

Eight-Year Program Review IBHE Report Summary: see attached Resources page and the EIU report archive: <https://www.eiu.edu/assess/archivepr.php>

PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT SUMMARY

1. Reporting Institution: Eastern Illinois University

2. Program Reviewed History with Teacher Licensure in Social Science

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5. OVERVIEW

The History with Teacher Licensure in Social Science program prepares secondary teacher students to design, implement, and assess discipline-specific, student-centered, inquiry-based instruction in all social science subjects. Coursework in the College of Education as well as significant clinical experiences, content requirements spread across all social science disciplines (economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology-anthropology), and deep immersion in the discipline of history mean that students are prepared to be effective teachers. The program—rooted in Eastern’s history as a state normal school—is also grounded in Eastern’s mission and university learning goals of Writing and Critical Reading, Critical Thinking, Speaking/Listening, and Responsible Citizenship. Students engage in critical reading and historical and other disciplinary-specific critical thinking in courses for the major and as they design thoughtful lessons and implement them in clinical settings. As future teachers, experience in public speaking is integrated throughout the program. Finally, as social studies teachers – now and since the Founding Era – have been called upon to prepare students to participate in civic life, HIS-TL is committed to prepare students to be responsible citizens and to be ready to prepare their own students for civic life in alignment with the National Council for the Social Studies’ C3 framework (the 3Cs are college, career, and civic life). History with Teacher Licensure in Social Science has learning goals that reflect the above, as well as the History Department’s mission to “inspire students to appreciate the depth, diversity, and complexity of human history” as well as to develop transferable research and analytical skills:

1. History with Teacher Licensure majors will demonstrate sufficient mastery of U.S. and world history as well as standard knowledge of economics, geography, political science, psychology, and sociology-anthropology.
2. History with Teacher Licensure majors will be able to analyze a source document using the historical method AND demonstrate the ability to design instruction to teach historical thinking in the secondary classroom.
3. History majors will be able to demonstrate knowledge of inclusive history in alignment with Illinois State Mandates for Social Science.
4. History with Teacher Licensure majors will effectively plan for instruction, developing objectives that are tied to appropriate learning goals and standards; designing appropriate and culturally responsive instructional strategies and lessons to build content knowledge and support learning needs of students; integrating support of literacy into instruction; and planning how to assess student learning.
5. History with Teacher Licensure majors will demonstrate professional teaching competency and an ability to positively impact student learning.
6. History with Teacher Licensure majors will demonstrate professional dispositions and capacities.

The licensure program is similar to many others in both the licensure path and overall requirements. Prior to 2019, EIU had a second licensure path, Social Science Teaching (SOS), which allowed students to specialize in geography, political science, psychology, or sociology. That program was eliminated in 2019 due to decreased enrollment, staffing, and broader resource allocation meant that multiple paths could no longer be sustained. As History with Teacher Licensure was the dominant route for students seeking licensure (with upwards of 80% of majors in the HIS-TL program), it became the singular path. Very few public institutions also offer licensure through departments such as Political Science. Though the program is housed in History, students are encouraged to minor and seek endorsements in other social science fields and students are prepared to teach all social science subjects.

Our graduates are successful in securing employment in the field and at public schools throughout the state, and the job market is much improved in comparison to a decade ago. Some students also move into graduate education or other fields post-graduation, but this is rooted in student choice, not a challenging job market.

6. MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Description and assessment of any major changes in the program

1. **Changes in the overall discipline or field.** Over the last eight years, the History with Teacher Licensure in Social Science program has evolved in response to a number of criteria, including Illinois's adoption of the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and revised Learning Standards for Social Science and new mandates; changes in direction by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the Specialized Professional Association (SPA) by whom we are recognized through 2030; the needs of candidates preparing for the ILTS Content Test in Social Science: History; and the commitment of the Eastern History department to update best practices for serving history majors. More information about how we have revised our program in response to all of these, as well as in continued response to our assessment program, is included in 6b below.

2. **Student demand.** Nationwide demographic changes as well as socioeconomic and political factors have brought challenges across the board to enrollment in higher education. These, as well as the prior state budget impasse, a statewide decline in teacher education enrollment, and the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, have led to a decrease in students prior to the last full IBHE review. (This in part was what led to the elimination of the SOS program in 2019.) That said, since 2017, enrollment has remained relatively consistent. The IBHE Data Bank and Eastern's Institutional Research data show relatively consistent enrollment and completion numbers in our History programs (BA and TL) from 2017 to 2025 (an average of 106 students enrolled each year, with ranges from 87 in 2019 to 126 in 2023), and the ratio of BA to TL majors remains roughly 1:3. 10th Day Reports from 2017-2025 demonstrate relative stability in the teacher licensure enrollment as well, with ranges from 55-80 students enrolled in teacher licensure. Degree completion data has also been relatively consistent: 2018-11, 2019-14; 2020-11; 2021-12; 2022-9; 2023-10; 2024-12; 2025-16.

3. **Societal needs.** According to the Bureau of Labor, there will be a 5% growth in employment of secondary teachers during this decade. Though in [March 2025](#) ISBE reported an "easing" to the educator shortage crisis, the job market remains very good for our graduates—and even with the easing, 87% of schools responding to the IARSS survey said they continue to have a teacher shortage problem. This is due to both retirements (ISBE's [Supply and Demand Report](#) from 2023 notes an "aging" teacher workforce) as well as attrition among younger teachers. Even as the state sees a small easing of the shortage, there are continued unfilled positions and vacancies. While social science is not as in demand as Math, Science, and World Languages, it IS in-demand, and ISBE et al.'s [Educator Shortage Report 2025](#) reports that 64% of education entity leaders report an anticipated increase in the need for teachers. As the top reason listed for unfilled positions was limited applicants (followed by structural conditions or the broader cultural landscape), this means that our students have a high probability of finding a job upon successful completion of student teaching—and even beforehand. Of 17 student teachers in the field at present, one already has secured a job. It IS a clear recruitment tool, particularly as the job market in social studies used to be much tighter.

4. **Institutional context for offering the degree.** As mentioned in section 5, Eastern's origins as a normal school mean it has long been known for teacher training, and the state normal school model is to position secondary teacher education programs within their academic departments. Students "belong" to the History Department and build a cohort and community there (and in the broader College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), and they also take classes and oversee by professors and supervisors in the College of Education. There is one class unique to their major, SOS 3400: Teaching Methods for Middle and Secondary Social Studies, and a series of classes unique to students in the three History Licensure tracks that aim to build analytical and research skills as well as help students explore career possibilities. Though no longer impacted by the state budget impasse, the program is of course impacted by broader landscape of higher education and the funding of higher education in Illinois. HIS-TL student demographics do not reflect the diversity of the Eastern Illinois University student population, and we continue efforts to better recruit women and students of color.

5. Other elements appropriate to the discipline in question

As a program that provides licensure in seven different social science areas, as well as training in pedagogy, educational psychology, and related fields, the degree program is very large, requiring 125 hours at present. To expedite graduation, we have decreased hours (at height, the program was 143 hours in 2012), and we continue to look for places to reduce hours while also fully equipping our students to pass the ILTS Content Test (Social Science: History, test 315) and to graduate prepared in all necessary facets of content and pedagogical knowledge. Our students, too, are increasingly affected by the cost of higher education, the changing landscape of student loans, and the additional costs of teacher licensure (ILTS testing costs, professional apparel, transportation needs for clinical experience, etc.). Due to staffing reductions and reduced offerings of courses, we are not always able to offer required courses every semester. We equip students to conform to best practices in social studies education, in historical thinking (according to the American Historical Association's Professional Standards of Conduct, 2023, as well as to the standards set forward by the National Council for the Social Studies), and Illinois's inclusive history mandates, inquiry-based learning standards, and culturally responsive practice. We would be remiss not to note that the context for teaching social studies subjects in the United States is particularly fraught at present, as federal dictates about "patriotic education," critical race theory, etc., affect social studies more than perhaps some other disciplines. Many of our students are aware that they are navigating a fraught landscape, and their trepidation is an obstacle to recruitment and to their career longevity.

B. Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement

As mentioned in 6A1, our learning goals, curricular choices, and assessment plans have evolved since the last report. We assess our learning goals using a variety of measures, and we work to assess our candidates learning from early coursework through the competition of student teaching. Through 2023, our learning goals and assessment measures included a few pieces required by NCSS, our SPA, and we have revised our assessment significantly over the last three years. Our broad learning goals, however, remain consistent, with a new goal and assessment for inclusive history.

Content Knowledge. We use Content Test data (which has long been a measure, and which has sub-scores for US history, World History, and Social Science knowledge) and a more recent assessment where cooperating teachers (CTs) report on student teacher knowledge of history, social science subjects, and disciplinary thinking (whether historical thinking or that of another social studies discipline). Performance on ILTS 246 (adopted 2018) was an area where we struggled. From 2021-2024 in particular, our data on student pass rates was not satisfactory, with no year where we had a first-time pass rate above 80% (our goal). An important context is that we were not wildly divergent from data reported across the state, yet this stood out as the area we most needed to improve. We implemented both curricular and extracurricular improvements (addition of courses, meetings, practice sessions, and 1:1 remediation work by the TL coordinator), and this led to more success in 2024-2025, with 11/14 passing on the first attempt. Since the test was revised (students now take ILTS 315), all students have passed on the first attempt (N=23). Even before content test data improved, the data from CTs consistently has consistently shown that most (80-90%) of our program completers have sufficient content knowledge. As some students in student teaching juggle multiple preps in multiple disciplines (a typical load could be US history, Civics, Geography OR World History and Economics OR US History, Current Issues, and Geography) we continue to look for opportunities to shore up candidate preparation to teach the wide array of social studies disciplines; this is perhaps the biggest challenge for a social science licensure program. In 2025-2026 we have gathered resource and planning ideas from a large group of teaching alumni to distribute to our candidates, for one measure, and we continue to build in opportunities in SOS 3400 and beyond to prepare students to teach the variety of social science subjects.

Historical Thinking. We assess student ability to “think like a historian” through a Primary Source Analysis assignment embedded into history coursework as well as a specific Historical Thinking Lesson Plan in SOS 3400. We added that second measure since the previous IBHE report, knowing that ability to plan for historical thinking showcases student ability. Assessment data from 2017-2025 shows that we are meeting our expectations. As the lesson plan requires more sophisticated application of understanding, it is not surprising that our data is less satisfactory (with 20% not meeting expectation for how to scaffold student reading of documents) and we continue to work to improve instruction in SOS 3400.

Inclusive History Knowledge. Our newest assessment, added only last year in response to curricular changes outlined below, is a rubric-based assessment of a milestone assignment like a film analysis or book review in courses carrying our Inclusive History label. As it is new, data is preliminary, with only one cycle of data. We look forward to using statistically significant data moving forward.

Planning for Instruction. With the addition of a new course (HIS 1101) described below, we now assess planning at two points, early in the major and then through the traditional Unit Plan that is required in all secondary content methods courses. Though our candidates are generally meeting our expectations for performance, we continue to revise the Unit Plan rubric, particularly to align to the new Illinois Literacy Plan and to continue our work to meet the Culturally Responsive Teaching Standards. Our goal has been that at least 50% of students meet standards in their ability to demonstrate content knowledge in teaching; align a lesson to standards; make use of appropriate instructional strategies and resources; create an assessment; and support critical thinking and literacy. Since we updated assessment in 2023, we met each of these targets with 77%; 70%; 62%; 65%, respectively. (N=84) On Measure 2, the Unit Plan, we expect 90% of students to meet the same standards as above, with at least 30% occasionally exceeding. We also met both of these targets in all four categories, with assessment getting the fewest number of students marked occasionally exceeding. Particular growth was shown in student use of instructional strategies and support of literacy between measures 1 and 2. As these areas have been places we have reinforced in our curriculum, the upward trend in student performance affirmed that our curricular changes are succeeding.

Impact on Student Learning. From 2017 until its waiver period began in 2020, we used edTPA data to measure impact on student learning. With one exception during that time period, all candidates passed edTPA on the first attempt, meeting our expectations for student performance. After edTPA has moved into a hiatus, we briefly relied on Student Teaching Evaluation data from COE but have since developed two new measures to assess impact on student learning during the significant clinical experiences of practicum and student teaching. First, we assess candidate artifacts and a teaching impact reflection during practicum and second, we ask CTs to make a similar assessment during student teaching. We measure eight capacities (content knowledge; creation of a positive learning environment, instructional strategies, meaningful learning experiences, strategies to support literacy, and authentic assessments; and abilities to explain instructional choices and to adapt instruction). In data from 2023-2025, candidates met expectations for all of the capacities except use of appropriate and varied instructional strategies. We have redesigned the planning element in SOS 3400 to address this and added a Course Journal where students gather strategies. Additionally, the TL coordinator has increased communication with both practicum students and student teachers specifically around the topic of active strategies for social studies, as the issue seems to be with transfer and using what was learned in SOS 3400 once students are out in the field managing multiple social studies preps.

Dispositions. We assess students on the dispositions we consider essential for success as a teacher: effective communication (spoken & written); professional interactions; problem-solving/initiative; leadership; professional ethics; and time management. We have always evaluated these during student teaching but have added dispositional assessment earlier in the program due to changes we are observing in our students, with hopes that early remediation mean all students can succeed. While dispositional assessment helps us think about the needs of students across the program, it mainly serves us a chance for early intervention with candidates.

C. Description of actions taken since last review, including instructional resources and practices and curricular changes

As described in B, we have undertaken many curricular changes and improvements since the last review as we have streamlined our program, aligned to new state and CRTL standards, and continued to follow best practices for our discipline. Throughout the period under review, we have worked with a small group of teachers and alumni to review and enhance our curriculum. Each semester we have at least one PD opportunity for our students where we bring in social studies teachers (some students who were in our History MA Online Option for Teachers) to enhance the work we do to prepare them in courses. Our Online MA for Teachers and Eastern's MAT program, both new since the last IBHE review, have created many organic opportunities to engage with social science teachers and improve our curriculum. Additionally, in 2023, we created videos on topics such as Planning, Organizing, Assessment, Creating Classroom Community where we interviewed teaching alumni about their practice. This allowed the TL coordinator to get valuable insights and a version of peer review for class materials. Additionally, since the last review the History Department has instituted an Alumni Advisory Board, and they reviewed all learning goals and curricular mandates for TL, offering feedback on them as well as recruitment. An Alumni Focus Group was also convened in June 2025, and a second one will be held this spring.

Major changes include the elimination of the Social Science Teaching path to licensure, continued revisions to the HIS-TL Degree curriculum to better equip students to both pass the ILTS content test, and work to bring inclusive history and culturally responsive social science understanding more to the forefront of the history major. On the former, small requirement changes have been made: an additional history survey is required in response to content test data, and an economics requirement was dropped to make way for it (that has shown no impact on content test performance). On the latter, HIS-TL majors now take one of three thematic, inclusive US history surveys aligned to the Illinois Social Science Mandates, and they also take an upper-level history course designed as an inclusive history course by the department Curriculum Committee and a political science elective aligned to the state learning standards with an attention to equity and diversity. Additionally, in 2022 we revised our curriculum to eliminate a one-credit introductory course (SOS 2400) for HIS-TL majors and to replace it with a three-credit course (HIS 1101) required of all History majors, BA or TL or IS. We made this decision to better build in education alongside other career choices for the major, and to more firmly orient our students to content and disciplinary practice as they move through the major. All students in HIS 1101 complete a lesson plan and get a foundation for thinking about their own desire to be (or not to be) an educator. This curricular shift has wedded early teacher training more firmly to disciplinary training and means that all faculty teaching that course participate explicitly in talking with our majors about teaching. This year we have also undertaken reviews of dispositional assessments, as mentioned above.

D. Description of actions to be taken because of this review, including instructional resources and practices and curricular changes

The weight of preparing students to pass the ILTS Content Test has eased somewhat since the release of ILTS Social Science: History #315. We are committed to continuing the many practices we have implemented to support all our students in passing that test and securing licensure, and we anticipate a need for continued changes as a new state test to replace edTPA is designed and implemented. Additionally, we continue to seek ways to prepare our candidates to succeed and find joy as teachers, and to not become part of the statewide story of early-career attrition. We will continue bringing in teachers who offer tips on work-life balance, organization, and time management and to bring our students to high-quality professional development events like the Illinois Council for the Social Studies annual conference (which we will host again in April 2025). In response to assessment data, to alumni focus group meetings in 2025-2026, and to an anticipated alumni survey to be undertaken in May 2026, we anticipate future changes to both curriculum and extracurricular content for our students.

Comments from the College Dean:

The BA History-Teacher Licensure program is now seven years past the folding of the Social Science Teaching (SOS) Program into it, which was done to better align with state curricular trends in licensure. The period since then has been marked with continued, smart evolution of the curriculum and more precise, relevant assessment measures — both of these areas have already demonstrated positive impact on students' preparation for an evolving discipline. Of particular note are the new measures that assess impact on student learning during their clinical experiences and the greater incorporation of the state inclusive history standards into the curriculum. Enrollment continues to exceed IBHE benchmarks, with an average of 106 enrolled per year. A significant reduction in overall program hours from 143 to 125 has decreased time-to-graduation, making the program even more attractive to recruits. An overall robust job market in this field combined with the program's commitment to instilling best practices has been a boon to students, with some even receiving job offers while in their student teaching. Overall, the program is well-positioned to navigate the changing seas of secondary education as well as the impending challenges of the "enrollment cliff."

We recommend a decision of **Program in Good Standing**.

VPAA Decision:

- ☒ Program in good standing
- ☐ Program flagged for priority review
- ☐ Program enrollment suspended

VPAA Explanation:

History Teacher Licensure BA (540101)

The summary above describes the evolution of the B.A. in History Teacher Licensure in Social Science program. In 2019, the program departed from the specialized streams offered in the Social Science Teaching (SOS)—sociology, geography, political science, psychology—towards a more streamlined focus on the most popular branch for students, History with Teacher Licensure. In its adaptation to changing teaching standards in the field, the program has flourished in curricular innovation and managed to sustain the enrollment of students who are markedly better prepared for demonstrating the teaching dispositions and content knowledge required to succeed. This keen preparation positions our students for winning jobs in a strong market for teachers. The program improves its assessment measures by adding and refining tools like a new exit survey for graduates.

Resources for Completing the Eight-Year IBHE Program Review Report

Section 5. Overview

This section will focus the review for your reader.

In **no more than half a page**, please explain your program's mission and its relationship to Eastern's mission (and, if applicable, to the mission of graduate education). Identify similar programs in the state; distinguish your program from others. You also should identify your program's student learning objectives and career/further education objectives, and summarize significant changes, achievements (by faculty and students and the program itself), and plans.

Section 6. Major Findings and Recommendations

These are the standard IBHE questions.

a. Description and assessment of any major changes in the program:

- changes in the overall discipline or field
- student demand
- societal needs
- institutional context for offering the degree
- other elements appropriate to the discipline in question

What, if any, internal or external events have affected your program since the last review? Have enrollments, degree production, costs, student satisfaction, job placement, etc. changed significantly? Has the discipline's governing body approved a new name for the programs it represents; updated or revised curricular requirements; identified new markets; developed new emphases? Have nationwide demographic changes or social policies affected enrollments or requirements for good or for ill?

The resources listed below may help you respond to item 6.a:

1. **EIU Institutional Research** houses all EIU common data sets, program enrollment and graduation data; see the "Facts & Figures" tab; staff members in IR are also available to help you assemble and analyze different program data: <https://www.eiu.edu/ir/>
2. **IBHE Data Points** track public university enrollment data across Illinois: <https://www.ibhe.org/datapoints.html>
3. **IBHE Enrollment and Degrees Conferred Data Tool**: <https://enrollmentsdegrees.ibhe.org>
4. **CIP Code** (classification of instructional programs) for each academic program, something you need for using the IBHE tool above: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=56>
5. **EIU Career Services Annual Report**: <https://www.eiu.edu/careers/annualreport.php>

6. **Occupational projections** are available from many professional journals and organizations, including:
- a. Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://stats.bls.gov/>
 - b. BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>
 - c. ISBE's Educator Supply and Demand Report: <https://www.isbe.net/edsupplydemand>
 - d. Illinois Workforce Information Center:
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Workforce_Information_Center.aspx
 - e. O*Net Online: <https://www.onetonline.org>

a. Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement

While 6.b also asks you to discuss other significant findings, it is basically the assessment section of the program review. As such, the responses here are crucial to your review's success. Departments unable to demonstrate that their assessment programs meet the established guidelines will be expected to revise those programs within six months of the final review deadline. The IBHE's assessment guidelines are appended to this document.

Since your overview already identifies your student learning objectives, focus here on the assessment program and its results. What measures are you using to assess learning? How well are students achieving the objectives identified for them? What are their specific strengths and weaknesses? What changes have you made and will you be making because of your findings from assessment? Emphasize direct assessment but mention the indirect measures you are using as well. Support your generalizations with specific data/evidence. And be sure to include feedback from key stakeholders—students, alums, employers, peer reviewers, etc.—since the IBHE requires it.

b. Description of actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes

c. Description of actions to be taken because of this review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes

6.c and 6.d are straightforward. However, by this point, you already may have mentioned the most significant actions your department has taken/is planning to take. **Do not repeat yourself.** Merely refer the reader to a previous section or sections.

Section 7. Outcome

After consultation with the College Dean, the Provost's Office will indicate whether the program will be deemed "in good standing" or "flagged for priority review." The latter category is used to identify programs experiencing serious concerns—significantly low enrollments, high costs, negative accreditation findings, below-average pass rates on statewide exams, below-average employment placement rates, a continuing lack of satisfaction among students or employers, etc. Departments will be asked to examine and address the identified concern(s) and report the results in an interim review, due in 1-3 years. Typically, however, the IBHE program review results in a positive decision, and the next review is due in eight years.