

From: Lueni Masina
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 1:44 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pacific Islander Studies

To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting comments in response to the current Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I write to express grave concerns regarding the lack of Pacific Islander AND Arab American Studies representation in the latest draft of the ESMC.

My name is Lueni Masina, and I am with the Asian American Recovery Services, and work specifically with the Pacific Islander community for the Essence of MANA Program. Prior to my work in the non-profit field, I was a College of San Mateo student. My freshman year of college, I was unmotivated, felt isolated, and constantly questioned my purpose. The following year it was announced that CSM would offer a Pacific Islander Ethnic Studies class instructed by Dr. David Palaita. It was not until I took his P.I. Studies course that I felt a sense of belonging on my college campus. Thus sense of belonging was not because I was greeted with a “Talofa”, but because I walked in to a classroom full of brown students that looked just like me, being led by a professor who also looked like me. Being a Samoan American, my whole academic career from elementary school to even college, I was taught the history of other ethnic groups, but never taught the history of my own people and this course would change that. For the first time ever, I didn’t have to go through the butchering of my name during attendance. For the first time ever, I was part of a community. For the first time ever, I learned about my own people... my ancestors, and the history of our motherlands. And most importantly, for the first time ever I did not have to explain myself or apologize for being Sāmoan.

Pacific Islander Studies, is so much more than just a course or curriculum. It has played a critical role in who I am, and where I am today working with my community, I am and will always be grateful for this program, and the opportunities it has given me. By taking this experience away from future generations, they are depriving knowledge of our history, erasing culture and stripping identities.

Know history, Know Self - No History, No Self.

I urge the CDE Curriculum Team and Instructional Quality Commission to pass an ESMC that includes Pacific Islander and Arab American studies course outlines moving forward and work with the respective communities to ensure this happens. We also demand **that the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) committee of writers and experts be reconvened.** This committee of Ethnic Studies scholars and teachers are the experts on Ethnic Studies curriculum and pedagogy.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email at lmolina@healthright360.org to provide further information

Sincerely,
Lueni “Lulu” Masina | AARS Essence of MANA | Project Assistant
Preferred Gender Pronouns: She/Her/Hers