

Tamalpais Union High School District  
Larkspur, California

COURSE OF STUDY

SOCIAL ISSUES

**I. Introduction**

A. General purpose:

The purpose of this course is to provide all students with a clear understanding of their individual rights and responsibilities as they enter young adulthood. The goals of this course include acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable students to make informed and healthy decisions with respect to the challenges associated with living in a complex and diverse world. The course will provide students with an opportunity to explore and define their roles as responsible members of the community, and to acquire a repertoire of strategies to cultivate and maintain physical and emotional wellness. The course emphasizes appreciation for and understanding of multiple perspectives in an open and democratic society. Social Issues provides an environment conducive to supportive and thoughtful discussion-based learning about concerns critical to students' lives.

B. District outcomes and Tam 21<sup>st</sup> Century goals:

This course addresses several of the district graduation outcomes. Social Issues has a primary emphasis on the following outcomes:

- # 1 Communicate articulately, effectively ...when speaking and writing.
- # 2 Read/view and analyze material in a variety of disciplines.
- # 4 Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society.
- # 14 Demonstrate knowledge, skills and self-discipline necessary to achieve and maintain physical and emotional well being.

- System # 3 Develop a social awareness.
- System # 5 Develop strong self-esteem and personal identity.
- System # 9 Develop awareness of the impact of behavior on oneself and others.

The Tam 21<sup>st</sup> Century goals of student success and instruction are addressed through this course, as well as the district's commitment to "preparing today's student for tomorrow's world." This course is the core of the Fourth R (Responsibility) Committee's recommendation to provide a comprehensive sexuality program district-wide.

C. Articulation with department, school and parents:

Social Issues is an interdisciplinary course which reinforces and interacts with the curriculum of English, Integrated Science, Physical Education and the Fine Arts. Each student is required to have a signed permission slip outlining the course of study which allows the student to be enrolled in class (Ed Code

51550, 60044-60045). In addition, parents are invited to an informational meeting (to be hosted by each school) where they hear about the specific content of the course. Visiting students or students without a signed permission slip may not participate in this class.

## II. Student Learning Outcomes

### A. Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to articulate (through writing or speaking) the rights and responsibilities that are associated with each unit of study.
2. Students will participate in ten hours of community service (to be completed during the semester of the course) through a non-profit organization.
3. Students will keep a reflective journal/notebook throughout the course.
4. Students will explore social issues topics in depth through a research project and/or literature.

### B. Content:

5. Who Am I as a Young Adult?
  - How have my rights and responsibilities changed now that I'm in high school?
  - How am I changing emotionally, physically, cognitively and socially?
  - Understanding my personal values and how they shape my decisions
  - The impact of the above on decision-making and goal-setting
  - Ethnic and cultural identity
  - Self-esteem
6. Wellness: Mental and Physical Health
  - How are my rights and responsibilities different now that I'm in high school with respect to my own health and safety and the health and safety of others?
  - Stress management and reduction
  - Body image
  - Dealing with mental and physical disorders (such as eating disorders, depression, etc.)
  - Family health history
  - Relevant school and community resources
7. Substance Use and Abuse
  - What are the legal and social consequences of drug use and abuse?
  - Emotional and physical effects of drug use
  - Biochemical effects of substance use and abuse during adolescence
  - Drug education (including legal and illegal)
  - Co-dependency
  - Use, abuse and addiction
  - Family health history
  - Relevant school and community resources
8. Relationships
  - What are my rights and responsibilities in a relationship?
  - Healthy vs. unhealthy relationships
  - Communication
  - Self-esteem

- Gender roles
  - Families
  - Friendships
  - Grief, loss and death
9. Sexuality
- What are my rights and responsibilities in terms of sexuality?
  - Sexual maturation (anatomy and physiology)
  - Sexual orientation
  - Reproduction
  - Birth control methods
  - Sexual decision-making
  - STIs, HIV and AIDS
  - Abstinence and sexual postponement
  - Dealing with societal pressures
10. Hate, Violence and Abuse
- What are my rights and responsibilities in terms of prevention and reporting?
  - Sexual assault
  - Sexual harassment
  - School violence and safety
  - Rape
  - Child abuse
  - Hate crimes
  - Racism

### III. Assessment

#### C. Means of Assessment:

Assessment in this course will be aligned with instruction. Projects, reflective journals, notebooks, discussion, quizzes/tests, interactive activities and presentations are some of the possible assessment tools to be employed by individual teachers at their discretion. Students will be given the course outcomes and a description of the methods of assessment and grading in writing at the beginning of the semester. Students are required to complete 10 hours of community service; those who do not complete all ten hours will have their semester grade lowered **two full** grades.

#### D. Course Assessment:

Social issues teachers from the Tamalpais Union High School District will meet every four years to review and revise curriculum. If possible, teachers will meet on a regular basis to share curriculum and evaluate the course.

### IV. Methods/Materials

#### A. Types of Activities/Instructional Methods:

In order to be effective, this course must be taught in a supportive, non-judgmental, active learning environment. Students must participate actively: discussing; reflecting through listening, speaking and

writing; practicing critical thinking, decision making, and communication skills; and learning how to take responsible, appropriate actions.

In order to help students realize the course outcomes, teachers will employ a variety of engaging activities including but not limited to the following: small and large group discussion, individual and group activities, reflective journal writing, reading primary and secondary resources, individual and group projects, oral presentations, guest speakers, role playing, videos, community service, book reviews, and teacher lecture. Social Issues teachers will be consistently and adequately trained and updated in content and current, effective teaching strategies.

#### B. Materials:

The primary resource will be the book: Questions & Quandries: A Human Development Workbook. Carol W. Hotchkiss. Avocus Publishing, Washington, D.C. 1993.

#### Supplemental materials may include:

- We Have Rights Too! ACLU
- Teaching Tolerance Magazine
- Ask Me If I Care. Nancy Rubin
- UpFront Magazine Scholastic

#### Community Resources:

- New Perspectives
- Marin Suicide Prevention
- REACH
- Marin AIDS Project
- Spectrum
- Public Health Department
- Rape Crisis Center
- Beyond Hunger
- Hospice of Marin
- Planned Parenthood
- Huckleberry
- MAWS (Marin Abused Women)

#### Videos:

- *AC Green's Abstinence*
- *Dying to be Thin*
- *The Truth about Drinking (MTV)*
- *A Place at the Table*
- *Gay Youth*
- *And. The Band Played On*
- *Power of Choice Series*
- *Say No to Drugs, End of the Road*
- *Teens Talk AIDS*

### V. General Information

#### A. Prerequisites:

There are no course prerequisites for Social Issues. All students must however have positive parental permission to participate in any discussions around sexuality as per the Ed. code. Parents may apply for a waiver with the district for their student to be excused from any or all parts of the class.

#### B. Graduation requirements:

This course is a one semester (5 unit) graduation requirement to be taken in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Students transferring into the district after ninth grade will be assigned to a special section for upperclassmen.

#### C. UC requirements:

This course does not meet any of the UC/CSU requirements.

APPENDIX A: Relevant District Policies including the District Fourth R Policy

APPENDIX B: Relevant California Education Code Sections

APPENDIX C: Parental permission letter

## **Relevant Education Code Sections (Appendix B)**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 35160   | Authority of Governing Boards  |
| 35160.1 | Authority of Governing Boards  |
| 51201.5 | AIDS and AIDS Prevention   |
| 51203   | Instruction on alcohol, narcotics, restricted, dangerous drugs   |
| 51229   | Abstinence from sexual intercourse; video tape and supplementary instructional materials   |
| 51240   | Excuse from health, family life, and sex education instruction due to religious beliefs  |
| 51511   | Religious matters properly included in courses of study  |
| 51550   | Sex education courses  |
| 51551   | Venereal disease education   |
| 51553   | Sex education classes; course criteria   |
| 51554   | Instruction on sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, human sexuality, or family life provided by outside organization or guest speakers; written notice |
| 51555   | Instruction on sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, human sexuality or family life; written notice   |

BOT Approved 10/23/92

Revised 5/96

*Revised 12/19/01*

**Δ.**