

## 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.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General	Rebecca Cummings Lecturer of English California State University, Long Beach	I'm commenting on the general tone of the document, not any one line or assertion, although I will cite portions for illustration. I'm certain that the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee will receive countless negative comments regarding the Model Curriculum's inclusive and "politically correct" language. But I hope that my comments are read in another light. I'm a fellow educator, with twenty years of experience teaching in the CSU with a sincere commitment to honest and rigorous higher learning. As much as this document desires to be open, inclusive, and empowering for students of color, the tone suggests a rather constraining pedagogy. Much of the document asserts at the outset a particular world-view and an intellectual <i>destination</i> , rather than a <i>mode</i> of inquiry. This is anti-intellectual. I urge the Advisory Committee to focus the Model Curriculum on just that, <i>curriculum</i> that has at its center the importance of inquiry, of discovery, of illumination, exposure, and true intellectual curiosity.

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Chapter 2, line 87: “Some examples of systems of power are: white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy.”		The document presupposes a conclusion that “capitalism” is a “system of power” that plays a role in the marginalization of minority groups and that this is the conclusion that is the foundation of all potential student inquiries. It seems that almost everywhere in this document the Advisory Committee is leading students to seemingly established conclusions. I am not “pro-capitalist” whatever that might mean; I am for academic honesty. The Committee must trust the very methods they are advocating: student-centered curriculum that encourages inquiry, problem solving, and rigorous research and critical examination. By assuming a set of conclusions, the Committee is narrowing, not widening, the fields of inquiry that students might engage, the questions they might ask, the knowledge they might pursue, and the conclusions they might draw.
Chapter 2, Lines 166, 167: “Extended Lesson: Students will write an argumentative essay about whether African-American’s should be paid reparations based on lessons learn on redlining lesson.”		<p>First, do I personally believe that African-Americans ought to receive monetary reparations? Yes, I do, for a myriad of complex reasons. Still, it is not an easy, settled question. Will any student, given the tone of this document, answer in any way but the affirmative? I don’t think so. This is only one example of many throughout the Model Curriculum that assumes positions on very complex matters.</p> <p>I strongly urge the Committee to resist leading students to a set of political beliefs, no matter how true the Committee might believe them to be.</p>

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"Hxstory"— throughout the document		Again, I strongly urge the Committee to remain focused on providing a framework for a badly needed Ethnic Studies curriculum. The etymology of the word "history" has no gendered component. I understand that the teaching of history certainly does. However, the suggestion is that the term "hxstory" is a settled, uncomplicated term that ought to be adopted by students and teachers alike. That's hardly the case. As educators, we cannot expect students to adopt debatable positions without those students having ever entered into the debate in the first place. It is intellectually dishonest and goes against the very values that the Committee and Ethnic Studies in general espouses.
		There will be those who will ridicule the Model Curriculum with predictable knee-jerk dismissals. I hope that the Committee will not lump my views in with those critics. Thank you for all the hard work that this document most surely entails and for demanding an open and honest education for all students.

California Department of Education, June 2019