

From: Alex Sadovsky
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2019 5:15 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Key academic aspects for the curriculum

Dear members of the CDE, IQC, and State Board of Education,

It is a great idea to address the past and current oppressions inflicted because of ethnicity or on other inhumane bases for discrimination. Indeed, the only guard against repeating bad history is to learn it.

In the service of this effort, I would like to offer two general comments on the Sample Course Models and Glossary and Bibliography you have posted on the website. Each comment is accompanied by examples based on these documents. The educational materials:

1. **Use terms with no established and commonly agreed-upon meaning.** Example: "system of power" as in "oppressive systems of power (i.e., racism, classism, sexism)," (p. 2, line 47 in Course Models). A Google search for "systems of power" yields almost no results and certainly no dictionary entries. Furthermore, racism in and of itself is a type of prejudice, which may or may not affect the distribution of political power. Its use in the quote is not correct.
2. **Do not list any documentary sources (e.g., transcripts of official meeting or speeches, texts of agreements or legislation) on which the instructors would be relying when claiming to state fact.** The only sources listed in the Bibliography are pedagogical publications.

Example: The Glossary BDS is said to be "*Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)*- is a global social movement that currently aims to establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions." This definition has both internal contradictions and external refutations:

*) The BDS founder, Marwan Barghouti, has announced that the aims of BDS include a dissolution or destruction of Israel: "Most definitely, we oppose a Jewish state in any part of Palestine." Documentary source: a video of him saying it
<https://twitter.com/aipac/status/1149323328471085057?lang=en>

If this is what the California State Board of Education means by "freedom for Palestinians", then it insists on destroying an existing UN member state. This is illegal under international law and is incendiary to antisemitism (a term absent from the Glossary, despite other phobias, e.g., Islamophobia, being listed).

*) The term "apartheid" (not listed in the Glossary) means "a policy or system of segregation or discrimination on grounds of race" and applies only to the citizens of the same state. Thus, the definition of BDS claims that Israel exercises racist policies and that the citizens of the National Palestinian Authority are citizens of Israel. The second fact is easily refuted: NPA and Israeli are two distinct citizenships. That the first fact has also been refuted (A. Dershowitz, *Case for Israel*), is secondary. What is primary is that **it is not accompanied in the curriculum by any documentary sources.**

Please don't get me wrong: I am all for speaking out against injustices. I just believe that the burden of proof is with the accuser (i.e., I believe in the presumption of innocence), and I would

like nothing better than documentary support for all the statements that California's public educators intend to present as fact to the students. If we impart knowledge, it is our responsibility to make sure first that it is actually knowledge and not impression.

Thank you!

Cordially,
Dr. Alexander Sadovsky