

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)
General	Jeffrey Rabin, UCSD	Although I am a liberal myself, it is important that an Ethnic Studies course be a genuine academic study and not a form of left-wing political indoctrination. The study of American ethnic groups and their history and culture is all to the good, but one should avoid implying that every member of an ethnic group must share the same politics, or indeed that the students in the course must subscribe to certain political views (e.g. “anticolonialism” or combating “hegemony”) in order to be acceptable or to pass. Does one have to be powerless or oppressed to be an ethnic group worthy of study? There is no particular reason why an Ethnic Studies course must include discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but if it does then that discussion must be historically grounded and fair to the complexity of the issues. An implication that every fair-minded person must be on the side of the oppressed Palestinians against the evil Israelis is a gross oversimplification and indeed contradicts the complexity of human feeling and conflict that should be axiomatic in the field of Ethnic Studies.
Chapter 2		Page 242, line 5159. If one is going to bring up the Nakba, it needs a fuller description than 3 lines can provide. The “Palestine War” is a nonstandard term for what Israelis call the War of Independence and Palestinians indeed call the Nakba. Some context for the conflict and the war is required.

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Page 2 of 2

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Chapter 4		Page 2 line 31. The definition of the BDS movement’s goal as “establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions” is ridiculously oversimplified. Why are they living in such conditions? What does “freedom” look like? Freedom within the State of Israel, or within a Palestinian State? Wasn’t this the goal of what was called the “peace process”? To uncritically portray BDS as an unproblematic liberation movement is a political stance, not an academic one.
Chapter 4		Page 10, line 239. Why is “Islamophobia” defined but not “antisemitism”? Is the hatred of only certain groups relevant to Ethnic Studies?
Chapter 4		Some of the terminology appearing in the Glossary is really too politically correct, e.g. “accompliceship” in place of “allyship”, “cisheteropatriarchy”, “hxrstory”, etc. This is the sort of thing that suggests to students that this class is only for those with the right political views.