

Mayville State University

EDUC485, Secondary Methods for Social Science, Class #27773

Fall 2025

3 Credit Hours

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dera Benson-Johnson

Contact Information:

Office: (701) 488-4674

Email: dera.johnson@mayvillestate.edu

Work phone: Same as office phone

Hours of Availability:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 10a-11a, 12p-1p

Tuesday and Thursday: 12-3 pm

Also available for meetings on other days and times by appointment.

Office Hours Meeting Link:

Instructional Mode: On-campus face-to-face, Online asynchronous

Course Dates: August 27-December 12th, 2025

Time Zone: All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

Meeting Times and/or Location Tuesdays 5-9 p.m., Classroom Building 104

Course Materials and Technologies

Required

[MSU Technology Requirements](#)

Johnson, E. and Lamarr, E. (2020). *The Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Hundreds of Practical Ideas to Support Your Students*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, Wiley Publishing.

Wineburg, S. (2018). *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*All other readings/materials will be provided either as links or PDFs on Blackboard.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in this Course

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS/ESSAY QUESTIONS: You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

Mayville State University

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor).

Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under the relevant Mayville State University policies.

DISCUSSION POSTS: Use of Generative AI Tools such as CoPilot, ChatGPT or Gemini on discussion forums in this course is prohibited. Discussion forums for the course are written and designed with the intent of hearing **YOUR** personal thoughts. Doing so is considered plagiarism and will have the same consequences as other violation of academic integrity.

Course Description

This course is to assure that pre-service students majoring in the social science secondary education program will be exposed to the same curricular topics, which include creating a unit of instruction with lesson plans, the opportunity to teach the unit to high school students, ability to use a rubric for assessment purposes, classroom organization and management, and use of alternative instructional strategies adapted to subject matter content. Students will write a philosophy of education paper specific to their content area. Other topics will be covered as appropriate to the field.

Pre-/Co-requisites: EDUC 480 and Admission to Teacher Education.

Course Objectives

The purpose of the course is to provide teaching candidates with preparation in decision making, planning, implementing, evaluating, and managing secondary education social science classrooms. A key component will be the continued development of a personal philosophy of teaching, specifically for the subject of social science. Additionally, students will complete practicum experience during the second half of the term.

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to Composite Social Science Education Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

1. *Add to your personal philosophy of education by considering your specific content field (INTASC 1-10; SLO 1,2)*
2. *Reduce standards to big ideas and essential questions (INTASC 1,7,8,9; SLO 1,2,4)*
3. *Comprehend general instructional strategies for secondary education (INTASC 1-7; SLO 1,2)*
4. *Develop lessons using the components of effective teaching, to include using technology resources such as digital mapping tools, primary source databases, historical simulation programs, economic modeling software, and civic engagement platforms (INTASC 1-10; SLO 1-5)*
5. *Integrate authentic literacy and 21st Century skills into content area instruction (INTASC 1-10; SLO 1-5)*
6. *Develop habits of a professional educator: manage multiple demands and expectations, collaborate, reflect, assess effectiveness of strategies and instruction and pursue advanced knowledge of the field to remain current in an evolving knowledge base (INTASC 1,9,10; SLO 1-5)*

Mayville State University

Standards Alignment (Composite Social Science Education Program Approval Standards-ND ESPB):

- 15035.2 The program requires study of the structures, key concepts, methodology, and generalizations that connect the various social studies, including the examination of professional standards and expectations for P-12 education.
- 15035.4 The program requires study of current events including controversial issues.
- 15035.5 The program requires studying methods of teaching social studies including current trends in social studies with an examination of various teaching methods and techniques.
- 15035.6 The program requires the study of current, appropriate instructional technology.

Course Expectations

Instructor/Student Communication

- You are expected to read materials and reference them in your thoughtful responses to discussion boards, to complete the assignments, reflection/reaction papers, exams, and topic paper by the posted dates.
- You are expected to adhere to all deadlines, due dates and scheduled times for exams.
- If your assignment appears in Blackboard as a corrupted, blank, or incorrect file, it will not be considered as a submission and will be graded according to the late policy. It is your responsibility to preview your submission in Blackboard to ensure that your assignment was submitted correctly. This often happens when you are not using the recommended browser, which is currently Google Chrome.

Our class will include independent completion of work, in-person meetings and lecture, video lectures online, and some discussion. Reading the material before you comment on discussion boards and demonstrating knowledge of that material will be essential. You are responsible for all material in the text, posted on Blackboard via video, and articles/other materials posted on Blackboard by me. Not all content can be covered but ALL content is fair game for the unit exam, meaning that some content might not be covered directly in a PowerPoint or lecture, and reading the text is essential. You should plan ahead - issues with internet access or Blackboard are not acceptable excuses for late work. If campus is closed because of weather, items are still due in Blackboard and will not be reopened.

- I do not have a preference on communication format; you may contact me via office phone or email. I do prefer that you address me as Ms. Benson-Johnson in your emails and to treat email communication as a formal means of communication.
- MSU is transitioning to an effort to guide students in communicating more formally here at Mayville State. The expectation is for an e-mail to be written in a professional manner. Your correspondence with professionals (faculty, staff etc.) should contain a greeting and a sign-off, as well as careful editing. Take a minute to review every email you send me and see if you are missing some of the key components. Our hope is that with a little practice, students will begin to communicate more effectively through emails. **If emails sent to me are not designed properly, you run the risk of me not responding to them.**
- I will return any attempt at communication within 24 – 72 hours. However, I do not check emails over the weekend or after 4:00 p.m. In other words, please plan accordingly if you will need input from me.
- I will return all work with feedback within 7 days.

Students are accountable for all academic communications sent to their Mayville State University e-mail address.

Mayville State University

Assignments and Assessments

As this course is one of the final education courses you will likely take before student teaching, getting used to “teaching” in front of a group will be one of the weekly expectations in this course. This will encourage you to continue to take content and translate that into teachable moments. While you will be expected to teach two mini lessons from scratch (see below), you will also be expected to teach very short lessons based on our text, *The Social Studies Teacher’s Toolbox*. You will select respective chapters from the various parts of the book to share with your fellow classmates. Each lesson will be no longer than 10 minutes and will cover the basics and need-to-know content provided by the authors. You will submit a “post-it-note” lesson plan, which will be explained in the first meeting. As each student will be presenting on a separate topic, all students benefit from the ideas taught by their peers. Additionally, one week you may prospectively team-teach a chapter to encourage collaboration with other educators. Each lesson will be worth 5 points. Chapters will be selected during the first week (not all chapters may be selected/taught). Please use the table below to know who which chapter you present each week:

Week	Topic	Chapter	Teacher(s)
2	Reading & Writing	1. A Fresh Look at Vocabulary	
2	Reading & Writing	2. Reading Strategies	
2	Reading & Writing	3. Read-Aloud Protocols	
2	Reading & Writing	4. Thematic Data Sets	
2	Reading & Writing	5. Writing in Social Studies	
3	Reading & Writing	6. Mnemonics	
3	Reading & Writing	7. Timelines Revisited	
3	Reading & Writing	8. Current Events Case Study	
3	Reading & Writing	9. Genre Study	
3	Reading & Writing	10. Concept Attainment	
4	Analysis Tools	11. Questions for Learning	
4	Analysis Tools	12. Image Analysis	
4	Analysis Tools	13. Analysis of Primary Sources	
4	Analysis Tools	14. Synthesis Charts	
6	Speaking & Listening	15. Speaking & Listening Activities	
6	Speaking & Listening	16. Discussions	
8	Other Key Strategies	17. Project-Based Learning	
8	Other Key Strategies	18. Culturally Responsive Teaching	
8	Other Key Strategies	19. Social and Emotional Learning	
8	Other Key Strategies	20. Assessment	
8	Other Key Strategies	21. Getting the Most from Your Textbook	

Mayville State University

Mini Lessons (10 points each/20 points total)

You will teach 2 mini lessons to your fellow student(s) and instructor (including, prospectively, combined meetings with other methods courses). You will select topics through the reduction of standards to essential questions within the social sciences. The lesson will demonstrate appropriate teaching methods covered through course work and readings. A mini lesson focuses on one specific teaching point and lasts approximately 15-20 minutes. The lesson format should incorporate the components of effective teaching as outlined in class. Written lesson plans will be turned into the instructor prior to teaching the lesson, including all materials to be used during the lesson (e.g., slides, handouts, etc.). Peer evaluation and self-reflection will be included. **ONE of your mini lessons must include the use of a technological component (such as including digital mapping tools, primary source databases, historical simulation programs, economic modeling software, and civic engagement platforms).**

- Mini Lesson #1 – Week 5
- Mini Lesson #2 – Week 7

Unit Plan (20 points)

You will craft an entire unit plan from a topic (e.g. Revolutionary War, Civil Rights Era, Rise of Islam, Latin America, etc.), subject (e.g. U.S. History, Geography, Civics, etc.), and grade level (e.g. 7-12) of your choosing. This will include creating pre- and post-assessments, as well as ten unique scaffolding lessons (not full lessons). The unit plan will exhibit thorough consideration of varied teaching methods, as well as reducing standards to big ideas and essential questions. We will spend time in class developing some of these ideas and measures to promote critical understanding of the unit planning process. See detailed assignment sheet for specifics and grading.

Your Unit PLAN must include some aspect of technology as noted above in mini lessons; note that in THIS case, you do not need to have ACCESS to the technological tool—do some research and pick an IDEAL tool that you would like to use based on your research.

- Unit Plan Due: 10/13

Philosophy of Social Science Education (30 points total)

You began the process of crafting and writing your philosophy of education in previous coursework, and we will continue to build on this, specifically adding your positions within your content field, the social sciences. Again, you will address important questions, such as: What is the purpose of social science education? What are social science teachers supposed to do? What is the student's role in the process? Wrestling with these questions will help you make decisions and develop lesson plans that are in tune with your own thoughts about the learning process. You will work on this paper slowly, completing respective parts each week and receiving feedback throughout to help develop a final draft. These mini drafts will be submitted by the end of each week. While this paper is not a required aspect of your portfolio, it should be considered a vital addition. See detailed assignment sheet for specifics and grading.

- Week 2 Draft: Why you want to teach social science/studies. (2 pts)
- Week 3 Draft: Purpose of social science/studies education; Relationships (student, community, parents, teaching colleagues, administration) in social science/studies. (4 pts)
- Week 4 Draft: Characteristics of an effective social science/studies teacher. (2 pts)
- Week 5 Draft: How to teach social science/studies and assess-instruction & strategies; Social science/studies technology. (4 pts)
- Week 6 Draft: Diversity and differentiating social science/studies instruction. (2 pts)
- Week 7 Draft: What to teach in social science/studies; Expectations, classroom management & discipline (community of learners) in social science/studies classrooms. (4 pts)
- Week 8 Draft: Introduction of the paper (includes a hook for the reader and a thesis statement); Conclusion: Connection to the Reflective Experiential Teacher Framework. (4 pts)
- Final Draft Due: 10/27 (8 points)

Mayville State University

Social Sciences through a Student's Eyes (20 points)

This assignment will help you to understand what secondary-age students already know and think about social sciences. For this assignment, you will interview two secondary age children (grades 7-12). Based on your interviews, you will write a brief paper identifying some of your conclusions, as well as explain some instructional implications of your findings. See detailed assignment sheet for specifics and grading. (This assignment was originally developed by Linda EDUC 485 Syllabus - 4 Effective Fall 2023

Levstik of the University of Kentucky and Keith Barton of the Indiana University for their elementary methods courses. This assignment has been altered for secondary students by Ken Carano of Eastern Oregon University.)

▪ Paper Due: 10/27

Practicum Experience Overview

During the second eight weeks of the term, you will complete a 30-hour practicum experience with local educators in their classroom. This experience is vital to continued growth in the art and science of teaching. During the practicum, you will be expected to do more than simply observe. Indeed, you will want to get as much out of this experience as possible, including helping students with questions, developing lessons and assignments, and teaching in any capacity (formal and informal). This likely will be your last time in the classroom before student teaching, so it will be important to fully use this time. More information will be given during class as you prepare for this portion of the course and found in the Practicum Experience Information and Expectations document on Blackboard. Below is a summary of the assignments used to assess your experience.

Practicum Experience Commitment Calendar (15 points)

In anticipation of your practicum experience, and to develop good communication and organizational skills, you will create a “Commitment Calendar” of the days and times you will be in that classroom to complete your 30 hours. This calendar will be turned in Blackboard drop box and you will give a copy to your cooperating teacher. This is so your teacher will know well in advance the days and times you will be in their classroom. There is example of a commitment calendar in the Practicum Experience Information and Expectations document on Blackboard.

Practicum Experience Video Reflections (30 points total)

During your practicum experience, you will record a reflection video via FlipGrid at the end of every observation day. Each reflection must be a minimum of 3-5 minutes long. These videos are not simply a means to give a “summary of the day.” Rather, it is to give you opportunity to be reflective about your experience(s) in the classroom. Several reflection prompts are included in the Practicum Experience Information and Expectations document on Blackboard for you to consider. More information on how to use FlipGrid may be discussed in class.

Practicum Experience: Lesson Plans (20 points each/60 points total)

Lesson plans are the cornerstone of any professional educator’s preparation and performance. You will develop three unique lesson plans, each which will be delivered within your assigned placement classroom assigned. Lesson plans should start with your co-op teacher, who will provide you with options in line with the needs of the respective classroom and be guided by both your philosophy of education and components of effective teaching. Two of your lesson plans MUST be taught on back-to-back classroom days. The instructor will observe and evaluate one of these lesson plans (of your choice; see Observed Lesson and Debrief below) in your placement classroom. You will use the standard lesson planning template provided by the Division of Education. *Due dates will vary based on respective placement classrooms and co-op teachers.

Practicum Experience Observation, Debrief, and Taskstream (30 points total)

Mayville State University

You must schedule one in-class observation to take place (10 points). This includes coordinating with the instructor about possible times/dates to visit, as well as other logistical matters (e.g., location of school, location of classroom, other things to know, etc.). Your lesson plan for this observation must be completed and sent PRIOR to observation. After the observation is complete, you will need to schedule a time with the instructor to meet and debrief for 30-45 minutes on campus or via Zoom (10 points). Towards the end of your experience, fill out your Disposition and InTasc on Taskstream (10 points). More information regarding this can be found in the Practicum Experience Information and Expectations document on Blackboard.

Praxis II for Social Science Education

As this is likely your final semester before jumping into student teaching, you are expected to complete the Praxis II Social Studies: Content Knowledge (5081) test before the end of this term. While you do not necessarily need to pass (though that is strongly encouraged!), the student teaching semester is incredibly time-consuming, and therefore taking the test beforehand is helpful to get out of the way in terms of needed credentials to obtain your teaching license. If you have any questions regarding Praxis please ask the instructor, or you can find more information here: Praxis II Social Studies: Content Knowledge (5081). EDUC 485 Syllabus - 5 Effective Fall 2023

Additional Student Evaluation:

Every student who is working on a teaching degree or a credential must demonstrate proper dispositions to continue in the Teacher Education program. During your social science field work, and per the Teacher Education Handbook, your cooperating teacher will be asked to complete a professional disposition evaluation and evaluate your teaching skills, as will your methods instructor. You will also complete a self-assessment of your disposition and teaching skills. (Submitted digitally-Division Administrative Coordinator)

InTASC Acceptable Target: Minimum average score of 3 with no indicators below 2.5

InTASC Ideal Target: Minimum average score of 3 with no indicators below 3

Disposition Acceptable Target: Minimum average score of 3 with no indicators below 2.5

Disposition Ideal Target: Minimum average score of 3 with no indicators below 3

Evaluation and Grading

Grading Policies

I will do my best to turn around work completed in this course in a timely manner (optimally within a week of a respective deadline, but no more than two weeks). Moreover, I will attempt to leave helpful comments when and where necessary. Most evaluation is based on rubrics, which are available for you to consult as you complete respective assignments.

To maintain timely feedback, I will not accept late submissions of quizzes, assignments, discussion posts or assessments, although I understand *extraordinary* circumstances do occur (such as medical/family emergencies). Any requests for extensions based on these circumstances must be sent via email within 24 hours of the respective deadline. All deadlines will be by the end of their respective due dates (i.e. 11:59 pm CST).

Attendance/Participation Policies

To successfully complete this course, your attendance and active participation is required. Participation in classroom discussions, demonstrations, and interactive activities will result in stronger connections to theory and practice, adding to the quality of your learning experience.

Mayville State University

Grading Scale

The overall course evaluation is based on 250 total points, with the following grading scale: A (100-90%), B (89-80%), C (79-70%), D (69-60%), F (<60%) (percentages are rounded).

Breakdown of Grades

Assignments/ Assessments	Total # of Assignments	Points Possible for each	Total Possible Points (% of Grade)
Teaching the Teacher's Toolbox	5	5	25 (10%)
Mini Lessons	2	10	20 (8%)
Unit Plan	1	20	20 (8%)
Philosophy of Social Science Education	1	30	30 (12%)
Social Sciences through a Student's Eyes	1	20	20 (8%)
Practicum Experience: Calendar	-	15	15 (6%)
Commitment			
Practicum Experience: Video Reflections	-	30	30 (12%)
Practicum Experience: Lesson Plans	3	20	60 (24%)
Practicum Experience: Observation & Debrief	-	30	30 (12%)
Total Points Possible	-	-	250 (100%)

Enrollment Verification

On-Campus Course Statement

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors to conduct an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. Class attendance will be used to verify enrollment in on-campus courses. If you do not attend, your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

Proctor Notification

No proctors are required for this course.

Important Student Information

In the Help & Resources for Students section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency

Mayville State University

- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Course Timeline/Schedule

Week (Dates)

Week 1 and 2

(8/25-9/8)

Week 3 and 4

(9/8-9/22)

Week 5 and 6

(9/22-10/6)

Week 7 and 8

(10/6-10/20)

Week 9 and 10

(10/20-11/3)

Week 11 and 12

(11/3-11/17)

Week 13 and 14

(11/17-12/1)

Week 15 and 16

(12/1-12/15)

Topic

Objectives, Expectations, Why Social Sciences?

Direct and Indirect Instructional Methods

Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Reading and Writing, Part 1

Independent and Experiential Instructional Method

Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Reading and Writing, Part 2

Interactive Instructional Methods and Performance Assessment

Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Analysis Tools

Rubrics and Grading

Mini Lesson #1

Unit Planning

Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Speaking and Listening Classroom Management

Mini Lesson #2

Teaching Tough Issues and Final Thoughts

Social Studies Teacher's Toolbox: Other Key Strategies

Readings

Hansen et al. (2018, pp. 32-43)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 1-30)

Wineburg et al. (2015, pp. ix-16)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 31-50)

Maguth et al. (2015)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 52-81)

Larson (2022)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 81-92)

Kenna and Potter (2018)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 93-102)

Beal & Bolick (pp. 68-85)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 103-138)

Marzano (pp. 79-95)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 139-162)

Lintner (2018)

Wineburg (2018, pp. 163-178)

Mayville State University

Appendix

Conceptual Framework

Teacher Education courses are based upon the Conceptual Framework: Reflective Experiential Teacher. See the document 'Conceptual Framework' provided in the course shell.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Addressed in This Course

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Addressed in This Course

As part of Mayville State's effort to demonstrate continuous improvement in achieving student learning outcomes, this course will address the following SLOs:

- *SLO 1 Learner & Learning:* Students understand diversity in learning and developmental processes and create supportive and safe learning environments for students to thrive.
- *SLO 2 Content:* Students understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can advance their students' learning, address misconceptions and connect ideas to everyday life.
- *SLO 3 Instructional Practice:* Students will plan instruction, utilize effective instructional strategies and technologies, and continuously assess students for mastery and decision-making purposes.
- *SLO 4 Professional Responsibility:* Students take responsibility for student learning, positive relationships, their own professional growth, and the advancement of the profession

The following SLOs/Professional Standards will be mastered in this course: SLOs/Professional Standards

Mastery Assignment

SLO #1	Lesson Plans/Practicum
SLO #2	Unit Plan/Practicum
SLO #3	Mini-Lessons/Practicum
SLO #4	Practicum Reflections and Debrief

INTASC – Teacher Education

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards

1

Learner Development: The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Mayville State University

2 *Learning Differences:* The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

3 *Learning Environments:* The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

4 *Content Knowledge:* The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

5 *Application to Content:* The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

6 *Assessment:* The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

7 *Planning for Instruction:* The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

8 *Instructional Strategies:* The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understandings of content area and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

9 *Professional Learning & Ethical Practice:* The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and action on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

10 *Leadership & Collaboration:* The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues,

Mayville State University

other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Instructional Strategies

- Student/teacher-led learning experiences
- Direct instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Experiential learning
- Cooperative learning activities
- Critical and creative thinking strategies
- Class/Online discussions
- Multi-media, current technology
- Simulation and inquiry activities
- Written and oral communication
- Case study review
- Assigned reading

Conceptual Framework (Required for EDUC/EC Block courses and Professional Education Core courses.)

Teacher Education courses are based upon the Conceptual Framework: Reflective Experiential Teacher. See the document 'Conceptual Framework' provided in the course shell.