

**From:** Zollman, Ron  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 11:28 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Ethnic Studies is one of the most fundamental areas where we can understand each other better and build more empathy in the world.

In connection with the second ESMC draft, and recent public discussion including comments I have seen shared by the ADL at this link, [ADL's most recent letter](#), I hope the future updated ESMC will include appropriate attention to the Jewish community and anti-Semitism:

1. **A lesson plan on Jewish Americans** that recognizes the diversity of the community including Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and Jews of color. Additionally, a lesson plan on Arab Americans should also refer to Jewish Americans of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) descent.
2. **There is so much online hatred against Jews – dramatically disproportionate to the percentage of the population – that I hope the lesson will include lessons about [antisemitism](#)** and dispel ugly, hateful stereotypes.
3. **Of course there should be an opportunity for public comment** in all phases of the development of a final ESMC.

Personally, I have seen kids in college say that the best advice they ever heard was to “never work for a Jew” (I heard this both from a kid named Lee at my dorm at UCLA – where I also heard from another student that Jews are going to hell); I have heard people at work use terms like “why don’t you Jew them up” (at Iomega) or “you’re not going to Jew me down” (said to my sister when she was quoted a different rate for a hotel room than the rate shown to her at the counter of the hotel). When someone infringed a trademark of a company I was helping, I received a note from the defendant – a man I’ve never met – saying, “No wonder people hate Jews.” Antisemitic hate crimes have been common in the wake of various political rallies (The ADL and Senator Jacky Rosen (Nev.) and Adam Schiff have been part of events discussing this fact. Even in law school, a friend at Hastings said to me, “Certainly people talk about Jews all the time, they just don’t do it with you around.” And at work, people will schedule meetings on solemn Jewish holidays – not through malice but from ignorance, but still marginalizing in effect.

None of this is to suggest that other groups have not suffered terribly. They have. My public school education would have been richer from learning more in school about the experience of other ethnic groups, more vividly. But failing to recognize that anti-Semitism is a serious problem, or failing to see why treating Jews only as empowered and privileged is an unfair view of the world, would be a sad shortcoming in California’s Ethnic Studies Curriculum.

With gratitude,

Ron

**Ron S. Zollman**