



SSE 6617
Trends in K-6 Social Science Education
53040 002
Summer 2026

Instructor Name

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University Course Description

This course is designed to study techniques and strategies employed by social studies teachers that are affective in motivating elementary school aged youth to acquire the information, skills, and modes of reasoning unique to the social sciences. Students are expected to conduct research and demonstrate use of various methods, techniques, and materials. Theoretical foundations of social studies are also examined.

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

This course is delivered in a synchronous online format with scheduled weekly class meetings. Sessions are designed to extend and apply assigned readings rather than repeat them, requiring students to come prepared for active participation.

Class time emphasizes a student-centered learning environment that blends brief instructor-guided mini-lectures with discussion, collaborative learning, and applied activities. Students will regularly engage in small-group work, analysis of primary sources, lesson design, and peer feedback to support the development of effective social studies teaching practices.

Student Learning Outcomes

Following completion of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Implement a variety of teaching methods (direct instruction, cooperative learning, concept formation, simulation, etc.) used in social science education, employing various examples from the social studies content
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of social studies subject matter as defined by the NCSS and Florida's State Standards.
- C. Construct social studies instructional approaches based on the Florida's State Standards.
- D. Understand the centrality of social studies to "integrated lessons" in the elementary classroom; the interdisciplinary nature of social studies education; and use of other disciplines to enrich social studies (fiction from language arts, inventions from science, etc.
- E. Appreciate the special considerations of the social studies teacher in the context of enculturation, indoctrination, and dealing with controversial issues.
- F. Understand the role of social studies in the individual development of children and socialization into a democratic society, and
- G. Employ information and communication technology skills to become familiar with and assess the range of resources available through the Internet and social science journals, etc.

Course Objectives

1. **Facilitate active learning experiences** that model a range of effective instructional strategies (e.g., direct instruction, inquiry-based learning, cooperative learning) for elementary social studies teaching.
2. **Provide structured opportunities** for students to engage with key social studies concepts and standards (NCSS and Florida State Standards)

through guided practice, discussion, and applied activities.

3. **Guide students in designing standards-based instruction** by scaffolding the development of lesson plans and curriculum materials aligned with state expectations.
4. **Model interdisciplinary teaching approaches** by integrating literacy, technology, and other content areas into social studies instruction.
5. **Create a collaborative learning environment** that encourages dialogue, reflection, and critical examination of complex and controversial issues in social studies education.
6. **Support the development of pedagogical decision-making** through feedback, peer review, and iterative improvement of instructional work.
7. **Incorporate the use of digital tools and primary sources** to enhance students' ability to locate, evaluate, and apply instructional resources in social studies contexts.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

- Bober, T. (2019). Elementary educator's guide to primary sources: Strategies for teaching. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/usf/detail.action?docID=5597788>
- Florida Department of Education. (2023). Social Studies Standards. <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/Standard>
- NCSS. (2024). Teaching with Primary Sources to Prepare Students for College, Career, and Civic Life: Volume 1. <https://www.socialstudies.org/tps/teaching-primary-sources-vol1>
- NCSS. (2024). Teaching with primary sources to prepare students for college, career, and civic life Volume 2. <https://www.socialstudies.org/tps/teaching-primary-sources-vol2>
- Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov>
- Florida Memory <https://www.floridamemory.com/>
- National Archives <https://www.archives.gov/>
- Tampa Bay History Center <https://tampabayhistorycenter.org/>
- Laptop

How to Succeed in this Course

Successful students in this class complete all readings before coming to class. Our in-class time is designed to further and deepen the knowledge, concepts, and skills from the readings – not just repeat the information.

Grading Scale

Grading scale

Grading Scale (%)			
94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0 - 59	F

NOTE: No grade below C- or S will be accepted toward a graduate degree. Please retain all your assignments for the semester, including those that are graded and returned.

Grade Categories and Weights

Your grade in this class will be a result of completion of the course requirements listed below.

Course Assessment and Grading Breakdown	
Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Social Studies at the Center	25%
Group Lesson Plan	25%
Civics/ELA Lesson Plan & Presentation	30%
Weekly Class Engagement	20%

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Week	Content	Assignments Due
Week 1	Perceptions and Perspectives in the Social Studies Planning and Assessment in the Social Studies	Teaching with Primary Sources Basics Discussion Post
Week 2	Introduction to the Library of Congress Time, Continuity, & Change	Social Studies at the Center Submitted to Canvas

Week	Content	Assignments Due
Week 3	People, Places, & the Environment Population Education Virtual Workshop	
Week 4	Community-Based Museum Site Visits	Museum Activity
Week 5	Power, Authority, & Governance Civic Ideals & Practices	Group Lesson Plan on History/Geography- 4th Grade Submitted to Canvas AND individual peer rating of group members
Week 6	Production, Distribution, & Consumption	Civics/ELA Lesson Plan & Presentation- Submitted to Canvas Peer Reviews of Civics/ELA Lesson Plan

Syllabus, including course readings, assignments, and points are subject to change, based on the needs of the course and at the instructor's discretion.

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be

used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy: Assignments will be given a letter grade based on the University of South Florida grading system and the scoring guidelines that accompany each assignment. Assignments may not be revised for resubmission after the due date, so it is strongly recommended that students arrange to meet with the instructor in advance to receive feedback and additional guidance regarding progress on submissions.

All assignments are due on the date specified on the course calendar. Assignments will be considered turned in on-time if they are submitted to Canvas on the due date by the specified time. Late assignments are accepted, but with a late penalty. Papers received up to 48 hours late will be evaluated using the criteria in the syllabus, and the earned grade will be calculated as follows: Up to 5 hours late, 5 percent deducted; Between 5-24 hours late, 10 percent deducted; between 24-48 hours late, 20 percent deducted. Any student who does not turn their work within 48 hours of the due date will earn a grade of F on the respective assignment. This means that the highest grade you can earn is 59% for the late submission. Under extenuating circumstances, the professor will review circumstances on a case by case basis and make decisions accordingly. If an emergency arises that prevents you from completing your work on time, please email the professor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for you to keep up in the class. The late penalty may be waived at the professor's discretion in case of an emergency. Emergencies are defined as anything which is serious and unexpected. Emergencies cannot be written on the calendar in advance. Examples of non-emergencies are: family weddings, vacations, conferences or any other event that can be planned around.

Extra Credit Policy: There are no extra credit assignments.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas and Email: Course materials, checklists, and announcements will be posted on Canvas. Students are responsible for downloading materials. Canvas email will be used to communicate among class members. You are responsible for information that is emailed to your Canvas account or is posted on Canvas. Review Canvas announcements regularly for an overview of our weekly schedule. Specific due dates for assignments are listed in the schedule and can also be found in the course calendar.

Please feel free to email me directly with questions. Use only your USF email to correspond with me and put SSE 6617 in the subject line of the email. I check my email regularly and will respond to all emails within 24 hours Monday-Friday. Please note that I may not be available on weekends but will respond to weekend email messages no later than Monday. If you do not receive a reply within this timeframe, please contact me again, since emails sometimes get lost in delivery.

Technology Expectations: Because this course is delivered in a synchronous online format, all students are expected to have regular access to a reliable internet connection and a laptop or tablet with audio and video capabilities during scheduled class sessions. Course meetings will require active use of technology for discussions, collaborative activities, and engagement with course materials.

Students are encouraged to use their devices to support learning (e.g., accessing readings, taking notes, participating in shared documents, or researching during activities). At the same time, maintaining an engaged and professional online presence is essential. This includes actively listening, contributing to discussions, and minimizing distractions from unrelated applications or devices.

If technology use becomes distracting or interferes with your participation, you will be expected to stop non-course-related use during class time. Activities such as browsing unrelated websites, messaging, or multitasking can limit your ability to engage and may impact your participation grade. Consistent, active participation—listening, contributing, and collaborating—is required during all synchronous sessions.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in

distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>. Essays are due at turnitin.com the same day as in class.

Netiquette Guidelines

1. Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
2. Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
3. Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
4. Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
5. Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

1. Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
2. Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
3. Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website](#).

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Service Support Tampa Campus](#)

[USF IT Support St. Pete Campus](#)

[USF IT Support Sarasota-Manatee Campus](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email

asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Writing studio website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)