



LOUISIANA

CERTIFICATION

Louisiana offers teachers three types of certificates—C, B, and A. Universities must recommend that teachers be issued the first level of teaching certificate and are held accountable for the success of the teachers they recommend.

Elementary Certification

To be certified in grades pre-K–3 a teacher must have 39 hours in general education. Six of these hours must be in social studies. Other requirements for this level pertain to early childhood teaching. To be certified in grades 1–6, a teacher must have 54 hours in general education. Twelve of these general education hours must be in social studies. Methodology courses focus on reading, language arts, and mathematics, not social studies. Education course work is also required. Certification for grades 4–8 requires 54 hours in general education, 12 of which must be in social studies. Teachers must either take an additional 12 hours of generic subject study, three of which must be in social studies, or they focus in depth in two teaching areas—English, social studies, or mathematics (7 hours) or science (4 hours). The total hours of general and focus area course work should equal 19. Teachers must also take education course work for a total of 124 credit hours.

Secondary Certification

A minimum of 33 semester hours, including the general education requirements are necessary. These hours are distributed as follows:

- ❖ United States history—6 hours;
- ❖ Louisiana history—3 hours;
- ❖ Western civilization or world history—3 hours;
- ❖ United States government—6 hours;
- ❖ geography—6 hours;

- ❖ economics—6 hours; and
- ❖ sociology—3 hours.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

According to Louisiana’s Title II report, the state has not yet established content standards for teachers. Instead, the state has created performance standards that apply to all teaching fields and grade levels. These standards are entitled the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching and consist of five domains: Planning, Management, Instruction, Professional Development, and School Improvement.

Standards for Students

The Louisiana Social Studies Content Standards use four disciplines as their core basis: geography, civics, economic, and history. Anthropology and sociology are incorporated within these four strands. Louisiana’s standards first name a discipline and then provide phrases to explain the discipline’s underlying themes. Then a focus paragraph sets the discipline in context and explains its overall importance to students’ education. A standard provides a description of what students should know and be able to do, and benchmarks are then listed for grades K–4, 5–8, and 9–12. The benchmarks are categorized by appropriate content standards. Benchmarks for grades 5–8 address U.S. history to 1877 and world history to 1450. Benchmarks for grades 9–12 focus on U.S. history since 1877 and world history since 1450. Specific eras for both U.S. and world history are identified in the benchmarks.

History Standard

- ❖ Time, Continuity, and Change—Students develop a sense of historical time and historical perspective as they study the history of their community, state, nation, and world.

History Strands

- ❖ K–4:
 - a. Historical Thinking Skills
 - b. Families and Communities
 - c. Louisiana and United States History
 - d. World History
- ❖ 5–8:
 - a. Historical Thinking Skills
 - b. United States History
 - c. World History
 - d. Louisiana History
- ❖ 9–12:
 - a. Historical Thinking Skills

- b. United States History
- c. World History

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Louisiana high school students must earn three credits in social studies in order to be able to graduate:

- ❖ American history—1 unit;
- ❖ civics—½ unit;
- ❖ free enterprise—½ unit; and
- ❖ world history or world geography or Western civilization—1 unit.

Exit Exam

The GEE 21 (Graduation Exit Examination for the 21st Century) will be, once fully implemented, administered at grades 10 and 11. In order to be eligible for a standard high school diploma, students are required to score at the “approaching basic” or above (see assessment section) level on the English Language Arts and Mathematics sections and on the Science or Social Studies sections.

ASSESSMENT

LEAP 21 (Louisiana Educational Assessment Program for the 21st Century) and the GEE 21 (Graduation Exit Examination for the 21st Century) represent a newly implemented criterion-testing system in Louisiana. Students take LEAP 21 tests in grades 4 and 8 and the GEE 21 in grades 10 and 11. As criterion-referenced tests, the exams are aligned with the state’s content standards. Students do not receive a pass/fail score. Instead they receive scores based on achievement levels: advanced; proficient; basic; approaching basic; unsatisfactory. Students also take the norm-referenced Iowa Tests of Basic Skills in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development in grade 9.

The LEAP 21 social studies test in grades 4 and 8 has two main parts. The first part consists of 50 multiple-choice items in grade 4 and 60 items in grade 8. The items are intermingled across the four social studies strands in the standards (geography, civics, economics, and history). The section part of the assessment consists of four open-ended questions that require a constructed response and higher order thinking in the context of social studies. Students in grades 4, 8, and 11 are required to take a state assessment.

