Dr. Gigi Peterson **Alternative Routes to Certification to Teach Adolescent Social Studies**

Former SST Program Coordinator

For various reasons, some students may find that the SST dual major is not, for them, a workable or timely path toward initial certification. The SST dual major has many requirements that need to be completed over a series of semesters, and many transfer students are unable to complete the degree in four years, especially if they enter Cortland as juniors. They must complete requirements for two full majors, space out upper-division classes in the social science major (usually history),\* maintain a certain GPA and thus reasonable workload, and qualify for and complete a two-year “SST Professional Sequence” of classes that also integrate field experience in schools.

Every year, several SST majors leave the program, many of them because they need more time to complete the requirements, and taking 5-6 years to complete a BA is not feasible. Some of them choose to graduate with a social science major only (most commonly History) and to pursue initial certification through a MAT or MST program. Unfortunately, the SUNY Cortland administration has not acted on the proposal to create an MAT program that the History Department submitted some years ago, and they have argued that there is “no market” for such a program. An ex-SST major created a directory of MAT/MST social studies programs in New York State Fall 2018 and it is available to interested students. See also information at <http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/career-services/teacher-certification/> and <http://eservices.nysed.gov/teach/certhelp/CertRequirementHelp.do>

**SST Professional Sequence – Required courses in specific semesters for qualified candidates**

*Candidates must meet GPA and other requirements in order to proceed in the sequence.*

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| **YEAR 1-Fall**  AED 310  AED 315  other | **YEAR 1-Spr.**  AED 300  HIS 399  SPE 275  other | **YEAR 2-Fall**  AED 301 6 cr  other | **YEAR 2-Spr.**  AED 400 6 cr  AED 401 6 cr  AED 402 1 cr  No other classes | *Year 3 -Fall*  *Optional to*  *finish requirements* | **EARN BA and pass NYSED tests to earn Initial Certification** |

This program can take some students five, six or even more semesters to earn the BA and initial (Initial) certification. Among other problems, this presents financial aid/scholarship difficulties.

NYSED requires that teachers earn a master’s degree within five years of their initial certification in order to earn professional certification. Typically, master’s programs take 1 ½-2 years for completion.

***How does extended time in the SST-[social science] dual major compare to earning a social science BA and then earning initial certification at the master’s level?***

A student might take 5-6 years for the SST-{X} BA, and pass NYSED tests, for initial certification

and within 5 years, 1 ½-2 years for a masters degree to earn professional certification

and, over the years additional coursework to maintain professional certification

OR 4 or 4+ years for a social science BA (like HIS)

then 1 ½-2 years for an MAT or MST to earn initial certification (*some courses that may have been taken for SST may apply toward NYSED/MAT or MST requirements*)

and, over the years additional coursework to earn and then maintain professional certification

\* To clarify the terminology: the SST major prepares one for certification to teach “adolescent social studies” and is a professional, teacher education major. It cannot be done alone, but must be part of a “dual major” with an approved social science *content* major, such as History (most common), Political Science, or some other options, represented here as “SST-{X}.

A student can choose to drop the SST major and graduate with a BA in the social science major (the “X”). The acronym “NYSED” refers to the NY State Department of Education; information on this handout is for the pursuit of certification in NY State.

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