

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General comments	Louise Rasmussen, Ph.D. Global Cognition	<p>I only just became aware of this opportunity to provide feedback on the California Department of Education’s 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. As a result, I will only provide two brief top-level comments. I’d be happy to discuss this with you further.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>The stated objective of this curriculum is to provide “all students regardless of race with crucial interpersonal communication, cultural competency, and equity driven skills...” Yet, nowhere in this document are these skills defined. Nor are there learning objectives tied to these skills.</p> <p>Research suggests that simply being exposed to or acquiring knowledge about cultural differences does not lead to development of cultural competence. In fact, it can have the opposite effect. Therefore, it is important that any educational endeavor in this area has clear, actionable skill-oriented learning objectives.</p> <p>One recommendation would be to consult with established literature, competency models and frameworks defined in the areas of interpersonal communication, cultural competency, and equity driven skills. Another option would be to conduct a best-practices study to determine the relevant skills your students need in order to achieve immediate professional goals. There are precedents for both approaches.</p> <p>The curriculum appears to be replacing one biased lens with another.</p> <p>See for example line 215 in Chapter 3: UC-Approved Course Outlines Overview: “It is essential that lesson objectives to be written with active verbs based on cognitive demand (example: students will be able to infer the imperialist motives of Columbus using his journals).” There are a number of instances where the sample curriculum defines the ‘desirable conclusions’ students are to draw from the materials.</p> <p>There are two disadvantages tied to this concern. One, the students are likely to detect this bias which will lead many to reject the content of the curriculum. Two, the curriculum will fail at teaching critical thinking skills paramount to which is the ability to detect bias and draw one’s own conclusions based on evidence.</p>

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California Department of Education, June 2019