

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.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
<i>[Enter the Chapter Number here, or just "General" for a comment that applies to the entire document.]</i>	<i>[Enter Your Name] [Enter the agency, organization, or business that you represent, if applicable.]</i>	<i>[Include the page and line number(s) here—Write your comment here]</i>

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General	Elena Dukhovny (no affiliation, personal response)	<p>I fully support the presence of ethnic studies curricula – I think it’s vital to have the histories of all peoples of California, especially those that have been traditionally under-represented, taught in public schools. It’s all the more important, then, for me to outline two major issues that I see with the current model curriculum.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The curriculum is poorly written, with many incomplete sentences, ideologically laden and poorly defined terms (righteous, “made to constantly digest content”, “But teachers need to be aware of some concerns when selecting resources.” and many others), as well as circular /vague arguments. As a professor in the CSU system, I correct many of these mistakes in undergraduate writing and take points off for them in final papers. I worry about allowing people who do not write professionally to write curricula for our public schools. 2. The curriculum lumps multiple ideological clichés into what claims to be an ethnic studies curriculum. It’s a disservice to the communities this curriculum is trying to represent to lump “Capitalism, Colonialism, Imperialism, Patriarchy, White Supremacy, Heteronormativity, Institution, Privilege, Hierarchy, Hegemony, Power, Systemic, Oppression” together with the genuine complex, constructive, participatory stories of these communities. Most of these are propaganda terms that do not encourage critical thinking; they read like a textbook from the Soviet Union at the height of the cold war. I wonder whether the communities this curriculum is trying to support (e.g. the Hispanic and Asian-American communities) have agreed to be represented in connection with these ideologies. <p>Though this, unlike the prior two concerns, is a more narrow issue, I am compelled to comment that as a Jew, it frightens me that the only international political term that made it into a curriculum presumably focused on U.S. communities is BDS – the Boycott, Divest and Sanction movement, as opposed to, let’s say, a discussion of the conflict in Kashmir, movements to free Tibet, or dozens of other controversial political/activist movements around the world. BDS is highly controversial, and this curriculum does not give any room for discussion of both sides of this issues.</p> <p>Overall, after reading through many sections of the curriculum, I feel strongly that it is divisive, poorly organized and poorly referenced. It is highly ideological and does not, as it claims, encourage critical thinking. The many communities of California deserve better.</p>

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