

From: Jeff Kinrich
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I am in favor of offering ethnic studies as part of the school curriculum. But I strongly oppose the draft curriculum currently being circulated. The language is biased, uninformative, and, in many parts, hateful.

The criticism of capitalism is over the top, and hardly reflects the teachings of economics or the accomplishments of our modern system. No system is perfect, and a discussion of strengths and weaknesses is appropriate (although perhaps not as part of an ethnic studies curriculum). But the current proposal does not accomplish that goal. Capitalism has its faults and leaves some behind, but it is not a "form of power and oppression." At a minimum, such a statement should not be presented as anything other than one side of a discussion, while requiring a clear and equally forceful expression of contrary views.

Further, the proposal is notable for what it leaves out. There is no discussion of antisemitism, even though, according to the FBI, there are more antisemitic incidents in the US than hate crimes against any other religious minority. The treatment of Israel reflects antisemitic tropes. The discussion of the BDS movement ignores the clear antisemitic elements embedded in that movement. Again, there are rational and perhaps superior contrary views; it is intellectually dishonest to ignore them.

It appears that the authors had a clear political and sociological agenda, and that agenda should not be the agenda of the Department of Education.

Teach truth, teach students to think, and teach in a balanced fashion. The current proposal does none of that.

Jeff Kinrich
Valley Village, CA