

**Appendix Q: Criteria for Elective and Advanced Social Studies Courses**



**Criteria for Elective and Advanced Social Studies Courses (Civic Knowledge) and Electives Rooted in Civic Participation**

**The Definition of Civic Readiness** is organized around four domains:

1. Civic Knowledge
2. Civic Skills and Actions
3. Civic Mindsets
4. Civic Experiences

**Directions:**

Advanced Social Studies classes and electives rooted in civics must demonstrate evidence of a strong foundation to Civic Readiness to be approved as part of the Seal of Civic Readiness. Use this tool to evaluate individual courses. A course may only be approved if there is evidence that the curriculum will include the four domains of civic readiness. For each aspect of Civic Readiness check off if the course Y (yes) includes this or N (no) does not include this element of civic readiness. Provide examples as appropriate.

For a course to qualify it needs to have at least three components of each domain: Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills and Actions, Civic Experience and Civic Mindsets.

**Civic Knowledge: Demonstrate a fundamental and functional knowledge of government, law, history, geography, culture, economics, and current events. These may include inequities within our democratic system at the federal, state, and local level. Students should know how to apply this knowledge to different circumstances and settings.**

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local and school levels and how to participate			
Civil and educational rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the U.S. constitution, the Constitution of the State of NY and federal, state, and local statutes and regulations			

History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society			
Impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues			
View and analyze history and current issues from multiple perspectives			
The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering,			
Ensuring a free press			

**Civic Skills and Actions: Demonstrate a broad array of critical analytic, verbal, communication, media literacy and other skills and participate in a wide variety of actions. Students should practice such actions both inside and outside of school on a regular basis.**

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument			
Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue or problem			
Identify, describe, and contrast the roles of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies			
Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights			
Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with participation in a democratic society and the interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process			
Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy) media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility			
Engagement in working toward the public good			

**Civic Mindsets: Demonstrate the mindset of a participant in a democratic society. A civic mindset is a commitment to democratic interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, attitudes, and beliefs and informed actions that promote and facilitate meaningful participation in civic life. It is an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups.**

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness			
Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations			
Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties			
Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems			
Respecting fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law			

**Civic Experiences: Participate in developmentally appropriate civic experiences. Civic readiness should be developed in a variety of settings and ways—inside and outside the classroom, across content areas and for multiple purposes. Civic Readiness should be promoted by engaging students in relevant experiences that include students as active participants.**

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Completing a civic capstone or civic engagement project			
Engaging in service learning			
Engaging in civil discourse around controversial issues			
Engaging with news and digital tools, such as social media, responsibly			
Participating in civic centered co- curricular and extracurricular activities such as Model UN, Student Government, Debate Club, Student Journalism or Mock Trial			
Participating in school governance			
Voting, volunteering, and participating in community organizations and governmental systems, such as community boards, youth advisory councils etc. to promote continuous improvement			

