

Social Studies State-Selected End-of-Course Examinations

Pursuant to Am. Sub. S.B. 165 (Enacted March, 2012)

Frequently Asked Questions

January, 2013

In March, 2012, the General Assembly passed and Governor Kasich signed Amended Substitute Senate Bill 165 (referred to below as S.B. 165). Included in this legislation was a requirement for the state superintendent of public instruction and the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents to select end-of-course examinations in American history and American government. The selection is to be made not later than July 1, 2014.

This document addresses questions related to the implementation of state-selected end-of-course examinations. It represents the current understanding of S.B. 165 by the Ohio Department of Education. The interpretations are tentative, are under study and are subject to change as more information becomes available. For further information about the legislation, see “Social Studies and Am. Sub. Senate Bill 165 (Enacted March 2012) Frequently Asked Questions” on the Ohio Department of Education Web site.

Overview

Q. What is the end-of-course examination requirement?

A. Under the provisions of S.B. 165, the state superintendent of public instruction and the chancellor of the Ohio board of regents are to select end-of-course examinations in American history and American government. The selection is to be made not later than July 1, 2014. The state-selected examinations are scheduled to become operational in the spring of 2015.

The state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government shall require demonstration of mastery of the American history and American government content in the social studies standards and the historic documents identified in the legislation.

At least 20 percent of the state-selected end-of-course examination in American government shall address the topics on American history and American government described in the Ohio Revised Code.

Q. How will Ohio’s assessment system shift from the Ohio Graduation Tests to end-of-course examinations in social studies?

A. Students in the class of 2016 will be the last students that have to meet the requirement of passing the Ohio Graduation Tests in order to graduate. Students in that class who are unsuccessful in passing the Ohio Graduation Tests in one or more subjects will continue to have opportunities to take and pass the Ohio Graduation Tests under current testing rules. The Ohio Graduation Test in social studies will

have its last administrations in the 2013-2014 school year, except for students needing additional opportunities to take and pass the social studies portion of the Ohio Graduation Tests.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, Ohio high school students taking American history and American government courses will be subject to the state-selected end-of-course examination requirement. Students who are required to take the Ohio Graduation Tests in the 2013-2014 school year and who will take American history or American government to meet graduation requirements in 2014-2015 and beyond will also be subject to the state-selected end-of-course examinations once they become operational in the spring of 2015.

Affected Students

Q. What students are required to take the state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government?

A. After July 1, 2014, any student in any grade taking American history and American government to meet graduation requirements and will take the designated state-selected end-of-course examination.

Q. Will students taking the state-selected end-of-course examinations also be required to take the Ohio Graduation Test for social studies?

A. Students who are members of the class of 2016 or an earlier class and who are enrolled in the American history and American government courses during the 2014-2015 and subsequent school years and who have not yet passed the Ohio Graduation Test for social studies will continue to have passage of the Ohio Graduation Test as a graduation requirement. Students enrolled in the American history and American government courses during the 2014-2015 and subsequent school years and who are members of the class of 2017 or are members of later classes will not have to take the Ohio Graduation Test for social studies. These students will take a nationally standardized assessment that measures college and career readiness and also take the state-selected end-of-course examinations to meet graduation requirements.

Q. Is passage of the state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government required for course completion, course passage, or graduation credit?

A. Passage of the state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government is not a separate graduation requirement. A decision on recording the results of the state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government is forthcoming. Student performance on these examinations may be incorporated as percentage of the final course grade or may be notated on students' transcripts.

Q. Must students retake state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government if they are unsuccessful on their first attempts?

A. Students are not required to retake state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government if they are unsuccessful on their first attempts unless they are also required to retake the affected course.

Q. Will there be accommodations for special needs students taking state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government?

A. Local school districts will make accommodations for special needs students taking state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government in accordance with the testing instructions.

Q. Are students who earn credit for either American history or American government prior to the implementation of state-selected end-of-course examinations required to take the end-of-course examination for either course for which credit has previously been earned?

A. Students are not required to take the state-selected end-of-course examinations for any course in which credit has previously been earned.

Q. Are students who transfer into a school district with credits in American history and/or American government required to take the state-selected end-of-course examinations?

A. Students are not required to take the state-selected end-of-course examination for any course in which credit has previously been earned.

Q. Are students taking Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses in American history and American government subject to the state-selected end-of-course examinations for those courses?

A. S.B. 165 calls for the state superintendent of public instruction and the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents to “select multiple assessments that school districts, public schools, and chartered nonpublic schools may use as end-of-course examinations.” Those assessments shall include “nationally recognized subject area assessments, such as advanced placement examinations, SAT subject tests, international baccalaureate examinations, and other assessments of college and work readiness.” Decisions are forthcoming as to the selection of applicable assessments.

Q. Are students enrolled in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) courses in American history and American government subject to the state-selected end-of-course examinations for those courses?

A. Decisions are forthcoming regarding students enrolled in PSEO courses for high school credit in American history and American government and the applicability of the state-selected end-of-course examinations.

Q. Are students who are earning credit for American history or American government under credit flexibility subject to the state-selected end-of-course examinations?

A. Students wishing to pursue their credits for American history and/or American government via credit flexibility must include demonstrated mastery of American history and American government standards,

including the historic documents listed in S.B. 165, in their instructional delivery plan. Students can test out of these courses, but the assessments used to make this determination must include the content pertaining to the specified historic documents with at least 20% of the American government assessment based on the identified documents.

Programmatic Issues

Q. During what times during the school year will school districts be able to administer the state-selected end-of-course examinations?

A. Some districts offer American history and/or American government courses for periods of time less than a full school year. In those instances, during the initial year of administration, if a testing window is available at the end of the quarter, trimester, semester, etc., students would take the examination at that time. If there is not a testing window available, students would be required to take the end-of-course examination at the end of the school year. After the 2014-15 school year, multiple testing windows will be available to accommodate courses offered for varying lengths of time and ending at various times of the year.

Q. What content must be covered in the state-selected end-of-course examinations in American history and American government?

A. Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the American history and American government content and the historic documents identified in the legislation. The expected content is based upon the course syllabi found in *Ohio's New Learning Standards: K-12 Social Studies*. The content on the specified historic documents should be drawn from the content statements in the course syllabus for each course as found on the Ohio Department of Education Web site. This would include content statements 5 – 9 in American history and content statements 6, 8 – 13 and 18 in American government.

Q. How will the content be distributed among the test items used with the state-selected end-of-course examinations?

A. Test items will address as many of the historic documents found in the applicable content statements as feasible given the length and composition of the examinations. At least 20 percent of the state-selected end-of-course examination in American government shall address the topics on American history and American government described in the Ohio Revised Code.

Q. What constitutes “at least twenty per cent of the end-of-course examination in American government”?

A. Items addressing the historic documents will make up at least twenty per cent of the points possible on an end-of-course examination in American government.

Q. What types of items or tasks will be used with the state-selected and state-constructed end-of-course examinations?

A. Five basic types of items/tasks will be used with the state-selected and state-constructed end-of-course examinations. Four types will be machine-scored items. One type will be human-scored items.

The machine-scored items/tasks include:

- multiple-choice items – questions with four answer options;
- short-answer items – questions with response areas requiring a few words, a short phrase, or a brief sentence;
- graphic-response items – questions with a response interface in which objects are manipulated in response to a task (e.g., objects categorized on charts; events sequenced on a time line; symbols placed on a map);
- simulation tasks – tasks involving situations requiring the identification/application of steps to achieve a goal (such tasks may be followed by other items of various types based upon the information in the simulation).

The human-scored items consist of constructed-response items. These items are questions requiring an extended response which is scored against a rubric.

All of the item types may include one or more stimuli. The stimuli may include document excerpts, graphics, and data displays.

Q. How will the state-selected and state-constructed end-of-course examinations be structured?

A. The state-constructed end-of-course examinations for American history and American government will consist of two parts. The first part will be administered at approximately the end of the third-quarter of the course and consist primarily of constructed-response items. The second part will be administered toward the end of the course and will consist entirely of machine-scored items.

Resources

Q. What commercial test products are available to use in preparing for the state-selected end-of-course examinations?

A. Many publishers include testing item banks with their published materials. The Ohio Department of Education does not approve or endorse products from commercial vendors for use with state-selected end-of-course examinations.

Q. Will practice items be released prior to the first administrations of the state-selected and state-constructed end-of-course examinations in American history and American government?

A. Present plans include the possible release of practice items or a half-length practice test for the state-selected and state-constructed end-of-course examinations in American history and American government.

Q. What resources does the Ohio Department of Education have to assist districts with implementing the state-selected end-of-course requirements?

A. The Ohio Department of Education will make the following resources available on its Web site:

- The academic content standards for American history and American government
- The model curricula for American history and American government
- The Gap Analysis Tool for examining district curricula
- The Social Studies Interim End-of-Course Examinations Frequently Asked Questions document
- The Social Studies State-Selected End-of-Course Examinations Frequently Asked Questions document
- Editions of the fall 2012 State-selected End-of-Course Examinations Webcast and Webinar

The Ohio Department of Education will also be making periodic updates to information through its on-line newsletters, *The Signal*, *Ides of ODE* and *EdConnections*.