The Social Science Education Project: Content Section

**Overall Learning Outcomes of SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION project:**

The SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION project is designed to showcase the student’s marriage of excellent teaching grounded on the mastery of content. Its three sections represent the culmination of the student’s expanded knowledge of current pedagogy, diverse teaching styles, and practical research skills (including, but not limited to: communication skills, the ability to formulate and prove an argument based on secondary sources, and critical thinking skills).

**Content Section Overview**

--This section of the project is directed by the student’s content director who also ensures the student uses the proper footnote/endnote reference form as is common in his or her discipline. History projects should be written in Chicago form.

--Students need to meet with a potential content advisor who, once reviewing the student’s outline and proposed thesis/argument, (and agreeing to the project) signs the advisor contract. The student should arrange a meeting with and return this contract to the Graduate program director.

At this stage the student and advisor must both be on-board with the students’ outline and thesis.

**Purpose of the Content Section:**

This section is a synthesis of existing secondary literature that is governed by an interpretive argument, created by the student, and derived from existing scholarly literature.

-- It is not an encyclopedia style entry.

-- It also does not attempt to explain how one might teach this information.

-- It is far more than just a summary of selected aspects over a given topic.

-- This section should be governed by a focused question regarding a topic of the students’ choice based on secondary literature.

--The answer to this question (the thesis), as a sophisticated argument, must contain a verb.

**Audience of the Content Section:**

It is intended to provide critical background information for a future teacher, after reading the content section, to have sufficient mastery of the subject matter to teach the lesson plans in section 3 of the project.

**Format of the Content Section:**

The content advisor and the student should determine how many meaningful chapters are needed. Typically, strong projects in the past reflect the following: an introduction, 3 chapters, and a conclusion.
Length of the Content Section:

The content section should be approx.. 40-50 pages, including content bibliography

Example of the Content Section:

**Topic:** A comparative essay in which a student examines the Civil Rights policies of Ike, JFK, and LBJ

**Thesis (having read a critical-mass of secondary sources, this is the student’s interpretation):** JFK was actually far more conservative in his CR policies than was IKE. This, in turn made LBJ look far more liberal than he actually was.

Outline of Content Section:

1. Content section Introduction
2. Chapter 1: Eisenhower, Civil Rights Moderate
3. Chapter 2: Kennedy, Civil Rights Transformer
4. Chapter 3: Johnson, Civil Rights Champion
5. Conclusions: Assessment