

From: Nora Abedelal

Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 7:14 PM

To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>; [emails redacted]

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Arab-American studies is Asian American studies!

Dear Instructional Quality Commission,

My name is Nora Abedelal and I am a recent graduate of UC Davis. I was born and raised in San Francisco, and am of Palestinian descent. I am emailing because I am saddened by the decision to remove Arab studies from the fold of Asian-American studies. We should be encouraging our students to engage in thoughtful, critical, and **accurate** scholarship. The decision to remove Arab-Americans from the fold of Asian American studies is dangerous. We should not allow people who have little to no expertise with Arab-Americans to determine whether or not Arab Americans should be removed from the 'main curriculum' on the basis of discomfort, in particular, that criticizing Israel (a government which the U.S sends billions to) would be uncomfortable for some!

I urge you:

- **Include the Arab American lesson plan submitted to the California Department of Education by members of the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) advisory committee.**
- **Re-insert Arab American studies in its rightful place—within Asian American studies.**
- **Align all lesson plans to the guiding principles of ethnic studies, which are anti-racist, decolonial and liberatory.**
- **Reject debunked definitions of antisemitism that equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism.**

Best,
Nora