

# Preparing to Teach Junior High and High School

## Description

The State of California offers several types of credentials to students interested in teaching. Students interested in teaching at the **junior high or high school** level should obtain a bachelor's degree and a **Single Subject Teaching Credential**. The Single Subject Teaching Credential authorizes the holder to teach in departmentalized classes on the subject named on the credential, such as English or Mathematics. Single subjects include:

- Agriculture
- Art
- Business
- English
- English Language Development
- Foundational-Level General Science
- Foundational-Level Mathematics
- Health Science
- Home Economics
- Industrial and Technology Education
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Science: Biological Sciences
- Science: Chemistry
- Science: Geosciences
- Science: Physics
- Social Science
- World Languages: Languages other than English

## Duration

While the length of time for completion of a bachelor's degree may vary from student to student, the degree is typically 120 semester units and takes approximately 4-5 years to complete when enrolling full-time. In addition, a teacher preparation program takes approximately 1 year to complete.

## Single Subject Teaching Credential Requirements

- **Education:** A bachelor's degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
- **Basic Skills Requirement:** Demonstrate basic skills proficiency in reading, writing, and math through one of the options approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), which includes coursework (GE areas for English Composition, Math, and Critical Thinking with grades of B or better), exams (such as CBEST), or a combination of both. For more information, visit [www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/options-bsr](http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/options-bsr).
- **Subject Matter Competence:** Can be met one of the following ways:
  - Pass the appropriate California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) to establish subject matter competency. The cost of the CSET varies by examination. For more information, visit [www.ctcexams.nesinc.com](http://www.ctcexams.nesinc.com).
  - Complete an undergraduate subject matter preparation program (SMPP) focusing on the appropriate single subject area and obtain verification of completion form. For more information and to search for a Commission-Approved Subject Matter Preparation Program, visit [www.ctc.ca.gov](http://www.ctc.ca.gov).
  - Complete college-level coursework aligned with each domain of the subject matter requirements.
  - Combining coursework and exams including SMPP, CSET, and/or college-level coursework methods.
  - Complete a Bachelor's degree or higher in a discipline aligned with the credential. For Single Subject, major must exactly match the subject area of the credential being sought, including "Applied" majors or those with additional modifiers.
- **Provisions and Principles of the U.S. Constitution:** Complete a U.S. Constitution course (Political Science 101 at Santa Ana College) with a "C" or better or by equivalent exam.
- **Teacher Preparation Program:** Complete a single subject teacher preparation program, including student teaching, approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Upon completion, obtain a formal recommendation for the credential by the program sponsor. For more information and to search for a Commission-Approved Educator Preparation Program, visit [www.ctc.ca.gov](http://www.ctc.ca.gov).
- **Character and Identification Clearance:** Submit the appropriate paperwork along with fingerprints to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

## College Majors for Junior High or High School Teaching

The major you select should reflect the subject area you plan to teach. For example, students who are interested in teaching Mathematics should major in Mathematics. At some colleges and universities, these degree programs qualify as subject matter preparation programs. See a counselor for help with major selection.

## Basic Recommendations

- Seek advisement from a counselor since teacher education requirements differ at each university.
- Earn good grades. Most credential programs require a minimum 2.7 to 3.0 grade point average.
- Obtain as much experience in the classroom as possible. Stop by the SAC Service Learning Center to find out about opportunities for working with youth.
- Explore your transfer options. What kind of university suits you best?

## How to Prepare for the CSET (if applicable)

- Become familiar with content specifications and CA frameworks found at [www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/).
- Take classes that support your knowledge in the subject area.
- Choose a major that prepares you in subject matter knowledge.
- Keep your notes, exams, and papers from all subject matter classes.