

Assessment #2: Content Knowledge (Assessment of Content Knowledge in the Social Studies)

a. Brief description of the assessment and its use in the program

This assessment addresses course grades taken by TC in the history education program. Courses in the various social science disciplines are addressed here.

b. Alignment with NCSS Standards

This assessment aligns to Standards 1a, 1b, and 1c as coursework in the social science disciplines address content knowledge, disciplinary inquiry, and disciplinary forms of representation.

Figure 1. Course descriptions and alignment to NCSS standards		
Discipline	Course	Description of how the course meets cited standards
History	HIS 210: Craft of History	In this course students grapple with the problems that historians encounter as they analyze cultural diversity, human environments, the effects of science and technology, cultural interaction, and politics.
History	HIS 498	Small classes that focus on specific topics in history. Formal seminar reports and completion of major research paper. One semester required for all history majors. To be taken in the senior year.
Geography	HIS 230: Themes in World History and Geography	As a survey of the modern world, this course addresses culture and diversity, change over time, environmental factors, science and technology, cultural interaction, and the development of democracy and other political doctrines. Students learn to analyze how human societies interact with and are shaped by elements such as climate, elevation, soil, vegetation, population, land use, and industries. Students develop geography skills by working with various types of maps (e.g. topographic, political, urban), primary source documents and images.
Behavioral Studies (psychology)	SED 224: Adolescent Learning and Development	This course focuses on the psychological factors of human development and their influence on student learning.
Behavioral Studies (sociology)	EFN 299: Schools and Community	This course examines the nature and the complex interrelationship between schools and communities in the rapidly changing diverse culture of the United States. Students learn how family and school values, belief systems, and attitudes intersect and subsequently result in inequitable schooling opportunities and student academic achievement. Students develop an informed discourse that enables them to analyze classroom dynamics through the use of social theory as they examine case studies, ethnographies and complete a field-based observation study.
Civics	POL 110: American Government	Examines the strengths and weaknesses, problems and promise of representative democracy in the United States. Surveys the relationships of citizens to Congress, the president and the courts through political parties, elections,

		interest groups, and the media. Considers the constitutional framework of government and the rights of the individual against governmental intrusion.
Economics	ECO 102: Principles of Macroeconomics	An introduction to the measurement and analysis of the aggregate level of economic activity including unemployment, interest rates, inflation, exchange rates and economic growth. Government fiscal and monetary policies are examined along with international economic interactions.
Economics	HIS 396: Teaching Economics in Secondary School	This class seeks to familiarize students with basic concepts central to understanding economic principles and illustrate how these concepts apply to American history. Significant emphasis will be placed on connecting abstract economic concepts to historical issues and real-world situations. The course will also address the issue of economic literacy and why economic literacy is an integral component of civic decision making.

Figure 2. Required courses and alignment to social science disciplines						
Discipline and applicable course	History	Geography	Civics	Economics	Behavioral Studies (Sociology)	Behavioral Studies (Psychology)
	HIS 210 HIS 498	HIS 230	POL 110	ECO 105 ECO 115	EFN 299	SED 224
	Note that HIS 210 and 498 are used here because all TC are required to take these two courses.					

c. Brief analysis of data findings

Data is derived from students enrolled in HED 490 (who are senior student teachers at the end of their program) during the Fall 2018, Spring 2019 and Fall 2020 semesters. Note that in certain cases students took classes that were transferred into the College. These courses are not included in the data samples.

Fall 2018 – TC displayed high mean GPAs in HIS 210, HIS 230 and EFN 299. TC scored lower in HIS 498, POL 110 (3.13) and the various economics courses (2.90 mean GPA in this category).

Spring 2019 – TC displayed high mean GPAs in HIS 210, HIS 230 and EFN 299. Mean GPAs for POL 110 and economics courses were higher in this cohort than in the previous one. The mean GPA for SED 224 was lower than the previous cohort (3.0 vs. 3.30).

Fall 2019 – TC again scored highly in HIS 210, HIS 230 and EFN 299. The mean GPA for economics reached 3.40, up from 3.24 in the previous cohort. The mean GPA for POL 110 was lower than the previous cohort and in line with the Spring 2018 cohort (3.14 and 3.13).

d. Interpretation for how data provided evidence for meeting standards

The low standard deviations suggest TC are in the same general range for their course grades, with no significant outliers. Overall, TC score highly in their HIS courses and in EFN 299. The average GPA is in the B+ range for these classes. Averages are lower for psychology, government, and economics. Psychology and economics are closer to a B range than a B+, but the means are still 3.14 and 3.18 respectively, suggesting at least a competent level of performance. These data suggest that TC are generally performing well in their coursework and are meeting expectations in the various disciplines. TC tend to score lower in social science disciplines other than history, but overall the level of performance is acceptable in government, psychology and economics.

e. Description of assessment

n/a

f. Scoring guide for the assessment

Figure 3. The College of New Jersey Grading Scale	
Letter Grade	Percentage Earned (on 4.0 scale)
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.0
F	0

g. Candidate data from this assessment

Figure 6. Grade distribution Fall 2018 (N=14)							
Discipline	History	History	Geography	Civics	Economics	Sociology	Psychology
Course	HIS 210	HIS 498	HIS 230	POL 110	ECO 105 HIS 396	EFN 299	SED 224
Mean GPA in standard	3.40	3.35	3.57	3.45	3.24	3.71	3.0
Standard deviation	.43	1.11	1.47	1.2	.83	.94	.94
A	4	3	5	4		6	2
A-	5	3	4	1	3	4	4
B+	4	4	2	2	4	4	3
B	4	2	2	3	2		1
B-		1	1	1	2		2
C+							2
C		1					
C-							

Figure 7. Grade distribution Spring 2019 (N=12)							
Discipline	History	History	Geography	Civics	Economics	Sociology	Psychology
Course	HIS 210	HIS 498	HIS 230	POL 110	ECO 105 HIS 396	EFN 299	SED 224
Mean GPA in standard	3.57	3.20	3.64	3.13	3.40	3.63	3.12
Standard deviation	1.41	1.02	2.12	.89	1.9	1.22	.83
A	3	4	6	3	1	4	
A-	5	3	1	1	2	4	3
B+	1	2	4	3	6	3	2
B	3	2			2	1	2
B-			1	1			4
C+							
C							
C-							

Figure 8. Grade distribution Fall 2019 (N=9)							
Discipline	History	History	Geography	Civics	Economics	Sociology	Psychology
Course	HIS 210	HIS 498	HIS 230	POL 110	ECO 105 HIS 396	EFN 299	SED 224
Mean GPA in standard	3.33	3.17	3.59	3.14	2.90	3.57	3.30
Standard deviation	2.82	.98	1.09	1.25	.76	0	.83
A		3	4			3	
A-	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
B+	7		2	4	1		3
B	1	1	2	2	3	3	2
B-		3			1		1
C+					2		
C		1			1		
C-							

Figure 9. Mean GPA based on the above three data sets						
Discipline	History	Geography	Civics	Economics	Sociology	Psychology
Course(s)	HIS 210 and HIS 498	HIS 230	POL 110	ECO 105 and HIS 396	EFN 299	SED 224
<u>Mean GPA</u> Spring 2018 Fall 2018 Spring 2019	3.33	3.60	3.24	3.18	3.64	3.14