

## **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](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov). You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at [kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov](mailto:kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

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<p>Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview</p>	<p><i>Diana Centeno</i></p>	<p><b><i>General Comments; additional guidance for teachers, schools, and districts</i></b></p> <p>Educators everywhere agree that the goal of ethnic studies curriculum, and education broadly, is not promote one point of view but foster the critical thinking of students. The goal, too, is to help students identify the (factual) information necessary to develop informed opinions. It is my belief as a former educator and current research that the proposed curriculum does that.</p> <p>However, as someone deeply committed to ethnic studies curriculum; I request that rather than omit topics that may be deemed “controversial” or “politically charged” that the Advisory Committee move to develop a set of guiding principles for Ethnic Studies teachers in the state, outlining how they can best teach weighty topics their job within the constraints of the law. These principals should explain, for example, how teachers are not allowed to lobby for any particular side or politician. This resource can also include support as to where to find varied, reliable, primary resources. I believe providing such guidance will help clarify misconceptions and assuage misguided public fears that Ethnic Studies teachers will “indoctrinate” students toward particular political parties or points of view.</p> <p>Moreover, for districts and schools it would be helpful to share guidance about how they can go about choosing what Ethnic Studies area they should focus on. This guidance should call on districts to organize programming to that would uniquely benefit students struggling with large achievement gaps or who are mired by hateful bullying inside and outside of schools. For instance, a district where Latinx students are lagging behind their peers may be advised to implement a Chicana-x-focused Ethnic Studies course; while a school experiencing incidents of islamophobia might decide to institute an Arab studies course.</p>
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Chapter 2, Sample Course Models, Arab American Studies Course Outline		<p><b><i>General Comments (lines 4920 -- 6195)</i></b></p> <p>The curriculum guide should retain its strong focus on the modern day oppression of Palestine people. It should retain and expand its texts related to this topic. The uncomfortable reality is that the experience of this marginalized community is too often ignored or erased. Indeed, California's own social studies and history standards largely omits the experience of Palestinians; other Arab students; as well as Muslims. A comprehensive ethnic studies curriculum could help remediate that fact. While it is not the job of ethnic studies educators to share their opinions to students about these current events or particular countries, it certainly is their job to share examples of the injustices faced by Palestinian and Muslim people around the world, allowing students to arrive at their own conclusions.</p>

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Chapter 2, Sample Course Models, Arab American Studies Course Outline		<p><b>Page 268 -- 270; starting at line 5794 --</b> It is unfortunate that some are working to continue to omit the experience of these marginalized groups, as they work to scrap their “stories of struggle and resistance” from the proposed ethnic studies curriculum. Opponents have particularly called out the following song lyrics for omission: “For every free political prisoner, an Israeli colony is expanded,” Mansour raps (line 5794). “For each greeting, a thousand houses were demolished. (Israelis) use the press so they can manufacture, but when my sentence is judged, reality presents itself.” This quote tells a story from the perspective of an artist, which is based on factual events. Indeed, nothing in the song is inaccurate or fictitious: Numerous news outlets have reported that the Israeli Army by extension have worked to demolish the homes of Palestinians, causing the European Union to release a statement stating the Israel’s actions are illegal under international law.<sup>i</sup> The lyrics also critique the press for who “manufacture.” These lyrics have been called out for propagating anti-Semitic tropes, but experts agree that press freedom has in fact suffered under current Israeli leadership.<sup>ii</sup> The lyrics by Mansour, like all of the proposed texts, are not intended to promote “anti-Semitism” as some have said; they are sharing stories of resistance, critiquing oppression, and critiquing empire. These stories should be erased, though they should be better framed as only one take on current events.</p>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Chapter 2, Sample Course Models, Arab American Studies Course Outline		<b><i>Starting at page 248; starting at line 5322</i></b> -- The curriculum guide includes an “Immigrant Narrative 3” about Rashida Tlaib (line 5322). There is recent evidence that Israeli government has engaged in acts of injustice against Congresswoman Tlaib; for instance, Prime Minister Netanyahu recently moved to ban her and another Muslim, American congresswoman from Israel. <sup>iii</sup> For this reason, I am requesting that this section be amended to include a citation that points to this recent fact. Or, that this current event be added to a section titled “Further Resources.” This current event is germane to a conversation about islamophobia and students should be able to analyze these attacks on the few members of congress who are Muslim.

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Chapter 2, Sample Course Models, Arab American Studies Course Outline		<p><b><i>Page 234; Starting at 4597</i></b> -- In the same vein, the curriculum calls for touching on the “Call to Boycott, Divest, and Sanction Israel.” The curriculum does not ask teachers to catalyze boycotts against Israel; but it should be clearer that the job of teachers is to outline the current arguments surrounding these boycotts. As with any good education it is up to teachers to open spaces for students to come to their own conclusions about these boycotts. This is particularly true of a teacher teaching an Arab studies course, as they are charged with “centering the Arab voice.” Not mentioning germane current events would undercut the purpose of an Ethnic Studies course. Students must understand the struggle of the Palestinian people if they are to learn to “cultivate empathy” and call for the “holistic well-being of a group of people currently undergoing oppression” as the Ethnic Studies curriculum suggests they should. Asking to erase this the voices of Palestinian oppressed group is thus not only antithetical to the goal of the ethnic studies field, and an Arab Ethnic Studies course in particular, but is fundamentally damaging to the many Palestinian-background students throughout California. In effect, erasing these stories would keep them from seeing themselves in the curriculum. It would also keep educators from helping students critically examining Islamophobia in all of its forms.</p>

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Chapter 2, Sample Course Models		<p><b><i>Stating at 771; page 40</i></b> -- The sample curriculum offers a sample theme #3 Migration. I request that this theme include resources relevant to instances of oppression in modern day migration, particularly around family separations and camps on the southern border, which impact thousands of families in California. The curriculum should also be updated to include research on the physiological and other practice impact ramped-up immigration enforcement has on immigrant communities. Samples resources may include: <i>The Impact of Immigration Enforcement Policies On Teaching and Learning in America's Public Schools (UCLA)</i>; <i>Adults in Immigrant Families Report Avoiding Routine Activities Because of Immigration Concerns (Urban Institute)</i>.<sup>iv</sup></p> <p>Additionally, I believe the sample curriculum should be more explicit about the impact of US imperialism in modern-day migration of Central American, Latin American, and Caribbean populations. While it mentions “US interventions broadly” it should include the book <i>Open Veins of Latin America</i> and other optional resources more explicitly. The curriculum should also list examples of US imperialist interventions which posed a threat to economies in Central and Latin America, such as the “The banana wars” and others.</p>



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Chapter 2, Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies Course Outline		<p><b><i>Starting at 1685; page 78</i></b> – “Modern-day immigration” should be added as a “sample topic” in the given its current influence on the Latinx community. This would also remediate the fact that the majority of topics on the list currently represent historical, rather than modern-day movements. As mentioned above, this topic should include stories and histories about modern day detention camps on the southern border. Another model lesson should be added that explores, for example, drawing from children in detention centers; add the resource “Migrant Children Were Asked to Draw Their Experiences in U.S. Custody. Here's What They Drew”<sup>v</sup> Lessons on detention should draw parallels between other US acts; such as Japanese exclusion and internment.</p> <p>“color-ism” and “xenophobia” and “anti-blackness” should be added as sample topics. Currently the Chicanx curriculum is lacking in exploration about oppression and “isms” that mire the community.</p>

California Department of Education, June 2019

<sup>i i</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/65699/Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20demolition%20of%20Palestinian%20buildings%20in%20East%20Jerusalem](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/65699/Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20demolition%20of%20Palestinian%20buildings%20in%20East%20Jerusalem)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/insights/23933/why-censorship-of-israel-s-media-has-grown-under-netanyahu>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/65699/Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20demolition%20of%20Palestinian%20buildings%20in%20East%20Jerusalem](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/65699/Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20demolition%20of%20Palestinian%20buildings%20in%20East%20Jerusalem)

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/adults-immigrant-families-report-avoiding-routine-activities-because-immigration-concerns>

<sup>v</sup> <https://time.com/5619800/drawings-migrant-children-border-detention-aap/>