

Global Community Citizenship (GCC) - ½ Credit High School Course

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs

Question	Answer
Q1: What are the purpose and objectives of this class?	<p>This course was developed to help students see themselves and others as stakeholders in their schools and local communities. Through the building of awareness while understanding perspective, students begin to appreciate differences while recognizing and valuing the things they have in common. Relationships are at the heart of the AACPS' Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Education in 2018. This course fully aligns with that plan. Leading tenets of the Global Community Citizenship Course are inclusion, empathy, and acceptance with the goal of developing students as thoughtful citizens and changemakers.</p> <p>The one-semester course piloted at Arundel beginning in the fall of 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- explicitly teaches active listening and civil discourse skills.- values student voice as issues and events at local, state, and national levels are discussed,- collectively examines cultural and technological influences through real world problem-based learning challenges that support individual roles in demonstrating civic virtues.- explores bias (both implicit and explicit), empathy, and inclusion as students and adults listen, visualize, and understand their impact in a globalized world. <p>Global Community Citizenship allows students to experience a journey of development through four primary modules that are ultimately aimed at building and enhancing civility and respect (see course-at-a-glance chart).</p> <p>Through this course, students are taught active listening, conversation and oral communication skills. Civil discourse, teamwork, and introductory conflict de-escalation techniques are also explored to support productive engagements.</p> <p>While this course is focused on “community,” it also fosters the growth of a community of learners as a growing body of research confirms that students in schools with a strong sense of community are more likely to be informed decision-makers, ethically engaged, socially and emotionally competent, and academically successful.</p>

<p>Q2: What is the proposed course content, and will it be consistent across the county?</p>	<p>The content of the course is described in Question 1. The tenets for the course are the same for all settings although implementation may be unique to the contextualization related to a school's Signature and/or Magnet Program theme. The one-half credit course will be designed in four 8-12 day modules across one semester.</p>
<p>Q3: How will the students be assessed in this course?</p>	<p>Rubrics will be developed and used to assess skills and content knowledge for all major assignments throughout this course. The rubrics will be driven by the standards around which assignments were designed. Additionally, students will be expected to be engaged in classroom conversations and discussions; participation and engagement will be expected. It is important to note that students' personal values and opinions will not be evaluated in this course.</p>
<p>Q4: The potential for a teacher to cross the line to indoctrinate their politics and religious preferences is significant. Consistent guidelines and additional oversight are required for both students and teachers.</p>	<p>As with all courses, the Global Community Citizenship course's instructional modules will be monitored by administration. The focus of the course is on <i>building community and awareness of differences for acceptance and inclusion</i>, not on indoctrinating politics or religious preferences. Mandatory teacher professional development will be put in place beginning this spring to support teachers to facilitate this course without bias.</p>
<p>Q4: What is the process for teacher selection? We need a mechanism to ensure fair coverage of all ethnicities.</p>	<p>Teachers will be carefully selected, and all chosen teachers will attend our mandatory teacher professional development for this course. Course activities have non-negotiables associated with them and are designed to create awareness/perspective and foster inclusivity, empathy, and connection.</p> <p>Currently, school leaders are looking to select educators with course interest, passion, and strong listening and communication skills. Teacher selected is school-determined, but there is a belief that an interdisciplinary pool of teachers will be selected as teachers across all disciplines are letting their principals know of their interest.</p>
<p>Q5: Is there a plan to certify diversity course content and instructors?</p>	<p>There is no certification required by MSDE. Course implementation and fidelity of module exploration will be monitored by the administration (central office and school-based). With several teachers in every school engaging students in the course, norming and reflection will also occur throughout each semester. We will also embed assessments (formal and informal) throughout the course. These benchmarks will inform us of our student learning across both content and skill.</p>

<p>Q6: What are the teacher certification requirements</p>	<p>State certification requirements aligned to COMAR will be upheld in this class. This course will fall into the category known as “interdisciplinary.” As such, any teacher who is certified to teach high school is eligible to teach this course from a certification perspective. Their interest, passion, listening and communication skills, and their willingness to participate in the mandated professional development will drive which teachers are chosen for this course.</p>
<p>Q7: How will the class be handled when a substitute is required?</p>	<p>If a GCC teacher is not available to substitute for their colleague in the instructional delivery of this course, a substitute plan will be implemented that is aligned to the material. A substitute will never lead an initial discussion of course material or lead an introductory lesson of new content. As in all courses, occasionally a substitute teacher may need to serve as the teacher of record for a few days during any semester.</p>
<p>Q8: What is the impact of student course selection with the introduction of this class?</p>	<p>Currently there are 8.5 elective credits available within the 26 mandatory credits for an AACPS high school student to graduate with an AACPS diploma. With the Global Community Citizenship course becoming a mandated one-half credit for graduation, 8.0 elective credits remain for students to make choices for their optional high school courses. There is no full removal of other courses/classes to insert this new course. However, in the case of students in some of our magnet programs, a student’s magnet course of study may change slightly to incorporate this course.</p>
<p>Q9: How will the Global Community Citizenship be implemented across high schools, some of which house magnet programs?</p>	<p><u>Signature Alignment</u> The course will be offered within a context of each high school’s Signature Program theme for all comprehensive (non-magnet) students in each of our high schools.</p> <p><u>Magnet Program Alignment</u> Magnet students will be offered the course taught within the context of their magnet program theme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM/BMAH: Redesigned mandatory Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Medical Rounds courses to serve as new GCC course • PVA: Redesigned mandatory PVA Foundations of Art course to serve as new GCC Course • IB World High Schools are contextualizing the course within the IB instructional and cultural framework in partnership with the Signature Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Redesigned Historical Inquiry course will be offered for IB MYP-DP Magnet Students that will run as a one-half credit new GCC course and a one-half credit Historical Inquiry course over the timeframe of one year. GCC will be taught at the Standard level and Historical Inquiry will remain at the Honors level. <p><i>NOTE: All 9th grade students will take this course at the “Standard” weighting level.</i></p>

<p>Q10: What is the intersection of Maryland’s Graduation Requirements with the County Requirements?</p>	<p>COMAR allows for LEA discretion and decision-making with local graduation requirements. This is currently seen with the credit differences (State of Maryland: 21 credits to graduate vs. AACPS: 26 credits to graduate). This new GCC course will not change AACPS’ number of credits a student needs to graduate. That number will remain at 26.</p>
<p>Q11: Is there a process for a student to graduate without completing the requirement?</p> <p>Will this class be required for all students?</p>	<p>As a graduation requirement, the course is required for all entering ninth-graders as of the 2019-2020 school year. How the instruction is contextualized may vary, recognizing that Signature and Magnet program themes vary across the county. However, all ninth-graders will be required to take the course and engage in the same non-negotiable core course content (see Question 1 response)</p> <p>In addition to the day course, the course will be available in summer school as needed. An online option (virtual) is being designed for a credit-recovery offering by AACPS.</p>
<p>Q12: Will AACPS students be exempt from University of Maryland core diversity requirement?</p>	<p>The course is an AACPS graduation requirement. University of Maryland decisions are independent.</p>
<p>Q13: This material is recognized as challenging to teach. Are other high school systems doing this?</p>	<p>There are school districts across the nation that are teaching courses or offering programs related to explicitly teaching active listening, civility, civil discourse, valuing diversity in communities, and the importance of inclusion.</p> <p>In fact, ASCD* has targeted this content for a spring Global Leadership Summit, affirming our actions. The Summit literature denotes:</p> <p>“The Global Leadership Summit will provide participants the unique opportunity to develop the capacity to lead classrooms and education systems that foster in students the will and the skill to tackle problems of real-world significance locally and globally. Participants will discover effective resources, best practices, and new ideas that can help students develop empathy, perspective recognition, intercultural communication and collaboration skills, and critical thinking. “</p> <p><i>*ASCD – Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development</i></p>
<p>Q 14: Will a student be punished any differently in this class vs. general education classes?</p>	<p>The AACPS Code of Conduct is universal and applies to all classes. AACPS will have the same expectations for students in this course as we do in all other classrooms and on school property.</p>

Q15: How is this course graded?	This course has the same grading requirements outlined in AACPS policy/regulations as all courses. A minimum of nine grades, in addition to quarterly assessment grades, are required for every course. We will assess students' content knowledge related to community development and citizenship as well as their ability to evaluate and synthesize information and provide evidence of personal learning through performance assessments. The content of this course also includes 21 st century skills development. As such, we will also assess a student's ability to showcase their listening and communication skills.
Q16: Is there a cost to the inclusion of this course?	There are no new teacher-hires needed for this course. Except for regularly purchased class resources, no additional instructional costs are expected. Teachers will be engaged in system-planned activities, professional development, and onboarding events similar to the professional development they receive for each of their other courses. Professional development costs for this course are no more than professional development spent on other courses offered in the school system.
Q17: Would student development be better served if we focus on financial literacy?	<p>MSDE has financial literacy (FL) requirements for all school systems. AACPS provides direct instruction on financial literacy across our curricula with instruction in targeted coursework in the elementary, middle and high school levels. In county high schools, financial literacy is taught through two courses required for all students: Algebra I and U.S. Government. Additionally, through electives, we offer access to the financial literacy standards in the following: Financial Literacy, Business and Personal Finance, Principals of Business Management, Career Development, Preparation and Transition, and AP Micro and Macro Economics. NOTE: Our system further participates in the FBLA,* DECA*, and Diamond Challenge clubs and co-curricular activities and our programs of choice have students writing business plans with the application of financial literacy skills embedded in the curriculum. Finally, many of the Signature course offerings include financial literacy elements related to each high school's Signature theme.</p> <p><i>*FBLA – Future Business Leaders of America; DECA – Distributive Education Clubs of America (prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management to be college and career ready)</i></p>
Q18: Is this course being offered too late in a student's education to reduce bullying, harassment, and intolerance?	This course is being implemented at the high school level because we have a Board-approved course developed by Arundel High School that has been in place for three semesters than can be enhanced for each of our high schools. Lessons designed to teach the content topics and standards imparted in this course also exist to a lesser extent throughout our elementary and middle school curricula. We believe students are ready to engage in deeper self-reflection and are able to listen and weigh others' opinions more significantly as they enter high school. This course will serve as an onboarding experience to assist our high school students to grow as individuals and as community members beginning with their entrance to high school. AACPS does see value in and will continue discussions about the possibility of developing a full-fledged course at the middle school level.