

## Bachelor of Social Science in Secondary Education Social Studies

The Secondary Education Social Studies (SESST) major prepares students to meet the requirements to be certified for the Social Studies Instructional I Certificate as established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The program prepares teacher candidates to become effective, driven, passionate educators, teaching, history, government, economics, geography, psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

This program is recognized by the [National Council for the Social Studies \(NCSS\)](#) and the [Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\)](#). Students are challenged to prepare for teaching assignments at the middle and high school level, and in diverse settings characterized as rural, urban, and suburban. The art and science of teaching in secondary schools is undergoing significant transformation as new technologies, time allocation for instruction, and new instructional strategies are impacting the delivery of social studies instruction.

Penn State Harrisburg also offers Secondary Education bachelor's degrees in [English](#) and [Mathematics](#).

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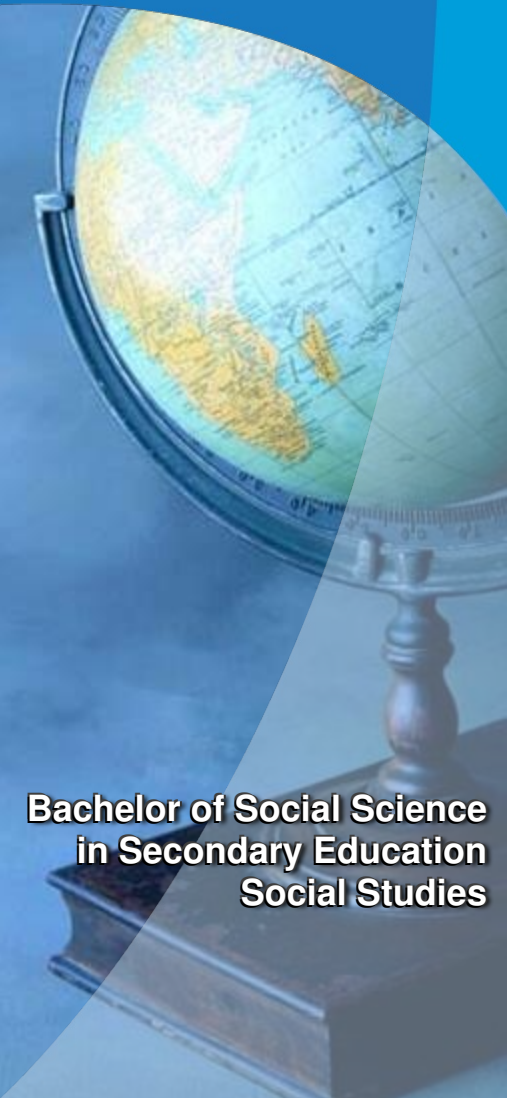
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**PennState**  
Harrisburg

**School of Behavioral  
Sciences and Education**



**Bachelor of Social Science  
in Secondary Education  
Social Studies**

## Curriculum Certification

The Pennsylvania Department of Education approves this major, and students who successfully complete the requirements and are recommended by the School of Behavioral Sciences and Education will be certified for either the Citizenship Education or Social Science Instructional I Certificate as established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Certification requirements for teachers vary by state.



## Courses Overview

Coursework is rooted in evidence-based effective practices for teaching and learning and incorporates the most up-to-date and relevant approaches and issues in education.

Over the first four semesters, along with their General Education requirements, students take an array of introductory social studies-related courses in American and world history, sociology, psychology, geography, economics, and political science, as well as an introductory education-related course. After satisfying all entrance to major requirements, students become teacher candidates and begin more in-depth coursework in a number of areas, including history, American studies, women's studies, minority studies, sociology, anthropology, geography, and political science.

Seven core education courses undergird the teacher certification and are taken throughout the student's final four semesters. These courses include everything from "Learning Theory and Instructional Procedures" (EDUC 314) and "Social and Cultural Factors in Education" (EDUC 315) to "Strategies for Effective Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms" (EDUC 459) and "Diversity and Cultural Awareness Practices in the K-12 Classroom" (EDUC 400). In "Teaching Secondary Social Studies" (EDUC 415), candidates engage in an in-depth examination of the aims and purposes of social studies, selecting meaningful content, engaging students with critical and transformative learning experiences, and designing relevant and purposeful lessons and instructional units. All courses are taught by highly qualified and experienced teacher educators with backgrounds in adolescence, educational psychology, special education, education history and theory, and social studies issues, curriculum, and pedagogy.

The SESST program comprises two main field experiences. EDUC 313 is a two-credit experience tied directly to EDUC 314, affording teacher candidates to make clear connections between theory and everyday practice. The second is the capstone experience, student teaching, where candidates are placed with an experienced mentor teacher in a partner school district for 13-15 weeks. We are also proud to offer a new experience in the form of a year-long clinical residency, the Teacher Residency Collaborative, where teacher candidates are placed with a mentor teacher during the fall semester three days a week and candidates are with the same mentor full time in the spring semester. More information about the residency is available on the [Teacher Education website](#).

## Undergraduate Admissions Requirements

Minimum high school course requirements for admission to baccalaureate (four-year) degree programs are listed below. Keep in mind that specific programs may have additional requirements or recommendations.

### English

Four units, including one unit each in composition and literature, are required.

### Social Studies/Art/Humanities

Three units in any combination of social studies, arts, and humanities are required.

### World Language

Two units in a single world language other than English are required. However, a student may be admitted with fewer than two units in a world language other than English, but must correct this deficiency by the time s/he earns 60 credits or graduates from Penn State, whichever comes first. This deficiency may be corrected by passing one three- or four-credit college level world language course or by demonstrating proficiency equivalent to two units of high school world language study.

Either a third unit in the same language or an additional unit in a second world language other than English is recommended.

### Science

Three units of science are required. Preparation in chemistry and physics is recommended but not required for our Science and Engineering/Engineering Technology programs.

### Math

Three units of mathematics are required (four are recommended), selected from any combination of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. Some programs have additional mathematics requirements. Our Business, Engineering/Engineering Technology, and Science programs require one-half unit of trigonometry or higher level math within the required three units.

Penn State requires proof of graduation or a GED for admission to four-year degree programs.

\*In most high school curricula, one unit = one year.

Visit Undergraduate Admissions: Admissions Requirements for more information (<http://goo.gl/eVGAMB>)