

## **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](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov). You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at [kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov](mailto:kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

<b>Chapter of Model Curriculum</b>	<b>Ami Zusman, Ph.D. (UC Berkeley), private citizen</b>	<b>Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)</b>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Ami Zusman, Ph.D. (UC Berkeley), private citizen	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General		<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for California high schools. I applaud the actions of the Legislature and the Department of Education in taking steps to teach students both to understand and value the wonderful diversity that is California and to help them reject false, demeaning, hateful, and sometimes dangerous stereotypes and ideologies.</p> <p>However, I am deeply troubled that the draft curriculum includes virtually no mention of either the experiences and contributions of <b>Jewish Americans</b> or of the long history of <b>anti-Semitism/anti-Jewish discrimination</b> in California and the U.S. This omission is especially troubling in light of the recent rise in violence and murderous attacks on Jews in synagogues and schools – including in Pittsburgh, PA, and in Poway, CA, just a few months ago – as well as the hateful, dangerous rhetoric about Jews being spewed by white supremacists and sometimes other groups.</p> <p>The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is an opportunity to counter false stereotypes and dangerous lies (such as that Jews are all powerful, all wealthy, or all white – none of which is true). Providing information, for example, about the Jewish immigrant experience alongside that of other immigrants, the variety of Jewish experiences in the U.S. (including by Jews from Arab countries and other Jews of color), and the attacks against and stereotyping of various minority groups, including Jews, is an opportunity for students to understand the shared values and commonalities that bind us all together.</p>
Chapter 1		<p>p. 2, lines 27-31: Given the concerns I noted above, I urge you to explicitly list <b>anti-Semitism</b> as one of the forms of oppression in the U.S., and to include examples of anti-Semitism in the model curriculum, so that both teachers and students are aware of this ongoing scourge.</p>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Ami Zusman, Ph.D. (UC Berkeley), private citizen	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Chapter 2		pp. 288-289, lines 6237-39: Only at the bottom of a long list of “Sample Topics” at the bottom of p. 289 is the word “anti-Semitism” used for the first time, in a topic on intersectionality. Again, I urge that the model curriculum include more examples of Jewish Americans and anti-Semitism to heighten awareness and to provide the knowledge and tools to fight anti-Semitism.
Glossary		p. 1: The Glossary should include an entry on <b>anti-Semitism</b> .
Glossary		<p>p. 2, line 30ff: I believe the discussion of the BDS movement in a curriculum on California’s ethnic diversity is inappropriate and contrary to the curriculum’s intent to foster inclusion. I see two main problems:</p> <p>First, Israel alone is singled out for criticism in this curriculum. I do not condone the actions of the current Israeli government (or of much of the current U.S. Administration). But singling out Israel while saying nothing about abuses and protest movements elsewhere – such as the Chinese government’s incarceration of a million or more Uyghurs, or Saudi Arabia’s misogynistic treatment of women, or ethnic cleansing by Myanmar – presents a biased picture of the world. Unfortunately, I have seen Jewish students ostracized because of their presumed affiliation with Israel (even when they have none). This goes directly counter to the curriculum’s goal of reducing bigotry and stereotyping.</p> <p>Second, the curriculum defines BDS as its supporters choose to define it, but does not mention that the goal of the main leaders of the BDS movement is to destroy the state of Israel, nor does the curriculum provide the parallel story of an estimated 850,000 Jews in Arab states who were forced into exile after 1948, leaving most Arab countries virtually Jew-free.</p>

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General		In sum, I appreciate the great deal of thought and work that the committee has done in drafting a Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for California high schools, but I urge you to include in it the experiences of Jewish Americans in California and to correct misrepresentations in order to create a curriculum that truly celebrates our full diversity, provides the tools to fight bigotry, and brings all of us together.

California Department of Education, June 2019