

**Connecting Past, Present, and Future:
Teaching American History and Civics for American Citizenship**

Abstract

U.S. Department of Education American History and Civics Education National Activities
Program

Applicant: Illinois Institute of Technology, an institution of higher education.

Objective #1 (Absolute Priority, Competitive Preference Priority #1): Provide Illinois high school and middle school teachers—especially those in disadvantaged communities—and preservice teachers with inclusive and up-to-date information about American government and history, and civic engagement, including information to meet Illinois’ requirements for inclusive history, civics education, and media literacy.

Objective #2 (Absolute Priority, Competitive Preference Priority #1, Invitational Priority): Using research and best practices in social emotional learning (SEL), psychology and in methods of teaching history and civics, provide innovative, hands-on strategies to teachers.

Objective #3 (Absolute Priority, Competitive Preference Priorities #1 and #2): Give teachers strategies, based on civics education best practices, to facilitate student experiences centered around advocacy, deliberation, and engagement in controversial issues, fostering dialogue among students from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations.

Project activities: Two cycles, each including 4-1/2 days of summer professional development (PD) (offered once in Chicago and once downstate), including expert content on American history and government; information and tools about SEL; inquiry-based, hands-on pedagogy; development of professionally created curriculum and lesson plans based on PD content and teacher feedback; curriculum and additional PD leading to a statewide constitutional convention for students of participating teachers.

Expected reach: 120 current and teachers in PD, 500 students in Constitutional Conventions, and (indirectly) hundreds more students of participating teachers.