

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.

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General	Gene Epshteyn	<p>I strongly protest this ethnic curriculum, it is divisive, racist, and virulently anti-Semitic.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Arab American Studies Course Outline within the Ethnic Studies Model curriculum is deeply problematic. It is highly politicized and not built on foundational scholarship necessary for the quality education our students deserve. It lacks cultural competency, nuance and sensitivity to student demographics. The Arab American Studies Course curriculum, as it is currently written, fails to reflect Jewish Mizrahi demographics, needs and interests in the state of California.</p> <p>The Arab American Studies Course violates a number of the Ethnic Studies Curriculum Guidelines...</p> <p>It is not written in a language that is inclusive and supportive of multiple users as it excludes and erases the experiences, perspectives, and voices of diverse Middle Eastern communities.</p> <p>It will fail in promoting self and collective empowerment of Coptic students, Bahai Students, Mizrahi Jewish students, Assyrian students, Iranian students, Kurdish students, Yazidi students and non-Muslim Middle Eastern students who together constitute a sizeable Middle Eastern demographic in California yet are entirely erased in the <i>curriculum</i>.</p> <p>The course will fail to promote rigorous analysis of history, systems of oppression, and the status quo in an effort to generate discussions on futurity, and imagine new possibilities as it only presents one Middle Eastern experience - that of Arab Muslims.</p> <p>The over-emphasis of the Israeli Palestinian conflict and the definition of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) – an anti-Semitic movement - in the Model Curriculum are both framed entirely from the vantage of proponents of anti-Semitic BDS and fail to adhere to curriculum guidelines that require content to be taught in a manner that is "balanced", "inclusive", and reflective of "different perspectives."</p> <p>At a time of increased vulnerability for American Jews, it is essential that the State of California do its best to protect the unique needs and sensitivities towards American Jewish students, who are also people of color! We believe it is critical to remove the unbalanced definition of BDS from the glossary of terms and to include a working definition for antisemitism.</p>
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California Department of Education, June 2019