

**From:** Hosna Saida Opeyany <hopeyany@  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 11:46 AM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Arab American Studies in CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Hosna Opeyany, I am a student within the CSU system and I'm writing to you as a student as well as a concerned community member.

I am extremely concerned and frankly angered about the erasure of Arab American and Pacific Islander studies in the upcoming revisions. It is CRUCIAL that this is NOT done and that both of these studies are included in the ESMC. Speaking for myself, I don't say this as a suggestion. As a student and community member it is a demand.

The ESMC is structured around the core pillars developed by the founders of Ethnic Studies in 1969: American Indian studies, Africana/Black studies, Chicanx/Latinx studies, and Asian American studies. Following a decades-long tradition in higher education, the ESMC includes Arab American studies within Asian American studies. Leading Asian American scholars, including the National Association of Asian American studies, have issued statements defending the inclusion of Arab American studies in the CA ESMC.

Ethnic Studies has been linked to increases in positive personal, academic, and social outcomes for students. In the post-9/11 era, exacerbated by Trump's Muslim ban, Arab American students are desperately [in need of curriculum](#) that reflects their histories and current realities. I am emphasizing this because as someone who identifies under this specific category, I find it even more important that I emphasize how crucial this is to my education and others alike.

Those who do not understand our experiences, identities, and history are the first to make efforts in erasing it. Please do not be apart of that movement. Empower us, give us the resources and tools to have an education platform to learn and thrive. If European descendants can have that their whole K-12 experience why can't we in college at least? Ethnic studies is crucial, it is the key to education. If the United States wants to be proud of its diversity then it should invest in it also, and invest in the most important way- education with ethnic studies.

You have heard our voices, now it is a matter of whether you will listen or not.

Thank You.