



CONNECTICUT

CERTIFICATION

Connecticut has established a three-tiered certification system. The three levels of certification in Connecticut include: initial educator, provisional educator, and professional educator. The following requirements refer to the initial license.

Elementary Certification

Applicants need to meet the following requirements and the appropriate assessment requirement in order to be certified as elementary teachers in Connecticut:

- ❖ bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- ❖ minimum of six semester hours of credit in child and or human growth and development, which may be completed as part of the subject area major or general academic course requirement;
- ❖ minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in five of the six general academic areas (English, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts). A survey course in U.S. history, comprised of at least three hours of credit must be included;
- ❖ completion of a subject area major consisting of one of the following:
 1. major awarded by an approved institution in any one subject area, except that a major in professional education may not be accepted in fulfillment of this requirement; and
 2. 39 semester hours of credit in an interdisciplinary major consisting of a concentration of at least 18 semester hours of credit in any one subject area with the remainder distributed among no more than three additional subjects related to the area of concentration, except that a major or course work in professional education may not be accepted in fulfillment of any portion of this requirement; and

3. minimum of 30 semester hours of credit in professional education in a planned program of study and experience in elementary education (examples provided).

Middle-Level Certification

According to the regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education, in order to receive an initial educator certificate for teaching at the middle grades, an applicant must meet the assessment requirement and the following requirements:

- ❖ bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- ❖ minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in five of the six general academic areas (English, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts). A survey course in U.S. history, comprised of at least three hours of credit must be included;
- ❖ completion of one of the following three subdivisions:
 1. subject area major in any of the following fields: English, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, earth science, general science, social science, social studies, history, political science, economics, geography, anthropology, and sociology;
 2. an interdisciplinary major in humanities, history/social science or integrated science; and
 3. 24 semester hours of study in a subject (of the above listed subjects) and either 15 hours in a second subject which may result in endorsements in the two subject areas or 15 semester hours in an all level endorsement subject, special education or related subjects;
- ❖ minimum of 30 hours of credit in professional education in a planned program (examples provided); and
- ❖ for the history or social science major or concentration, the history courses shall include study in U.S. history, Western civilization or European history and non-Western history, and study in at least three areas of social science.

Secondary Certification

Secondary academic certificates are valid for grades 7–12 in the endorsed subjects. The certificate may also be considered valid for instruction in the endorsed subject for grades 5–6. In order to obtain a secondary certificate, Connecticut teachers must meet the appropriate assessment requirements and the following requirements:

- ❖ bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- ❖ minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in five of the six general academic areas (English, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts). A survey course in U.S. history, comprised of at least three hours of credit must be included;
- ❖ completion of a subject area major consisting of one of the following:
 1. a major awarded by an approved institution in the subject area for which certification is sought, except professional education; and

2. a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit in the subject for which endorsements is sought and a minimum of 9 semester hours of credit in a subject or subjects related to the subject for which endorsement is sought, except a major or course work in professional education;
- ❖ for the history and social studies endorsement:
 1. a major awarded by an approved institution in history, except that on and after July 1, 1998, 18 semester hours in social studies shall be included;
 2. a major in political science; economics; geography; anthropology or sociology including at least 18 semester hours of credit in history; or
 3. an interdisciplinary major consisting of 39 semester hours of credit in subjects covered by the endorsement, each of which shall include 18 semester hours of credit in history including United States history, Western civilization or European history and non-Western history, provided that for the interdisciplinary major, study shall include a minimum of one course in each of the following areas: political science; economics; geography; sociology or anthropology; or psychology; and
 - ❖ minimum of 18 hours of credit in professional education (examples provided).

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching Standards outlines the knowledge, skills, and competencies teachers need to ensure that students can learn. The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching includes foundational skills and competencies for all teachers pre-K through 12, and it includes discipline-based standards in various content areas. Elementary teachers are required to adhere to the following standard in regard to social studies instruction:

- ❖ elementary teachers know, understand, and use major concepts and modes of inquiry from social studies to promote students' abilities to participate in a culturally diverse democratic society. They provide opportunities for students to investigate topics related to themselves, their families, their communities, and the world around them.

Teachers in Connecticut whose main area of expertise is social studies are expected to be proficient in the following areas:

- ❖ social studies content knowledge;
- ❖ knowledge of students;
- ❖ learning environment;
- ❖ social studies skills;
- ❖ integrated teaching and learning;
- ❖ challenging teaching and learning; and
- ❖ civic competence.

Key domains within social studies teachers' content knowledge include

- ❖ United States history, including major events and the way of life in each major era from Native American peoples before exploration through the 20th century;
- ❖ world history, including the study of both Western and non-Western civilizations from prehistory through the 20th century;
- ❖ government/civics/political science, including basic political concepts and political theory, the United States Constitution, other forms of government, and international relations;
- ❖ geography, including the themes of geography, map skills, and the study of physical, human, and regional geography;
- ❖ economics, including fundamental economic concepts, microeconomic and macroeconomic principles, and regional geography; and
- ❖ behavioral sciences, including sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

No further specifications in regard to the teaching of social studies or history are made.

Standards for Students

Connecticut's Social Studies Curriculum Framework expects that by the end of grade 12 "students will gain a knowledge of history, civics and government, geography, and economics; understand the interaction between and among history, the social sciences, and humanities; and apply that knowledge and understanding as responsible citizens." Content standards are divided into history, civics and government, geography, and economics. Within history, there are four standards:

- ❖ historical thinking;
- ❖ local, United States, and world history;
- ❖ historical themes; and
- ❖ applying history.

Performance standards are embedded in this document and clustered at three levels: K-4, 5-8, and 9-12. Content Standard 2 includes specific topics to be studied organized by periodization. The standards are identified in a "Framework." It is not the social studies curriculum but a document that provides guidance for local districts to develop their own curriculum.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Connecticut state law requires that students take a minimum of three credits in social studies to graduate from high school. Beginning with the class of 2004, students will be required to take at least one-half credit in civics as part of these three social studies credits. No other specifications were listed on the web site.

Exit Exam

None required. The CAPT (see below) is administered in grade 10 and cannot be used as the sole criterion for graduation or promotion. However, it is the basis for awarding students a Certification of Mastery and students' performance on the CAPT becomes part of their permanent record. History/social studies assessment is not included.

ASSESSMENT

Connecticut has a statewide testing program. The CAPT Program (Connecticut Academic Performance Test) consists of two tests: a Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) that is administered at grades 4, 6, and 8, and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), which is administered in grade 10. The content areas tested on these assessments include mathematics, reading across the disciplines, writing across the disciplines, and science. The reading across the disciplines test is based on a response to literature test and a reading for information test, and the writing across the disciplines exam is based on an interdisciplinary writing test and an editing and revising test. While the interdisciplinary portion of the test uses a current issue approach used in social studies instruction, the test is assessed for writing and not social studies.

