope and sequence, clear learning objectives, application of explicit instruction, and grade- or course-level content.

Teachers design lessons that effectively connect learning objectives with explicit instruction, student engagement, academic language, deliberate practice, and assessment.
Teachers design lessons that connect students' prior understanding and real-world experiences to new content and contexts.
Teachers plan for the use of digital tools and resources to engage students in active deep learning.
Teachers ensure lesson sequence and materials meet the needs of all learners and adapt methods when appropriate.
Teachers plan for the use of multiple means to engage students, varied ways of representing information, and options for students to demonstrate their learning.
Teachers differentiate instruction and align methods and techniques to diverse student needs, including acceleration, just-in-time supports, technology, intervention, linguistic supports, appropriate scaffolding, and implementation of individualized education programs.
Teachers recognize students' backgrounds (familial, educational, linguistic, and developmental) as assets and apply knowledge of students to engage them in meaningful learning.
Teachers plan to present information in a meaningful way that activates or provides any prerequisite knowledge to maximize student learning.
Teachers collaborate with other professionals, use resources, and plan research- and evidence-based instructional strategies to anticipate and respond to the unique needs of students, including disabilities, giftedness, bilingualism, and biliteracy.
Teachers engage in a thorough process of lesson internalization to prepare well-organized, sequential instruction that builds on students' prior knowledge.
Teachers identify how the intentional sequencing of units, lessons, and learning tasks supports student knowledge and mastery throughout the year.
Teachers identify how the learning goals of units and lessons are aligned to state standards.
Teachers internalize lesson content by reading the texts, completing learning tasks and assessments, rehearsing lesson delivery, and identifying any personal gaps in understanding.
Teachers plan for pacing, use of teacher resources, and transitions between activities.

Teachers strategically plan instructional strategies, formative assessments, technology, scaffolds, and enrichment to make learning accessible to all students.
Instructional Delivery and Assessment - Teachers intentionally apply their knowledge of students and the learning process to implement high-quality instruction and assessment practices that are research- and evidence-based and informed by student work.
Teachers effectively communicate grade- or course-level expectations, objectives, and goals to help all students reach high levels of achievement.
Teachers provide multiple means of engagement to encourage all students to remain persistent in the face of challenges.
Teachers scaffold instruction, from initial knowledge and skill development through automaticity, toward complex, higher-order thinking, providing opportunities for deeper learning.
Teachers apply instructional strategies to deliberately engage all students in critical thinking and problem solving.
Teachers strategically incorporate technology that removes barriers and allows students to interact with the curriculum in more authentic, significant, and effective ways.
Teachers consistently check for understanding, give feedback, and make lesson adjustments as necessary.
Teachers implement frequent or low- or no-stakes assessments to promote retrieval of learned information.
Teachers continually monitor and assess students' progress to guide instructional outcomes and determine next steps to ensure student mastery of grade- or course-level content.
Teachers provide frequent, timely, and specific explanatory feedback that emphasizes effort, improvement, and acknowledges students' strengths and areas for growth.
Teachers strategically implement instructional strategies, formative assessments, scaffolds, and enrichment to make learning accessible to all students.
Teachers set goals for each student in response to previous outcomes from formative and summative assessments.
Teachers involve all students in self-assessment, goal setting, and monitoring progress.

Teachers apply multiple means of assessing learning, including the use of digital tools, to accommodate according to students' learning needs, linguistic differences, and/or varying levels of background knowledge.
Teachers understand the major concepts, key themes, multiple perspectives, assumptions, processes of inquiry, structure, and real-world applications of their grade-level and subject-area content.
Teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of and competence in the use of open education resource instructional materials when available for the grade level and subject area.
Teachers have expertise in how their content vertically and horizontally aligns with the grade-level/subject-area continuum, leading to an integrated curriculum across grade levels and content areas.
Teachers identify gaps in students' knowledge of subject matter and communicate with their leaders and colleagues to ensure that these gaps are adequately addressed across grade levels and subject areas.
Teachers deliberately and regularly share multiple different examples of student representations and resolutions.
Teachers stay current with developments, new content, new approaches, and changing methods of instructional delivery within their discipline.
Teachers demonstrate content-specific pedagogy that meets the needs of diverse learners, utilizing engaging instructional materials to connect prior content knowledge to new learning.
Teachers teach both the key content knowledge and the key skills of the discipline and requisite linguistic skills making the information accessible to all learners by constructing it into usable knowledge.
Teachers make appropriate and authentic connections across disciplines, subjects, and students' real-world experiences to build knowledge from year to year.
Teachers provide multiple means of representation and engagement to promote literacy and ensure discipline-specific academic language is accessible for all students.
Teachers explicitly teach, encourage, and reinforce the use of academic language, including vocabulary, use of symbols, and labeling.
Teachers prepare for and apply scaffolds in the lesson to make content accessible to all students, including diverse learners such as emergent bilingual students, students with disabilities, and students working above and below grade level.

Teachers engage students in productive struggle by allowing them time to work, asking questions to deepen their thinking, encouraging multiple approaches, praising effort on successful and unsuccessful attempts, and contrasting student attempts and correct solutions.
Teachers demonstrate research- and evidence-based best practices specific to planning, instruction, and assessment of mathematics.
Teachers communicate, using multiple means of representation, the relationship between mathematical concepts and mathematical procedures.
Teachers engage students in recursive lesson activities that reinforce automaticity in prerequisite knowledge and skills to mitigate the use of working memory when engaging those knowledge and skills as task complexity increases.
Teachers use multiple means of representation to engage students in mathematical tasks that deepen students' understanding of conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and mathematical reasoning.
Teachers prepare and deliver instruction and questioning to deliberately solicit different explanations, representations, solutions, and reasoning from all students.
Teachers prepare and deliver explicit instruction and modeling that links grade-level conceptual understanding with mathematical procedures and avoids shortcuts to problem solving.
Teachers analyze instructional plans to ensure an appropriate balance between conceptual understanding and procedural fluency.
Teachers facilitate discourse through regular opportunities for students to communicate the relationship between mathematical concepts and mathematical procedures.
Teachers provide time for students to collaboratively and independently apply conceptual understanding and procedural fluency to problem-solving.
Teachers explicitly teach and model that math abilities are expandable and improvable.
Teachers demonstrate research- and evidence-based best practices specific to planning, instruction, and assessment of language arts and reading.
Teachers analyze instructional materials in preparation for instruction to ensure they provide grade-level appropriate, systematic, and explicit practice in foundational literacy skills.
Teachers analyze instructional materials in preparation for instruction to ensure that foundational literacy skills are reached at each grade or course level.

Teachers identify and analyze grade- or course-level and complex texts for quality in preparation for instruction.
Teachers model ethical and respectful behavior and demonstrate integrity in all settings and situations.
Teachers understand and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the professional behaviors and responsibilities of educators.
(Teachers adhere to the Educators' Code of Ethics in §247.2 of this title (relating to Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators), including following policies and procedures at their specific school placement(s).
Teachers advocate for and apply knowledge of students' progress and learning plans through the maintenance of thorough and accurate records.
Teachers model and promote for students the use of safe, ethical, and legal practices with digital tools and technology.
Teachers actively self-reflect on their practice and collaborate with other educational professionals to deepen knowledge, demonstrate leadership, and improve their instructional effectiveness.
Teachers apply consistent reflective practices, analysis of student work, and video evidence of teaching to identify and communicate professional learning needs.
Teachers seek and apply job-embedded feedback from colleagues, including supervisors, mentors, coaches, and peers.
Teachers establish and strive to achieve professional goals to strengthen their instructional effectiveness and better meet students' needs.
Teachers engage in relevant professional learning opportunities that align with their growth goals and student learning needs.
Teachers seek to lead other adults on campus through professional learning communities, grade- or subject-level team leadership, committee membership, or other opportunities.
Teachers collaborate with educational professionals to ensure learning is accessible and enables all students to reach their academic and non-academic goals.