



## FAST TRAIN Programs

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
FAST TRAIN IB Certificate Program

**EDUC 512:**  
**Teaching Elementary Social Studies in International Schools**  
**3 Credits**

**Instructor:** April Mattix, Ph. D.

**Email:** [amattix@gmu.edu](mailto:amattix@gmu.edu)

**Phone:** (o) 703.993.4007

**Skype:** april.mattix

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Office:** 2603 Thompson Hall

**Meeting Dates:** August 27 – December 3

**Meeting Time:** 4:30 – 7:10

**Meeting Location:** Arlington, Founders Hall, Room 481

**Course Description:** Focuses on the translation of knowledge and data-gathering processes from the social sciences into appropriate and meaningful social studies experiences. Helps students develop an understanding of the aims and methodologies of an integrated study of history, geography, government/political science, sociology, anthropology, and psychology. Further it promotes developing elementary students' abilities to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society and interdependent world. Field experience is required. This course is a FAST TRAIN program requirement.

*Prerequisites: Admission to GSE, enrollment in FAST TRAIN program.*

**Nature of Course:** This course is delivered through a variety of instructional strategies. Session formats will vary and will include lecture, interactive hands-on activities, large and small group discussions, student presentations, and cooperative learning groups.

**Learner Outcomes:** This course is designed to enable students to:

- A. Understand objectives, subject matter, and materials of elementary social studies instruction.

- B. Develop high quality, integrated units and lesson plans for social studies based on inquiry, critical thinking, and cooperative learning models.
- C. Identify and use a variety of instructional strategies for teaching social studies lessons in international settings.
- D. Integrate technology resources such as simulations into elementary social studies.
- E. Integrate content from the arts, math, science and literature into social studies.
- F. Examine issues related to multiculturalism and diversity and their relevance to teaching elementary students.
- G. Address standards in instructional planning; know and explain the key elements of the national social studies standards and the Virginia Standards of Learning in social studies.
- H. Use various kinds of student assessment data to plan, implement, and improve instruction.

**Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:** EDUC 512 is a methods course in FAST TRAIN, a program that prepares elementary teachers for international schools. FAST TRAIN applies the goals of the regular GMU elementary education curriculum to an international context. EDUC 512 addresses the program goals that develop skills in instructional planning, implementation, and assessment.

**Standards:** The following standards are addressed in this course:

**ACEI/NCATE:**

2.4 Social Studies – candidates know, understand and use the major concepts and modes of inquiry from the social studies – the integrated study of history, geography and the social sciences, and other related areas – to promote elementary students’ abilities to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society and interdependent world.

2.4 The arts – candidates know, understand and use – as appropriate to their own understanding and skills – the contents, functions, and achievements of the performing arts (dance, music, theater) and the visual arts as primary media for communication, inquiry and engagement among elementary students.

3.1 Integrating and applying knowledge for instruction – candidates plan and implement instruction based on knowledge of students, learning theory, connections across the curriculum, curricular goals, and community.

3.2 Adaption to diverse students – candidates understand how elementary students differ in their development and approaches to learning, and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse students.

3.3 Development of critical thinking and problem solving – candidates understand and use a variety of teaching strategies that encourage elementary students’ development of critical thinking and problem solving.

3.4. Active engagement in learning – candidates use their knowledge and understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior among students at the K-6 level to foster active engagement in learning, self motivation and positive social interaction to create supportive learning environments.

**IB-PYP Practitioner Award Programme Requirements:** *The teacher will learn to use transdisciplinary planning and teaching skills. The teacher will know about the learner profiles and how to use them to support teaching in language arts.*

- a. International education and the role/philosophy of the IBO PYP programme
- b. Curriculum frameworks; principles, structures and practices
- c. Curriculum and instructional design
- d. Curriculum articulation
- e. Learning, theories, strategies and styles
- f. Teaching methodologies and the support of learning
- g. Differentiated teaching strategies
- h. Selection and evaluation of teaching and learning materials
- i. Developing assessment strategies
- j. The principles and processes of reflective practice
- k. Collaborative working: planning, implementation and evaluation

**INTASC:**

### **The Learner and Learning**

Standard #2: 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.

### **Content**

Standard #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 the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard #5: Application of 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.

### **Instructional Practice**

Standard #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.

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

**Technology (ISTE/NETS):**

I. Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments.

II. Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in content and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS-S.

III. Teachers exhibit knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society.

IV. Teachers understand local and global societal issues and responsibilities in an evolving digital culture and exhibit legal and ethical behavior in their professional practices.

V. Teachers continually improve their professional practice, model lifelong learning, and exhibit leadership in their school and professional community by promoting and demonstrating the effective use of digital tools and resources.

EDUC 512 primarily addresses the following standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). EDUC 512 also addresses the following Core Values from the College of Education and Human Development.

Visit the appropriate links for complete descriptions and examples of each standard and/or value.

INTASC	ITSE	Core Values
Standard #2 Learning Differences	Standard #1 Facilitate & Inspire Student Learning and Creativity	Value #1 Collaboration
Standard #4 Content Knowledge	Standard #2 Design & Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences & Assessments	Value #2 Ethical Leadership
Standard #5 Application of Content	Standard #3 Model Digital-Age Work and Learning	Value #3 Innovation
Standard #7 Planning for Instruction	Standard #4 Promote & Model Digital Citizenship & Responsibility	Value #4 Research Based Practice

Standard #8 Instructional Strategies	Standard #5 Engage in Professional Growth & Leadership	Value #5 Social Justice
<a href="http://www.ccsso.org/intasc">http://www.ccsso.org/intasc</a>	<a href="http://www.iste.org/standards">http://www.iste.org/standards</a>	<a href="http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/">http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/</a>

**Required Course Text:**

**Title:** Teaching Elementary Social Studies: Principles and Applications

**Author:** J. J. Zarrillo

**Edition:** Fourth Edition

**Publisher:** Pearson

**Publication year:** 2012

**ISBN:** 978-0132565516

**Title:** Social Studies Alive! Methods to Transform Elementary Education

**Author:** TCI

**Publisher:** Teachers Curriculum Institute

**Publication year:** 2010

**ISBN:** 978-1583711125

**Technology Resources:**

- All students are required to have access to a computer with Internet access and a current GMU email account.
- Relevant Websites:
  - International Baccalaureate Organization – Online Curriculum Center (OCC)  
<http://www.ibo.org/>
  - Practitioner Research as Staff Development:  
<http://www.valrc.org/publications/research/index.html>
  - American Psychological Association  
<http://www.apa.org>
  - National Council on Social Studies:  
<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>
  - National Center for History in the Schools:  
<http://nchs.ucla.edu/>
  - The American Geographical Society:  
[www.amergeog.org](http://www.amergeog.org)
  - The National Council for Geographic Education:  
[www.ncge.org](http://www.ncge.org)
  - American Historical Association:  
[www.historians.org](http://www.historians.org)
  - National Council on Economic Education:  
[www.ncee.net](http://www.ncee.net)
  - American Anthropological Association:  
[www.aaanet.org](http://www.aaanet.org)
  - National Archives and Records Administration:  
[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

Teaching With Historic Places:

[www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/)

Smithsonian Source:

[www.smithsoniansource.org/](http://www.smithsoniansource.org/)

UNICEF: Voices of Youth:

[www.unicef.org/voy/index.php](http://www.unicef.org/voy/index.php)

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students:**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

### **Professional Dispositions**

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

- The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

## **Grading Scale for FAST TRAIN:**

A+	= 100
A	= 94-99
A-	= 90-93
B+	= 85-89
B	= 80-84 (no B- grades)
C	= 70-79 – does not meet licensure requirements or Level I award recommendation
F	= Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

**Incomplete (IN):** This grade may be given to students who are in good standing, but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F (Mason catalog). Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the FAST TRAIN office.

**GMU E-mail & Web Policy:** Mason uses electronic mail ([www.gmu.edu/email](http://www.gmu.edu/email)) to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly (Mason catalog).

**Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval:** For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (Mason catalog). Students must contact an academic advisor in FAST TRAIN to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

**Attendance Policy:** FAST TRAIN students are expected to attend *all* class periods of courses for which they register. In class participation is important not only to the individual student, but to the class as whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation and as a result lower the grade as stated in the course syllabus (Mason Catalog). Any unexcused absences (lateness) will result in a 3-point deduction from your participation grade.

**Performance Based Assessment (PBA):** All courses in the Certificate Program in Advanced IB studies will have a required Performance Based Assessment (PBA). The required PBA for this course is the *Action Research Paper*. This assignment must be posted to Task Stream, where it will be reviewed and scored.

**TaskStream:** Every student registered for any FAST TRAIN course with a required performance-based assessment (will be designated as such in the syllabus) is required to submit this assessment (Individual Unit Plan) to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course, or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of your performance-based assessment will also be provided using TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

### **Course Requirements:**

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via Blackboard **except** for the final assignments, the Project Based Assessment (PBA), fieldwork log, and fieldwork reflection. These final assignments will be uploaded into **Task Stream**. The submission deadline for assignments is 11:59pm EST of the due date indicated for each assignment. All projects must be typed, in a legible 12-point font, with one-inch margins and double-spaced, unless otherwise noted. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. ***Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, except in extraordinary circumstances.*** I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe.

#### **1. Performance Based Assessment (PBA): Individual Unit Plan/IB Planner (25%) \*\*Due: December 3**

During your fieldwork, you will design an individual PYP transdisciplinary unit using the IB planner as a guide. It should address one of the following IB transdisciplinary themes: Who We Are, Where We Are in Time and Place, How We Organize Ourselves, or Sharing the Planet. The unit plan should be 2 weeks in length and should include social studies and one or more of the content areas (Literacy, Science, and/or Math), as well as both technology and Fine Arts. Each participant will submit the IB Planner and an overview chart. The overview chart should include an objective, learning activities, and assessment for each day in bullet point format. Detailed daily lesson plans are not required. The plan will be scored using the PBA rubric (available on Blackboard).

**Select two (2)** of the lessons in the unit plan and write detailed lesson plans to teach in your setting. If you are not in a full-time teaching placement then work closely with your



supervising teacher to suit your context. The two lessons must be observed either by a peer teacher and/or supervisor. Plan to share your plans with your observe prior to teaching and to conference with them after your teaching. Submit your lesson plan and observer documentation to TaskStream to complete your assignment.

**The assignment will only be graded in TaskStream according to the Performance Based Assessment Guidelines above.** Further instructions and the PBA rubric can be found on Blackboard.

## **2. Field Experience and Field Experience Reflection (10%)**

**\*\*Due: December 3**

The **field experience is a required component** of the teacher preparation program at George Mason University. All students will complete a minimum of 20 hours in field experience for this course. Documentation of your field experience is required as well as a signed statement from your field experience teacher(s) or supervisor(s). The Fieldwork documents are located on Blackboard.

In addition to the fieldwork log, each student will write a 2-3 page reflection on the fieldwork experience. The reflection should explain what you have learned from the fieldwork experience and your overall reflections on the process of conducting the work necessary to complete the individual unit planner requirements.

**\*Field Logs and Field Experience Reflections to be uploaded on Task Stream**

NOTE: Failure to submit documentation of successful completion of your **field work in a timely manner** will make you ineligible to register for coursework or be recommended for licensure.

## **3. Participation (10%)**

Class participation is vitally important in a course such as this. Each class session we will have readings to discuss, conversations to unpack, and activities to do. You are expected to participate in the class discussions and activities in a substantive way, as this not only enriches the class, but also helps ensure that you will get the most out of the sessions.

## **4. Reading Responses (15%)**

**\*\*Due: according to student selection of readings**

Writing about what you have read is a useful way to synthesize your learning. In the reading responses you will respond to the assigned academic readings to discuss the ways in which these readings interest, provoke or stimulate your ideas about teaching social studies. While these writings do not need to be formal, they should be professional in tone, grammatically accurate, and make use of the readings to motivate the discussion. While the response should provide evidence that you did the reading **it should not**

**simply be a summary of the readings.** The response is an opportunity to demonstrate your careful reading of the assigned texts, it is a space to work through and challenge ideas, and it provides an opportunity to make the readings relevant to your own teaching life experiences. You will need to complete **three (3)** reading responses, and you can pick and choose which readings to which you wish to respond. Entries should be one page, single-spaced and in a legible 12-point font.

## **5. Using Current Events to Teach Social Studies Concepts (10%)**

**\*\*Due: October 1**

Each student will be responsible for developing a brief (3-4 page) summary of an appropriate local, state, national or international news item that might be used to teach social studies at the elementary level. The write up should: 1) Provide a brief summary of the current event; 2) Include necessary background information for teachers wanting to address this topic - this should include a brief history and contextualization of the event (e.g., why this is this current event relevant to what you might be teaching) and some suggested quality resources (both print and digital); 3) Include an lesson plan, using the provided lesson plan template for an elementary lesson about this topic.

Further information will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

## **6. Social Studies through Literature (15%)**

**\*\*Due: October 29**

One of the most successful ways in which to help students relate to social studies concepts and content is through the use of literature as it provides a rich platform through which ideas, events, and frameworks can take on a “real” and “personal” perspective. For this activity, each student should select a concept or event from history. **The concept or event should be pre-approved by the instructor.** The student should then select one fiction and one non-fiction text that could be used for primary aged students (K-2) and one fiction and non-fiction text that could be used for upper elementary students (3-5). A 3-4 page paper should then be constructed which contains the following information: 1) the selected concept or event and why it was chosen, 2) a brief summary of the main ideas the students would be learning about this concept or event, 3) the books selected, 4) a brief description of each text, and 5) how each book relates to the concept or event.

Further information will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

## **7. Teaching Strategies Multimedia Presentation (15%)**

**\*\*Due: November 5, 12, or 19 - according to topic selected**

Each student will create a multimedia (Prezi, PowerPoint, etc.) presentation on a social studies teaching method. A list of strategies will be provided in class, but students may

select a strategy not on the list as long as it has been approved by the course instructor. The presentation should focus on 1) describing what the strategy is, 2) explaining how the strategy is enacted, 3) determining when the strategy could best be utilized, and 4) providing a summary of potential benefits and roadblocks.

Further details of the project will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Assignment Summary:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>	<b>Outcomes Addressed</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Participation	10	All	Daily
Reading Responses	15	All	Various
Using Current Events to Teach Social Studies	10	A, B, C, F, H	October 1
Social Studies through Literature	15	A, B, C, E, F	October 29
Teaching Strategies Multimedia Presentation	15	A, B, C, D, F, G, H	November 5, 12, or 19
Performance Based Assessment (PBA): <i>Individual Unit Plan/IB Planner*</i>	25	All	December 3
Field Experience and Reflection	10	All	December 3

**\*Designated Performance Based Assessment**