
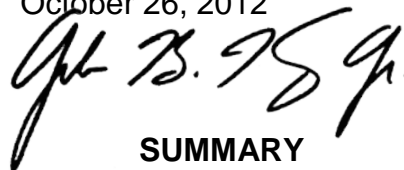




**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Ken Slentz   
**SUBJECT:** Common Core Grade 9-12 Social Studies Framework and Graduation Requirements

**DATE:** October 26, 2012

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

  
**SUMMARY**

### **Issue for Discussion**

Do the current Social Studies Core Curriculum and required high school courses reflect what the Regents believe students should know and be able to do upon course completion?

### **Background Information**

At the July, 2011 joint meeting of the P-12 Education/Standards Work Group, the Committee recommended and the Board adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Since that time, the Department has articulated the 12 instructional shifts that are demanded by the new standards. These shifts will help to ensure that students graduate high school college and career ready in that they have received instruction which develops in them the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Critical to those skills are a student's ability to read a balance of increasingly challenging fiction and non-fiction texts and to marshal evidence from a text in constructing a written argument. To determine if these and other key skills were reflected in the current Core Curriculum and required courses, at the May 2011 joint discussion of the Board's P-12 Education Committee and College and Career Readiness Working Group, a Social Studies Content Advisory Panel was created, consisting of a wide range of experts from the field. One of its charges was to advise on the suggested revision of the *New York State Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* to ensure alignment to *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*. As a result, the Content Advisory Panel has met three times since fall 2011 and advised on the draft New York State Grades K-8 Common Core Social Studies Framework. This Framework, aligned to the *New York State Common Core Learning Standards*,

integrates the existing *New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies* and the *Resource Guide with Core Curriculum*. The Social Studies Framework emphasizes Key Ideas and Conceptual Understandings for each grade level. Subsequent to this and upon direction from the P-12 committee at the September 2012 meeting, the K-8 Framework was posted on [www.engageNY.org](http://www.engageNY.org) for public review and comment through October 11, 2012. Members of the Content Advisory Panel reviewed the public input during their October 19, 2012 meeting and made recommendations to revise the Framework to increase its clarity, depth, and emphasis of its goals. This input will provide a starting point for a unified K-8 field guide to allow classroom teachers to implement effectively the K-8 Common Core Social Studies Framework. Department staff will utilize a similar process to develop a draft Grades 9-12 Common Core Social Studies Framework.

When reviewing the current diploma requirements for social studies to determine if they are aligned to the demands of the Common Core standards and the Regents expectations for student learning opportunities, the two units of credit in Global History and Geography as currently constructed did not appear to be aligned. As such, at the September 2012 Regents meeting, the Board discussed a recommendation to amend Commissioner's Regulations to require two separate year-long courses in Global History and Geography (yielding two social studies credits) which are built upon the Common Core Standards and the associated instructional shifts. These units could be thematically or chronologically based (see below) so long as they foster the reading, writing and reasoning skills demanded by the Common Core for college and career readiness. The Board also considered assessment options for these courses with the second year-long course potentially culminating in a new Regents Examination required for graduation. This new examination would replace the current Regents Examination in Global History and Geography. A second Regents exam for the first year-long could be provided if funding permits. However, no decision was made on this recommendation. Moving forward, the discussion of graduation requirements for social studies needs to be informed by the development of the Grades 9-12 Common Core Social Studies Framework.

### **Development of Feedback for Grades 9-12 Framework**

On October 19, 2012, the Content Advisory Panel met with Department staff and recommended, consistent with the Board discussion in September, that the Global History and Geography course of study be divided into two separate and distinct units of study to be required for graduation. The Panel presented three options for dividing the Global History and Geography course of study into two (2) units of study:

- (1) Thematic approach: In this option, Unit of Study 1 would be a foundational course concentrating on building skills in economics, geography, civics and world history; Unit of Study 2 would be a thematic approach to contemporary world history and geography; or
- (2) Chronological approach: Unit of Study 1 would address the Neolithic Revolution to the Age of Enlightenment (approximately 8000 BCE to 1600);

(approximately 1600 to present). This is the current practice in most districts;  
or

- (3) Chronological approach: Unit of Study 1 would address the Neolithic Revolution to the end of the Napoleonic Period (approximately 8000 BCE to 1815); Unit of Study 2 would address 1815 to the present. This option would narrow the scope of the study of the classical civilizations in Unit 1.

The Panel further recommended that if only one exam were to be offered the Regents examination required for graduation focus only on Unit of Study 2. No discussion took place regarding the funding required for a second exam associated with Unit of Study 1, but this information will be provided to the panel as their work moves forward based on the Regents' direction.

Department staff will work with the Content Advisory Panel members and other stakeholders as follows to receive and incorporate additional feedback.

### **Feedback on Course Options**

- NYSED and the Panel will survey stakeholders regarding the three different options for the Global History and Geography course of study (November 2012-January 2013).
- Staff will utilize the feedback to develop a Grades 9-12 Common Core Social Studies Framework.
- The Framework will be presented to the Board of Regents in January 2013.

### **Public Comment and Revision of the Grades 9-12 Social Studies Framework**

- The draft Grades 9-12 Framework will be posted for public comment (January to March 2013).
- The Framework will be revised to incorporate input from the field (March to April 2013).

### **Final Drafts Presented to the Board of Regents**

- In April 2013, staff will present to the Board the Grades 9-12 Common Core Social Studies Framework and the recommended revised Global History and Geography course of study. Draft amended graduation requirement regulations will be presented that incorporate the revisions to the Global History and Geography course of study as well as associated assessment options.
- A unified K-12 social studies field guide will be created to provide teachers with exemplars and resources for classroom usage.

### **Development of New Global History and Geography Regents Examination**

- Once the Board approves the new Global History and Geography sequence and requirements, development of new Regents examination(s) will begin.

- The first administration of new Global History and Geography Regents examination(s) would be targeted for June 2016.

### **Challenges:**

Challenges associated with this plan of action include:

- The Department would need to allocate fiscal and human resources to develop new one-year, end-of-course Regents Examinations (either an end-of-year course exam for year two or an end-of-year exam for each of the two courses) for Global History and Geography. A three-year development window is required in order to accomplish this goal.
- The Department would need to offer restricted administrations of the previous Global History and Geography assessment after the adoption of new assessment(s) in order to allow students to complete their cohort's assessment requirements.
- Local districts would need to allocate fiscal and human resources to develop curricula, purchase instructional materials aligned to the new courses, and provide professional development for teachers.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended the Board of Regents direct staff to gather feedback from the field concerning the development of the Grades 9-12 Common Core Social Studies Frameworks and the proposed changes to the graduation requirements.