

## How Middle School Subject Matter Authorizations Work

Individuals who hold a California multiple subjects credential can qualify for a middle school subject matter authorization in a number of single subjects. To understand how this works, we need to first understand how teacher preparation in California works in a general way.

### Teacher Preparation in California

California's process for certifying teachers at the primary and secondary levels differs from the process in many states. In California, *content preparation* and *pedagogical preparation* are separated. That is, candidates learn the *content* they intend to teach *and how to teach* that content in separate programs. Candidates who qualify for a middle school subject matter authorization will establish their *content competence* through 32+ units of coursework in their chosen content area and their *pedagogical competence* through their multiple subjects credential.

### Necessary Qualifications for a Middle School Subject Matter Authorization

To qualify for a middle school subject matter authorization, a candidate must possess *all* of the following:

- X) a California multiple subjects credential
- Y) a minimum of 32 units of course work in an approved subject area (see below for approved subject areas)
- Z) sufficient course work in specific sub-content areas within the larger single subject area (3-6 units per sub-area, depending on area)

Note that these qualifications are identified by letter, rather than number, to indicate that the order of completion of the qualifications isn't set. **Most** Liberal Studies students at San Diego State complete Y and Z together with their undergraduate requirements (before they complete X), but this is only one order in which to meet the qualifications. It's also important to note that Y and Z alone don't certify the candidate to do anything in a classroom; qualification X is also required.

### Available Subject Areas for Middle School Subject Matter Authorizations

Currently, the state of California grants middle school subject matter authorizations in the following content areas (with sub-areas):

- Language Arts (grammar, composition, speech, drama, literature)
- Mathematics (algebra, advanced algebra, geometry, statistics, real number systems)
- Science (biology, chemistry, geosciences, physics)
- Social Science (US history, California history, world history, world civilizations, physical geography, US government)
- Spanish (grammar, composition, culture, conversation, literature)
- Studio Arts (art history, two dimensional art, three dimensional art, photography/computer generated imagery)

For more information, candidates are encouraged to visit the Liberal Studies website (see the URL below).