



SOCIAL STUDIES GRADUATION REQUIREMENT FAQ 2026-2027

Q: Why did the social studies graduation requirement change?

A: The graduation requirements outlined in 53E-4-204 "Standards and graduation requirements" increased the number of social studies graduation credits from 3 to 3.5 due to H.B. 381 (2025).

The U.S. Government and Citizenship course will be retired in the 2027-2028 school year, and a new 1.0 American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course will take its place.

Q: Who does this new requirement pertain to?

A: It applies to students in the 2026-2027 grade 10 cohort and all subsequent graduating classes.

Q: When will the new course be available?

A: American Constitutional Government and Citizenship will be available to students in the 2027-2028 school year.

Q: What should the senior students take during the 2027-2028 school year, if they did not already take U.S. Government and Citizenship?

A: The U.S. Government and Citizenship course is being replaced by the American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course, so senior students would take that course to fulfill the former requirement.

Q: Do seniors have to take the full 1.0 credit of American Constitutional Government and Citizenship to fulfill the requirement that the retired U.S. Government and Citizenship fulfilled?

A: The requirements for the senior class of 2027-2028 remain unchanged. It will be up to each LEA to determine whether they would allow seniors to take only 0.5 of the 1.0 course.

Q: If a student in the 2026-2027 10th grade cohort has already taken the U.S. Government and Citizenship course, do they still have to take the new American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course?

A: Yes. Even if some standards are similar, the new course is specifically required by code for the 2026-2027 grade 10 cohort, and all subsequent cohorts that follow.

Q: Can we still offer the U.S. Government and Citizenship course after it is retired, as a social studies elective course?

A: No, the retired course will no longer be an option. Additionally, prior credit from that course may not be used to fulfill any portion of the *new* American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course requirement.

Q: Will other courses count toward this requirement? (e.g., A.P. U.S. Government, or Concurrent Enrollment Political Science, etc.)

A: It is not possible to determine what courses may meet the requirements until the standards are fully adopted. However, for Concurrent Enrollment (CE) specifically, a single semester course is unlikely to satisfy the 1.0 credit requirement.

Q: What is the endorsement(s) required for educators to teach this course?

A: Educators must hold one of the following endorsements in order to teach the American Government and Citizenship Course: History, Political Science, or Social Studies Composite.

Q: Will there be a new CACTUS course code for the new course?

A: Yes, a new CACTUS course code will be created for the American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course and will be ready when the course is available to students in 2027-2028.

Q: How is the course structured?

A: There will be two sections to the new course, meeting the legislative requirement to allow alternative options for meeting the second half of the course requirement per §53E-4-204.

New standards for *both* sections of the course are being written; therefore U.S. Government and Citizenship may not be used to fulfill any section of the new requirement.

Q: Can a student take a section of the course one year, and another section the following year?

A: While this is not ideal for course continuity, it is possible to construct scheduling this way, to accommodate mid-year transfer students, for example. Students must take both sections of the course. Credit cannot be awarded for any repeated section of the course.

Q: If the new standards are already integrated across the courses that make up the 3.5 required Social Studies credits for graduation, can we demonstrate that all standards have been addressed across multiple courses, or must course standards be taught in standalone courses that appear separately on the transcript?

A: Social studies requirements are to be taught as individual courses. Student mobility, differing learning modalities, grading periods, and credit recovery are four different concepts considered when determining the answer to this question.

Q: What will the “school sponsored activity emphasizing verbal communication” pathway to American Government and Citizenship credit entail?

A: After the Utah State Board of Education approves the course standards, a guidance document outlining required competencies will be created which will outline what school-sponsored activities will need to contain to count toward the second half of the American Government and Citizenship credit.

Q: Can the “school sponsored activity emphasizing verbal communication” pathway to credit count toward any social studies requirement?

A: No, competencies for the “school sponsored activity emphasizing verbal communication” are being created using the standards for the second half of the American Constitutional Government and Citizenship course. So, that pathway to credit can only apply to the second half of that particular course.

Q: Do students need to take social studies courses in a particular order in order for them to count toward graduation requirements?

A: The new American Constitutional Government and Citizenship was created with the presumption that seniors would be taking the course. However, social studies courses do not have a required order in which to take them. Schools often have their own course sequencing, and group cohorts of students into specific courses each year. This assists with teacher assignments and keeps credit earning organized.