

From: Barbara Kohn

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 12:20 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Issues with Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

To the Instructional Quality Commission:

The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum has been brought to my attention and I find several elements that deeply concern me

The few references to Jews are misleading and offensive. There is no discussion of antisemitism, but you do include a UC course that equates the experience of Jewish and Irish immigrants to this country and defines them as "holders of racial privilege." I can't imagine what facts are being used to support a description of Jews in this way. Not to mention that it immediately inspires a negative attitude about Jews at a time when antisemitism is on the rise globally.

It's also troubling, to say the least, that you recommend a UC course that covers the "philosophy" of the Nation of Islam, a group described by the Southern Poverty Law Center as deeply racist, antisemitic and anti-LGBT, indeed occupying "a prominent position in the ranks of organized hate." This should not be part of any public school curriculum.

Overall, the curriculum does not contain any language preventing its being used as a platform for hate and indoctrination. It advocates a narrow political philosophy and establishes an "us vs them" agenda, which is a danger to anyone, let alone young minds.

I hope that you will revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more accurate and inclusive terminology to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking.

Regards,

Barbara Kohn

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