

From: Ben Austin
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 1:02 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Citizen feedback

To whom it may concern,

I hold two masters and a PhD from a leading European university, I can tell you that my cursory review of the proposed curriculum reveals that it has little academic merit and is little more than quasi-Marxist ideological claptrap. Ethnic studies is an important subject for our youth to learn, as I know, having studied abroad for a prolonged period of time and having taught students from every continent of the earth. However, such study needs to be done based on scientific academic grounds, namely utilizing historiographical methods, anthropological methods, as well as philosophical and religious methods in order to understand the diversity of humanity in its historical, cultural, philosophical, and religious contexts with proper appreciation of diverse perspectives. The proposed curriculum will serve citizens poorly as it offers only one dogmatic subjectively ideological way of thinking about issues instead of providing tools for thinking about these important issues from a diversity of opinions and perspectives. For example, studying these issues from the perspective of oppressor/oppressed is a grossly reductionist way of understanding ethnic interactions and motivations (many individuals in different societies care about things other than personal or group power, such as belonging to community, shame, social status, purity, etc.). Another example is that this curriculum sees aspects of identity as primarily socially constructed which obfuscates the many ways of thinking and behaving that unite diverse peoples from across time and geography. In addition, many points in this curriculum show a strong Marxist bias (an ideology that has murdered at least 100,000,000 people in the last 102 years, and has been thoroughly disproved by scientists in the fields of economics, history, sociology, psychology, biology, and philosophy), such as seen in the glossary's definition of capitalism which assumes government control of all property is the norm or solution to the oppression of minority peoples. These flaws alone warrant scrapping the plan and starting over.

Kind Regards,
Ben Austin