

From: Michael Viola
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2019 12:10 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Protect Ethnic Studies

Dear Legislator:

I write to express my hope that you support and strengthen ethnic studies in California. As an educator of more than 10 years and a professor who prepares future educators to teach within our diverse community contexts, I can't express enough how important ethnic studies has been to connect students of color to the learning, helping them feel empowered by their specific histories, and equipping them to work collaboratively through difference to address important social issues of our time.

In this particular moment in history, ethnic studies curriculum and teaching is absolutely necessary. I urge you to not bend to special interest groups who are afraid to reflect upon structures of power and race that have benefited some and prevented the life chances of so many. Drawing upon the recommendations of Southeast Asian Action Resource Center I request that the model curriculum include the following content:

- Include curriculum on the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) in San Francisco and Berkeley, as they were the pioneers of the ethnic studies movement. We would not be discussing CA's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum today without the work they started decades ago.
- o Include historical Asian American community activism organizations, such as Asian American Political Alliance, Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action, Red Guards, Wei Min She/Asian Community Center, and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center.
- Include curriculum covering Filipino/as, Iu-Mien, Japanese, Korean, Lao, South Asian, and Vietnamese American communities. We need curriculum that explore the immigrant and refugee experiences of the communities and discusses the discrimination and resiliency these communities have faced as Americans.
- Not only does ethnic studies require the learning of ethnic and racial groups, but they should also discuss how systems, such as capitalism, white supremacy, etc., and the multiplicity and intersectionality of our identities (i.e. race, gender, age, sexuality, class, etc.), impact society."

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or to further hear more about how ethnic studies has been instrumental in my role as an educator.

Sincerely,
Michael Viola

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Michael Joseph Viola
Associate Professor, Justice, Community & Leadership (JCL) Program Advisory Board, Ethnic Studies Program Saint Mary's College of California