

High School Course Description: Social Studies

Alongside history, social studies at GISB is a core subject of political education. These courses educate GISB students to become mature and responsible citizens in a democratic society. Students experience social studies lessons as a forum for discussing current political issues and social communication, whereby their questions and experiences are taken seriously. The focus is on a democratic culture of debate, which should enable political action.

In 9th and 10th grade, Social Studies is listed as its own subject on students' transcripts. In 11th and 12th grade, it is combined with Advanced History on transcripts.

In social studies lessons, students acquire subject-specific skills that build on existing skills, attitudes, and interpretations and aim to expand and deepen them. These include:

- **Political judgment skills:** The student can analyze and reflect on political events, problems, and controversies, as well as questions of economic and social development from a factual and value perspective.
- **Methodological competence:** The student can independently gather information on current political, economic, legal, and social issues, work on technical topics using different methods, and organize their own political learning.
- **Political action competence:** Students can formulate their opinions, convictions, and interests, represent them appropriately, conduct negotiation processes, and reach compromises.

In addition, social studies classes teach all the skills that are acquired in **AP Comparative Government and Politics**, although the content differs. Competencies include:

- Connecting political concepts to real-life situations
- Comparing different political systems, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors
- Analyzing data to find patterns and trends and draw conclusions
- Reading and analyzing text sources
- Developing a claim or thesis and explaining and supporting it in an essay

A detailed list of the content covered each year in our intensive social studies curriculum can be found here:

Grades 9 and 10

- Immigration and integration
- The European Union
- Securing peace and protecting human rights
- Challenges of democracy

Grades 11 and 12

- What is politics?
- Fundamentals of economic activity
- Challenges of economic policy
- Political systems and political processes
- Democratic self-image: roots, characteristics, development, and outlook
- Peace and security as a task of international politics

Textbook / Informational Text Reading Amount:

We currently use the following textbooks as a basis for our work:

- Jahrgangsstufe 9 und 10: Rau, Jonas; Willfahrt, Wolfram (Hrsg.): Politik Entdecken. Wirtschaft und Politik. Bd. 3. Gymnasium NRW G9. Cornelsen 2021.
- Jahrgangsstufe 11 und 12: Kurz-Gieseler (Hrsg.): Sozialkunde II. Politik in der Sekundarstufe II. Westermann Gruppe 2020.

Types of Large Assessments in this Course:

- Written exams (one each semester), projects, presentations

Number of Hours Per Week:

- Grades 9 and 10: two lessons per week
- Grades 11 and 12: one lesson per week