

**From:** Helene Lipton  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 9, 2020 10:58 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Curriculum

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express my views about the revised Ethnic Studies Curriculum. By way of background, I am a Professor Emerita of Health Policy and Geriatrics in the Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy at the University of California at San Francisco. I have four grandchildren all of whom identify as Jews, two of who have been the victims of vicious anti-Semitism. I read this document with their futures in mind.

Here are my comments and concerns:

1. The Guiding Values and Principles directly reference and are partly based on a book called Education at War. The relevant section of the book encourages teachers to “develop solidarity and create images” with anti-Zionism, BDS, and anti-Israel narratives, which would be deeply hurtful and traumatizing to most Jewish students in the classroom.
2. The part in the Irish-Jewish lesson plan is openly anti-Semitic, viz. “The students will write a paper detailing certain events in American history that have led to Jewish and Irish Americans gaining racial privileges. First of all, Judi is not a race; it’s a religion. Students will be asked to think critically about why and who is allowing this evolution in white identity and how this shift in identity is affecting the identities of Irish and Jewish Americans.” This so-called analysis completely ignores rising anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence across the country. Anti-semitism increases every year and is now the #1 religious hate crime in America. Additionally, this lesson erases the experiences of Jewish immigrants coming to America after facing many centuries of brutality, pogroms, expulsions and genocide (murders of 6 million Jews (1 12 of whom).
3. The references to Jews are misleading and/or offensive, e.g., (a) failure to include Mizrahi and other Jews of color; (b) need to remove links to and advocacy of virulently anti-Israel rhetoric with malicious slander
4. Importantly, there needs to be a definition of anti-Semitism that address egregious stereotyping and using standards for Jews that are not applied to any other nation in the world
5. The dominant themes in the section entitled “Guiding Values and Principles” — upon which the entire curriculum is based — concentrate on (a) victimhood, with no acknowledgement of the substantial gains made by the Blacks and Hispanic communities; and (2) prose that is one-sided intimidation in tone and content. These “guiding principles” must be re-written.
6. Although explicitly anti-Semitic slurs appear to have been removed from the Ethnic Studies Curriculum, anti-Zionist references remain in footnotes, links and bibliography. It is imperative that these slurs be removed.
7. Importantly, we have no idea who the authors of this report are, what their backgrounds and credentials are, nor do we know the sources of funding for this voluminous document.
8. Importantly, there is no plan to monitor, assess and evaluate how this new curriculum will actually be taught in classroom all across California. This is a fatal flaw.

Sincerely,

Dr. Helene Levens Lipton