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)
	Gary L. Petersen; self	All comments below are mine.
Overall Review		Upon reading various pieces of the recommended curriculum, it is clear to the reader that there is no attempt at objective reasoning. The entire curriculum is predicated upon the assumption that all manner of discrimination and prejudice are, in fact, in place and active, without any objective analysis to support the underlying assumption. While it is reasonable to have a dialogue on these subjects, what is not reasonable is to disregard the standard educational practice of establishing the validity of the foundation upon which the doctrinaire is constructed. Without such justification, all that follows cannot be considered valid. The long-accepted practice of presenting "two sides of the story" before staking out a position is completely ignored, and prevents one from reaching his/her opinion on the matter. This is clearly a disservice to young people who have not attained sufficient life experience to form a well thought out opinion. They as yet do not have the wherewithal to question what is being presented to them. Educators who adopt such a program are not educators; they are inculcators and thought shapers.

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Indoctrination; not education		The entire text unashamedly is not only singularly biased; it is written with a clear direction for educators to indoctrinate students as to: (a) the multiplicity of differences and special or unique characteristics; (b) emphasize how each and every one of those differences has been systematically suppressed in one way or another; and (c) that there is a prevailing nefarious underlying mechanism by which the alleged suppression is carried out. Since this a quite damning perspective on the functioning of the United States, it would be reasonable to expect that evidence to support that assertion should first be provided, and thoroughly evaluated. Without that information, the remainder of the curriculum has virtually no validity.
General Comment		Given the ongoing and thoroughly embarassing lack of academic achievement by California schools/students in basic knowledge and skills, would it not be more productive to focus on basic topics (e.g., English, math, history, social studies, civics, etc.) and establish some modicum of success before embarking on these ancillary subjects? Without that, all that can be expected is a student body that will be marginally literate and seeing themselves as victims, rather than having been given the tools to ensure their success in the "real world" that will follow. I urge those of you who actually care about the continuing success of our youth to focus on what really matters and not this victimization nonsense that pervades our society at present.
"research has indicated that a culturally relevant curriculum can have a positive impact on students"	Please pardon the lack of specific page references for some of the comments that follow.	What is meant by "culturally relevant"? What is the evidence that "can have a positive impact" is substantiated (i.e., with data)?

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"best meets local student needs"		What are the "needs" being referred to here? What is meant by "local"?
"critical thinking"		So long as only a "one-sided" story is to be presented, how can there possibly be "critical thinking"?
Sample Course Models; Introduction to Ethnic Studies Course Outline		"help students develop an intersectional and global understanding of race, racism, ethnicity and culture in the shaping of individuals and communities in the U.S." - Without a sound, objective, and comprehensive examination of all factors "shaping individuals and communities" there is no context and therefore no validity in the negative assertions that will no doubt be communicated.
		"interlocking systems of oppression and privilege that impact all people of color" – Where is the evidence of "interlocking"? Can one honestly assert that "all" people of color have been so oppressed?
		"value and strength of diversity" – Without resorting to platitudes and "edu- speak" language, can you please identify, in objective terms, the "value" and "strength" that are being referred to here?
		"dismantle white supremacy and institutional racism" – This is a preformed opinion and clear intent to indoctrinate students, not teach them.
		"racial hierarchies" – What does this mean?
		"intergenerational trauma and healing" – Please define.
Sample Theme #1		"Systems of Power – white supremacy, capitalism, patriarachy" – These are all "loaded terms" which clearly indicate a preformed opinion and lack of objectivity. Moreover, where is the evidence to support the assertion that capitalism is racist?

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Content & Language Objectives		"reparations" are referred to in this section. This is a presupposed remedy to a problem not connected to the curriculum. This is yet another indication of indoctrination and thought molding.
Lesson / Day 1		"give out vocabulary handout" – This is clearly biased, since the terms are all biased.
		"cultural appropriation" – Is not the entire history of the United States a more accurately-termed "melding" of many cultures? Also, what is the alleged harm of adopting attributes of different cultures? Does this not indicate a desire to accept the cultures from which they are taken?
		"people of color" This is defined as anything non-white. Clearly this is heavily biased. Moreover, it is incorrect. Since "white" is in fact a color, the term should be revised to "people of other colors."
		"whiteness" Again, a term of extreme bias, indicating a lack of understanding of the broad spectrum of individuals that comprise the caucasion race. Also, a term with an inherent negative aggressive posture, intended to inflame and anger others.

California Department of Education, June 2019