



**GUARDIANS OF
DEMOCRACY**

TEACHERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Guardians of Democracy Teachers Program is a digital badging, online professional development program. Using the Canvas learning management system, teachers engage in online learning focused around the proven practices and complimentary streams of civics education.

What courses do you offer?

We currently offer courses on *Current and Controversial Issue Discussion Strategies*, *Simulations of Democratic Processes*, and *Informed Action through Service Learning*.



**Current & Controversial
Issue Discussions**

Each course area offers three levels of learning.

The first level, or 'Bronze Certified' badge level, takes place over the course of five weeks. All course activities are asynchronous in nature, but modules are open one week at a time. The bronze level courses culminate in the development of an action plan and do not require evidence of implementation or submission of student work.



**Simulations of
Democratic Processes**

The second and third learning levels are referred to as 'Silver Distinguished' and 'Gold Guardian' badge levels. The Silver and Gold courses also take place over five weeks, but participants can work at their own pace. In the Silver and Gold levels, participants dig

deeper into issues surrounding these best practices, develop and implement a lesson plan and engage in reflective practice.



**Informed Action through
Service Learning**

How long is each course?

Each course level is five weeks long. For Bronze level courses, modules open one week at a time. On average, participants spend 2-3 hours a week on coursework. For Silver and Gold level courses, participants work at their own pace and have five weeks to complete the course.

How do the digital badges work?

Participants receive a digital badge upon successful completion of the coursework via the badging platform [Badgr](#). Digital badges can be shared through social media, added to your email signature and allow recipients to share their achievements. Digital badges hyperlink to coursework, number of professional development hours earned and course syllabi.

What is the Portfolio of Practice?

One unique feature of the Guardians courses is the use of a Portfolio of Practice (POP). A POP is a google doc each participant creates. The POP is a space for individual participants and the course moderators to interact, reflect and share resources. Throughout the courses, participants will complete activities in their POP.

Once I register, how will I get started?

Once you have registered, you will receive an email confirming your participation in the course. For the Bronze badge courses, you will receive a welcome email and a link to a course pre-test. Once you complete the pre-test, you will be sent a course invitation directly from Canvas. The pre-test is a required component of the course.

I don't teach civics or social studies; can I still participate?

Absolutely! We believe that every teacher is a civics teacher. Regardless of your content area, you will find useful content and strategies to apply to your classroom instruction.

This program is inspired by the landmark report, [Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools](#) published by The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools.