

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)
Chapter 1	Andrew M. Clearfield Ph.D. (consultant, retired)	Evinces clear bias toward particular social movements to the exclusion of others. Offers only particular solutions to social problems rather than encouraging discussion of various remedies, the benefits and drawbacks of each etc. By insisting upon recent history in some cases (e.g. Asian-Americans) and long historical perspective in others (e.g. Spanish conquests) seems to privilege some grievances to the exclusion of others. Seems to demand activism as necessary goal of all Americans.
Chapter 2	Andrew M. Clearfield Ph.D.	Key concepts (ll. 61–79) already show clear biases in scope of recommended subjects to be covered. Certain problem areas that should be subjects of debate, instead are accepted as given.
Chapter 3	Andrew M. Clearfield Ph.D.	Gives model curricula in sufficient detail as to preclude further modification. The imprimatur of Cal Berkeley is sufficient authority to discourage alternatives, and to give the semblance of covering all the requirements of the course.

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Chapter 4 - Glossary	Andrew M. Clearfield Ph.D.	Some of the definitions are extremely biased in favor of one point of view. 'BDS' for example simply assumes that Israelis practice Apartheid; many may disagree, and such a conclusion should have to be demonstrated, not used as a starting point. 'Whiteness' lumps together all those not in the curriculum's recognized classes of people of color and includes many that by others' definitions might not be 'white'—all of these are assumed to be equivalently privileged with respect to the ethnic minorities included in the curriculum. Other definitions that might be relevant are missing: 'ghetto,' 'holocaust,' 'anti-Semitism.' "Indian" is defined without reference to the original Indians who have become an important ethnic minority in the U.S. and suffer considerable discrimination.

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(General Comment)	Andrew M. Clearfield Ph.D.	<p>This curriculum betrays its ideological bias in dozens of ways. To merely say that individual school boards can go to the trouble of submitting a curriculum of their own for approval is disingenuous in the extreme: few local school boards will go to the trouble of devising their own curriculum, especially if there is a risk that it might be turned down. Instead this curriculum—which ignores severe discrimination suffered by other ethnic groups in the United States and abroad, but is happy to include the Palestinians in Israel—will reinforce the impression that the groups cited have been uniquely maltreated, and that other ethnic groups, lumped together as ‘white’ have escaped similar maltreatment. To ignore the two outstanding historical examples of genocide—the Armenians in 1915-'24, and the Jews in Nazi Germany—is utterly misleading, and serves students, who may know little or nothing of history, very poorly. The course is in danger of becoming little more than ideological indoctrination.</p> <p>A more fundamental criticism is that a curriculum of this nature could have been created by an ad hoc group insulated from public scrutiny, and receiving public input only when the recommendation was a fait accompli. The issues involved are much too basic to be allowed to be seized by one group with an agenda of its own. <i>California should take steps to ensure that any such proposed compulsory course of study be created by a broad consensus of educators, with considerable public input, and with due deliberation.</i> The subject is too important to allow it to be captured by any one group, let alone one with such clear prejudices.</p>