

**From:** Lipman, Pauline J.

**Sent:** Monday, August 3, 2020 3:58 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Cc:** Superintendent; [emails redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Expert opinion in support of Arab American Studies in Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Dear Members of the IQC

As a professor of Educational Policy Studies, I am fully in support of retaining Arab American Studies from the California Model Ethnic Studies curriculum. I learned that the California IQC is considering dropping Arab American Studies from the ESMC. This is really surprising. As a researcher and professor whose work focuses on racial justice, it is clear to me that this historical moment demands that education authorities intensify anti-racist education. Comprehensive Ethnic Studies is a critical component.

In my role as professor of Social Foundations of Education, I have looked to the California Model Ethnic Studies curriculum as an exemplar of what needs to be done nationally. All students, regardless of nationality or race, need ethnic studies to help them develop empathy, solidarity, and the capacity to critically examine US and world history, popular culture and media, public narratives, and national and global policy. As an educator of undergraduate and graduate students, I clearly see the differences between students who have been exposed to such curriculum and those who have not.

It should go without saying, that to exclude any racial, ethnic, or nationality group from Ethnic Studies undermines the entire purpose of the curriculum. It is not anti-racist if it is in any way exclusionary. In particular, there can be no justification in research or ethics to exclude Arab American Studies as a fully intact part of the overall curriculum. Particularly in context of on-going Islamophobia, Arab American students desperately need a curriculum that includes their history and points of view, and students of all nationalities desperately need this curriculum to help them develop empathy and understanding for their Arab American peers. The founding of Ethnic Studies was based on the work of scholars in Black studies, Asian American Studies, Native Studies, Chicanx studies, and Arab American studies. Affirming this tradition, I am aware that the National Association of Asian American studies issued statements defending the inclusion of Arab American studies in the California ESMC. To not do so is to succumb to the very racism the ESMC is meant to combat.

I sincerely hope that the CA IQC will maintain the ESMC in tact and continue to be a model for US k-12 and higher education.

If you should wish to speak with me further, I can be reached at [plipman@uic.edu](mailto:plipman@uic.edu)

Thank you,

Pauline Lipman, PhD

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