

From: Theresa Montañó
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 10:51 AM
To: Ethnic Studies; IQC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Remarks from Theresa Montañó

As a former member of the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee, I was waiting with great anticipation for this final draft. We offer our perspective on the *REVISED model* as critical friends still hanging on to the radical hope that one day California will draft a model curriculum that centers the ideas, voices and concepts of *authentic Ethnic Studies*. *This revision IS NOT ETHNIC STUDIES.*

First of all, the changes and revisions made in the original draft shift the tone, tenor and perspective of the model curriculum from one that centered the voices and ideas of Ethnic Studies to a document that centers multiculturalism and the social science-history framework, effectively reducing the basic principles behind ethnic studies to token representation. This is evident in the following sections the introduction, definition, guiding principles and lessons. The introduction should not begin with how Ethnic Studies benefits everyone. While this is true, emphasizing it at the beginning reduces the importance of Ethnic Studies. It should begin by centering the voices of Black, Chicana/o-Latina/o, Asian and Pacific Islander, Arab American and American Indian Studies.

The ghost writers of the newly revised model curriculum gave symbolic attention to the Ethnic Studies guiding principles by listing them in Chapter 1 and unpredictably inserted the “Eight Outcomes of Ethnic Studies Teaching” which have no recent history in Ethnic Studies. Moreover, featuring the “History-Social Science Framework” and “Facing History, Facing Ourselves” promotes a majoritarian perspective effectively reducing Ethnic Studies to an instructional tool. The removal of critical Ethnic Studies concepts, content and concepts such as critical terms, glossary, guiding principles, and lessons is troubling. The Guiding Principles should be the center of this document, we strongly recommend removal of the “Eight Outcomes” and a stronger focus on the guiding principles. For example, all sample lessons should be aligned to the Ethnic Studies Guiding Principles requiring that all lessons objectives and essential questions of the lessons be rewritten

While claiming to focus on the four racialized communities that comprised Ethnic Studies, the newly released draft excludes critical segments of the Ethnic Studies community, namely Arab American and Pacific Islanders. This is an inexcusable omission and we stand united in demanding that both groups be re-inserted. Moreover, I would argue that the inclusion of Unit 6,7, and 8 in the UC course approval is essentially removing the focus from the four racialized communities of color that Ethnic Studies centers.

The Native American session is also woefully poor. The exclusion of the Native Voices is evident in the name change, lesson selection and lens used to write this section. We ask that the name

of this unit be “Native American” and not “Indigenous” honoring the native people of California and the United States. In addition, move the “foodways” lesson From Native American Section back to Chicana/so Latino/a section, situate Mascot lesson in California and use a historical narrative to write the lesson, and re-insert Native lesson on Contexts and Oppression and Land Acknowledgement.

When teaching Ethnic Studies, lessons need to explicitly reference the violence and systemic inequities facing racialized communities of color. For example, in the African American section, lesson plans lack an opportunity for students to analyze the systemic issues at the root of problems facing black communities, like inadequate and unaffordable housing and police brutality. Stronger, clearer, more accurate language is needed.

As noted by our Chicana/o colleagues, the removal of critical terms, the reductionist approach to the Guiding Principles and concepts the overwhelming references to the Social Sciences/History framework and Facing History reduces the centrality of Ethnic Studies and decontextualizes the lessons.

At this time, this document should not be published. As a former member, I am troubled that our names may indicate approval of this revision and this is far from true. We are willing and prepared to continue our work with the state of California to authenticate the voices of Ethnic Studies. Our children are the majority population, they should not have to capitulate to majoritarian voices who wish to decenter their stories or wait another 52 years for a course that centers their reality.

Thank you.