

Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum
Chapter 3: Instructional Guidance for K–12 Education

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Developing an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy for K–12 Education

Ethnic studies teaching is grounded in the belief that education can be a tool for transformation, social, economic, and political change, and liberation.¹ Central to an ethnic studies pedagogy is the goal to develop students to be able to effectively and powerfully read, write, speak, and think critically and engage in school in meaningful ways. To achieve these goals, ethnic studies educators should consider the following five elements as part of their pedagogical practice: purpose, identity, content and skills, context, and methods. Teaching ethnic studies necessitates that educators consider the purpose of ethnic studies, the context in which the course is being taught, and even a reflection on how the educator's identity and potential biases impact their understanding of and outlook on the world.

Purpose

It is essential that ethnic studies educators first reflect upon the purpose of the field, and the specific course at hand, before arriving at their pedagogical approach. Historically, the educational and academic purpose of ethnic studies has centered on three core concepts: *access, relevance, and community*.²

- Access- Ethnic studies provides all students the opportunity to engage with ethnic studies materials and content within their classrooms. They will be exposed to a diverse curriculum and rich teaching that is both meaningful and supportive.
- Relevance- Ethnic studies provides students with an education that is both culturally and community relevant, and draws extensively from the lived experiences and material realities of each individual student.
- Community- Ethnic studies teaching and learning is meant to serve as a bridge between educational spaces/institutions and community. Thus, encouraging

¹ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2000), 71.

² Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales et al., "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy: Implications for K–12 Schools from the Research," *The Urban Review* 47, no. 1 (March 12, 2015).

students to apply their knowledge to practice being agents of change, social justice organizers and advocates, and engaged citizens at the local, state, and national levels.

Reflecting on these concepts at the onset will ensure that ethnic studies educators are creating content and a pedagogical praxis that is grounded in both the field's purpose and aforementioned values and outcomes. Dawn Mabalon provides the following essential questions that guide the purpose of ethnic studies: (1) Who am I? (2) Who is my family and community? (3) What can I do to bring positive change to my community and world?

Identity

Before embarking on lesson planning for an ethnic studies course, it is important that ethnic studies educators are aware of how their own identities, implicit biases, and cultural awareness may impact ethnic studies teaching and learning. It is important to recognize that all teachers, whatever their backgrounds, have strong knowledge of their own personal and cultural experiences and knowledge to gain about the historical and current lived experiences of other groups. With much of the field focusing on issues related to race and identity, teachers, especially those with limited ethnic studies knowledge, should engage in activities that allow them to unpack their own identities, privilege, marginalization, lived experiences, and understanding and experience of race, culture, and social justice while they are also learning about the experiences of others. For teachers who may feel especially concerned with teaching ethnic studies, leading ethnic studies scholars highly recommend that they work through assignments like critical autobiography, critical storytelling, critical life history, or keeping a subjectivity journal, to begin the process of "constructively situating oneself in relationship to Ethnic Studies".³

³ Tintiangco-Cubales et al., "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy," pp. 118–120.

Additionally, unlike traditional fields, ethnic studies often requires both students and educators to be vulnerable with each other given the range of topics discussed throughout the course. Thus, educators should work to build community within their classrooms, be comfortable with sharing pieces of their own identities and lived experience, and be equipped to holistically navigate and respond to students' concerns, discussions, and emotions. Educators should view student-lived experiences as assets and understand that they themselves may not always have the answers, and therefore should seek opportunities to learn from their students and create room for teachable moments.

This is also true when incorporating literature in an ethnic studies course. Students need to see themselves represented as empowered individuals and experience a diverse range of complex stories to help them understand themselves, as individuals and as members of group identity, and the lived experiences of others different from them. Studies have shown that large majorities of books published for children and young adults feature white characters.⁴ When characters of color or other marginalized groups, such as LGBTQ+⁵, do appear, they are often portrayed as stereotypes or exist at the fringes of the story. Scholar and author Ebony Elizabeth Thomas warns that this exclusion is creating an “imagination gap” where children are growing up without experiencing what Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop described as the “windows, mirrors, and doors” of literature:

Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human

⁴ Data on books by and about people of color and from First/Native Nations published for children and teens compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

<https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp> (Accessed March 30, 2020).

⁵ The usage of LGBTQ+ throughout this document is intended to represent an inclusive and ever-changing spectrum and understanding of identities. Historically, the acronym included lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender but has continued to expand to include queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, allies, and alternative identities (LGBTQQIAA), as well as expanding concepts that may fall under this umbrella term in the future.

experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience.⁶

By choosing texts that provide protagonists and heroes in multiple cultural contexts and by centering the voices that have been traditionally marginalized or excluded from the curriculum and applying a critical lens to texts, teachers provide opportunities to develop students' critical literacy skills, while also allowing them to see themselves in the literature they read and expand the range of stories that they have about others in the world.

Content and Skills

With ethnic studies drawing on a range of academic disciplines from history and performing arts to sociology and literature, students should be introduced to an array of academically rigorous content and skills that are simultaneously grounded in the contributions, lived experiences, and histories of people of color. Students should be exposed to a variety of primary and secondary sources, learn how to process multiple and often competing sources of information, form and defend their own evidence-based analyses, and understand how to appropriately contextualize and evaluate sources of information by bringing them into conversation with other texts, significant events, people, theories, and ideas.

For additional support on identifying a multitude of sources that can be used in the classroom, ethnic studies educators should consult the sample lessons in chapter 4, the suggested resources in chapter 5, and the University of California ethnic studies course outlines that are included in chapter 6 of this document, collaborate with other teachers at their sites, and engage materials that can be found at local and community archives

⁶ Sims Bishop, R. (1990). "Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors." *Perspectives*, 1(3), ix–xi.

and libraries, especially those housed by the University of California, California State University, and local community colleges.

Context

Beyond content, it is important that ethnic studies educators are knowledgeable of the context in which the course is being taught. Here are some dynamics an ethnic studies educator might consider, followed by some ideas to address them:

- Is the course being taught in a district where parents or community members are unfamiliar with the field?
- Is the course being taught in a school with a widening opportunity gap?
- How comfortable and/or experienced are students with explicitly discussing race and ethnicity?
- Is the course being taught during a moment where racial tensions at the local and national level are beginning to impact students?

These are just a few of the contextual factors that ethnic studies educators must consider as they develop their pedagogical practice.

While being aware of these dynamics is important, working to address them within the course is also key. For example, an ethnic studies educator might create a lesson around education inequality and the opportunity gap that gets students to reflect upon the many factors that have contributed to disparate student success across racial and class lines. Students could analyze “student success,” “college readiness,” and standardized test data from their district or others across the state, read case studies that identify some of the community assets that contribute to student success, and reflect upon their own experiences, drawing connections to collected data or scholarly analyses, if any. A critical part of the context of ethnic studies is being aware of and anticipating for when negative emotions and/or traumas arise from students in dealing

with potentially difficult content or materials—having training with this and resources of further support (including school site counselors when needed), is key.

Methods

There are various methods or pedagogical approaches that ethnic studies educators should consider, from culturally/community relevant and responsive pedagogy to the important instructional shifts described in the California *History–Social Science Framework* and the *English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework*.

Inquiry

An inquiry-based approach to ethnic studies invites students to become active participants in the learning process. Students are encouraged to pose questions, investigate and explore academic content, and research and theorize solutions to problems that have and continue to generate inequities and racial tensions. This approach is inherently student-centered and helps democratize the classroom by allowing students to help pursue their own questions and shape their education. Thus, the role of a teacher in an inquiry-based classroom is more of a facilitator who helps students formulate questions, conduct research, and come to their own conclusions/solutions. Researchers found that this approach has yielded student achievement gains/narrowed the opportunity gap (especially amongst historically marginalized students), increased proficiency amongst English language learners, and provides a framework for teachers that might not share the same identities of their students to best engage underrepresented students.⁷ This approach of ensuring that students critically investigate and interrogate content is paramount to ethnic studies courses.

⁷ Center for Inspired Teaching, *Inspired Issue Brief: Inquiry-Based Teaching* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Inspired Teaching, 2008), <https://inspiredteaching.org/wp-content/uploads/impact-research-briefs-inquiry-based-teaching.pdf> (accessed July 23, 2020).

In practice, a teacher employing an inquiry-based approach to ethnic studies might frame a course description around a question like—how have race and ethnicity been constructed in the United States, and how have they changed over time? While broad, this question allows for students to be able to enter the course from various points. This approach encourages the use of lessons grounded in research and academic content. Getting students to engage primary sources, develop youth-participatory action research projects, or create service-learning projects are just a few examples of how an inquiry-based approach encourages students to become actors within the learning process.

Democratizing the Classroom and Citizenship

Ethnic studies educators democratize their classrooms by creating a learning environment where both students and teachers are equal active participants in co-constructing knowledge. This enables students to be recognized and valued as knowledge producers alongside their educators, while simultaneously placing an emphasis on the development of democratic values and collegiality.

This approach to ethnic studies teaching is also echoed in the California *History–Social Science Framework* which underscores one of the four important instructional shifts—citizenship, which is needed to prepare all members of American society, regardless of citizenship status, to become civically engaged in our democratic society. Having students research a challenge facing their community; engagement with local elected officials, advocates, and community members; structured debate; simulations of government; or service learning are all citizenship-oriented skills that are best developed in a classroom where students are able to exercise their agency. Furthermore, these types of activities are appropriate for an ethnic studies course as they provide a lens for students to identify institutional/structural inequities, advocate for

change at the local, state, and national levels, and to engage in healthy debate and dialogue with their peers.

It will often be appropriate for ethnic studies courses to include a community engagement project that allows for students to use their knowledge and voice to affect social transformation in their community. Teachers can utilize programs that assist students in collecting data, identifying issues, root causes and implementing a plan to better their environment. For example, if students decide they want to advocate for increasing the number of polling places within historically underrepresented communities in their city, they can develop arguments in favor and then plan a meeting with their county registrar of voters. To be convincing, they must do in-depth research on how other counties have achieved this change, demographic data, leading counterarguments, past voting data, etc. and then plan their speeches. This experience can be powerful and transformational in that it instills a sense of civic efficacy and empowerment in youth that they will carry on throughout their lives.

This emphasis on citizenship within the pedagogy provides students with a keen sense of ethics, respect, and appreciation for all people, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and beliefs. By democratizing the classroom, educators are allowing multiple entry points for students to discuss ethnic studies theories like, intersectionality—an analytic framework coined by Black feminist legal scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw, that captures how multiple identities (race, class, religion, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.) overlap or intersect, creating unique experiences, especially for those navigating multiple marginalized or oppressed identities.⁸ Intersectionality helps students better understand the nuances around identity, and provides them with skills to be able to engage and advocate for/with communities on the margins of the margins. Further, it helps those with privilege at different intersections

⁸ Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Issue 1, Article 8.

recognize their societal advantages in these areas, and build solidarity with oppressed groups.

Reinforcing Literacy

Ethnic studies, like all areas within the social sciences, is a literate discipline. Not only should students learn the skills necessary to access informational, scholarly, and literary texts, they should also be exposed to literary texts from authors of color. Moreover, they should be able to think critically and analytically, and express themselves through strong verbal and written communication. These skills are integral to students' ability to grasp and master content, engage in inquiry, and be active and well-informed participants in society. The specific grade-level skills that students should develop are described in the *History–Social Science Content Standards*, specifically the Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills, and in the *California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy*, including the writing and reading standards for history/social studies.

To further develop students' literacy skills, ethnic studies educators should consider including literature or other language arts-based texts into their courses, which also speak to some of the principles of ethnic studies. Examples include poems, plays, or literature, like the writings of Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, or dramas produced by El Teatro Campesino. These texts allow for teachers to discuss the literary, poetic, and theatrical devices of these works, while simultaneously highlighting the history of the Harlem Renaissance, or the dramas and cultural production of the Chicano and United Farm Workers movements. The infusion of more ethnic studies-based texts also allows for students of color to see themselves reflected in the curriculum, and for students to develop a mindset based on their exposure to multiple ethnicities in their curriculum that all people are valued, and should be represented in other contexts, too.

Making Connections to the *History–Social Science Framework* and the *English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework*:

These two curriculum frameworks contain an extensive lesson example that shows how teachers can work with colleagues across disciplines to address a common topic. In this case, the example is how a language arts teacher and history–social science teacher collaborate to teach the novel *Things Fall Apart*, addressing both language arts and history–social science standards in their instruction (the example begins on page 338 in the *History–Social Science Framework*, and page 744 of the *ELA/ELD Framework*).

Ethnic studies educators should also consider how they can collaborate with their peers to integrate ethnic studies instruction with content in other areas. Depending on which grade level the ethnic studies course is being offered, the ethnic studies educator can include a literary selection that connects to the content students are studying in their history–social science classroom, or work with the language arts teacher on lessons that address grade-level standards in reading or writing.

Culturally/Community Relevant and Responsive- Ethnic studies educators should be sure that their pedagogy is both community and culturally relevant. Beyond teaching content that is diverse, having an understanding of the various cultural backgrounds of students, being aware of pertinent cultural norms and nuances, and acknowledging and valuing student lived experiences as important assets and resources to collective learning, are also important to ethnic studies teaching and learning.⁹ While much of being able to develop a culturally-responsive pedagogy is about the relationships teachers build with their students, operating from a holistic and motivational space, tailoring lessons and assignments to speak to the needs and cultural experiences of students and staying abreast of research, trends, and issues that speak to the various

⁹ While often conflated, it should be noted that an ethnic studies pedagogy is not the same as culturally/community relevant and responsive pedagogy. The latter is but a facet of ethnic studies pedagogy.

cultures of students is also key.¹⁰ Furthermore, ethnic studies educators should stay abreast of challenges impacting their students' communities, and leverage ethnic studies courses to implement and spur discussions, assignments, and community-engaged projects around those issues and/or topics.¹¹ Additional guidance can be found at the CDE's Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy web pages at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/culturalrelevantpedagogy.asp> and <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/culturallysustainingped.asp> respectively.

In-Class Community Building

Given the unique and often sensitive material and discussions that may unfold in an ethnic studies course, being able to establish trust and building community within the classroom are essential. Thus, it is imperative for ethnic studies educators to develop a pedagogy and classroom that (1) sees the humanity and value in each individual student; (2) recognizes that each student has their own wealth of experiences and knowledge that will shape their worldviews and values, and diverse viewpoints are respected; (3) is grounded in academic rigor, but also tends to the socioemotional development of students; (4) encourages students to engage each other with respect, trust, love, and accountability; and (5) is a space where learning is democratized and students are centered through an inquiry-based process that nurtures the student voice and honors different styles of learning.

Ethnic studies educators are encouraged to establish community agreements or classroom norms in collaboration with their students where empathetic listening is prioritized and conflicting views are valued as opportunities for deeper learning,

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ For More on Community/Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogies see: Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy." *American Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 465–91; R. Tolteka Cuauhtin, Miguel Zavala, Christine Sleeter, and Wayne Au, eds. *Rethinking Ethnic Studies* (Williston, VT: Rethinking Schools, 2019); bell hooks. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994).

incorporate community building activities into lessons, and create time for regular reflection and debrief. Incorporating these recommendations can assist in building a welcoming environment where students are able to rigorously and intimately engage ethnic studies and build upon existing interpersonal communication and collaboration skills.

Educators today have a tremendous responsibility to students: teaching content, cultivating their social–emotional skills, and preparing them to be informed and active global citizens. “In reflective classrooms, students’ knowledge is constructed rather than passively absorbed. Students are prompted to join with teachers in posing problems to foster ‘critical consciousness’ (Freire, 1994). In reflective classrooms, teaching and learning are conceived as social endeavors in which a healthy exchange of ideas is welcome. Students are encouraged to engage in dialogue within a community of learners, to look deeply, to question underlying assumptions, and to discern underlying values being presented. Students are encouraged to voice their own opinions and to actively listen to others, to treat different students and different perspectives with patience and respect, and to recognize that there are always more perspectives and more to learn. Learning in these contexts nurtures students’ humility as well as confidence - humility because they come to see that they have no ‘corner’ on the truth, and confidence because they know their opinion will still be taken seriously.”¹²

Building “safe,” “democratic,” “empowering” classrooms is both art and science. Skilled teachers use a variety of techniques to create a sense of trust and openness; to encourage students to speak and listen to each other; to make space and time for silent reflection; to offer multiple avenues for participation and learning; and to help students appreciate the points of view, talents, and contributions of less vocal members.

¹² Betty Bardige and Dennis Barr, "Case Study: Facing History and Ourselves," in *Handbook of Prosocial Education*, vol. 2., edited by Philip M. Brown, Michael W. Corrigan, and Ann Higgins-D'Alessandro (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2012), p. 672.

Facilitating thoughtful, respectful, and generative discussions of controversial issues can be especially challenging in classrooms where students bring a diversity of social, personal, cultural, and academic backgrounds, mindsets, and experiences to the conversation. Yet the richness of these discussions and their importance for future citizenship drives many teachers whose classes are relatively homogeneous to seek out opportunities for their students to engage with counterparts of different backgrounds.

It is equally challenging to consistently facilitate honest or insightful dialogue in classrooms where there is a greater degree of social, personal, economic, and/or political homogeneity. By prioritizing student-centered approaches and utilizing a wide variety of discussion protocols, teachers can provide opportunities for students to engage critically in the gray areas of controversial topics with peers who may share similar viewpoints.

What do teachers need in order to effectively engage students in productive conversations and learning activities around difficult and important issues? Simply put:

- Sufficient understanding of the subject matter to provide basic context and select a set of authentic and varied readings, coupled with genuine curiosity and an awareness of the limitations of their knowledge
- Knowledge of their students' backgrounds and the ability to elicit students' questions and perspectives; monitor their understanding; push them to think critically; and help them appreciate the insights, wisdom, and moral courage of themselves and others
- A map of anticipated challenges—and a set of strategies, supports, and mentors that they can turn to when students' confusion, lack of engagement, misconceptions, prejudices, or hurtful comments and behavior prove challenging

- Awareness and active monitoring of their own thinking and learning and access to other adults who can join them in the inquiry, help them to articulate their questions and insights, and further stimulate their thinking
- Careful attention to their own political viewpoints and potential biases, to ensure students are empowered to form their own opinions rather than simply adopting the views of the teacher or particular educational materials

To become effective educators, teachers first need the time and opportunity to reflect together with colleagues. Providing professional development seminars and workshops which specifically create time for teachers to be learners allows them to explore core concepts and to deepen their understanding of the history they intend to teach while simultaneously exploring their own identity, the way their identity has affected and been affected by their experiences, and how their identity influences their perspective and the way they are seen by others, including their students. In community with other educators, teachers gain insight from others' experiences and perspectives and build relationships for ongoing exploration which may be useful as they then create reflective communities for their students. There is a wide range of existing activities that teachers can use to support community building in their classrooms. Please see chapter 5 for lesson resources including community building activity examples.

Approaches to Ethnic Studies

The History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve offers the following guidance for schools and educators on the teaching of ethnic studies focusing on two essential questions:

- How have race and ethnicity been constructed in the United States, and how have they changed over time?
- How do race and ethnicity continue to shape the United States and contemporary issues?

When the discipline was first founded, “ethnic studies” was (and still is) deployed as an umbrella term/field that was designed to be inclusive of four core fields—African American Studies, Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies, Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies, and Native American Studies. While each core field addresses the specific histories, and social, cultural, economic, and political experiences of people from said group, they often overlap in their approach, the types of methods and theories that are engaged, and through discussion of shared/collective struggles. The approaches found in these examples can also be applied to the study of other diverse groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, beliefs, and other identifiers that help to affirm a student’s sense of self.

With such disciplinary diversity, ethnic studies has been approached utilizing various instructional formats at the K–12 level. The most common are stand-alone core field courses, thematic/comparative race and ethnic studies courses, and the integration of ethnic studies content into existing content.

Like all successful instruction, teaching ethnic studies requires effective preparation, depth of knowledge, belief in students as capable learners, as well as strong institutional support. Drawing on lessons from San Francisco Unified School District’s effort to build its ethnic studies program, districts are encouraged to support their teachers’ development in three key areas:

Useful Theory, Pedagogy, and Research

Teachers and administrators should begin with a careful, deliberate analysis of their own personal identities, backgrounds, knowledge base, and biases. They should familiarize themselves with current scholarly research around ethnic studies instruction, such as critically and culturally/community relevant and responsive pedagogies, critical race theory¹³, and intersectionality, which are key theoretical frameworks and pedagogies

¹³ “Critical race theory (CRT) is a practice of interrogating race and racism in society. CRT recognizes that race is not biologically real but is socially constructed and socially significant. It acknowledges that racism is embedded within systems and institutions

that can be used in ethnic studies research and instruction. Engagement with theory and scholarly research can help strengthen educators' ability to distinguish between root causes and symptoms, dispel myth from fact, and address the importance of discussing and addressing lasting issues caused by systemic inequities. Attention should also be given to trauma-informed and healing-informed educational practices¹⁴. The bibliography for this document can be used as a springboard. However, it is strongly encouraged that both educators and administrators consult ethnic studies coordinators at the district level and county level, professional development offered by ethnic studies classroom teachers, county offices of education, faculty at institutions of higher education, relevant community resources, and other support providers. These diverse sources, contacts, and institutions can help educators and administrators stay abreast of useful theory, research, and content knowledge that can be leveraged in the classroom and/or professional development. Administrators can ensure that implementation of such learning is aligned with this model curriculum, the State Board Guidelines, and California's *Education Code*.

Ethnic Studies Content

In Ronald Takaki's seminal text, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, he articulates the need for a new "looking glass" from which our society must gaze. He argues that within our national narrative all communities must be able to see themselves. Thus, it is vital for teachers to engage a multitude of stories, narratives,

that replicate racial inequality -- codified in law, embedded in structures, and woven into public policy." Janel George (2021). A Lesson on Critical Race Theory. American Bar Association.

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-policing/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/

¹⁴ See the CDE's Supporting Resilience in Schools web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/resilientschools.asp> for more information about dealing with trauma in school settings.

sources, and contributions of everyone in America so that all students can see themselves as part and parcel of the grand American narrative.

Teachers should engage various texts and perspectives when teaching ethnic studies; be open to learning from their students; consider allowing students to offer suggested texts or sources that may speak to the specificities of their individual identities; and in addition to consulting other teachers, ethnic studies coordinators, and higher education faculty, draw on other instructional materials approved by the State Board of Education (SBE), as well as resources provided by other public institutions like local museums, archives, and libraries.

Academic Skill Development

Any meaningful education must equip students with the necessary tools to engage and invest in their own learning. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and collaboration are all critical to student success and foundational to the principles of ethnic studies. During lesson planning, ethnic studies educators should reflect upon different ways (exercises, homework assignments, service-learning projects, etc.) to get students to engage in ethnic studies content while rigorously developing academic skills. With fewer K–12 instructional materials available for implementing ethnic studies, as compared to traditional fields, it is imperative that teachers collaborate with each other to develop new units, lessons, and other instructional materials. School administrators can support this collaboration by allotting time within professional development days or during department meetings.

Teacher development in these key areas can help ensure that students in ethnic studies courses will develop a firm grasp of the field, as well as key social and academic literacies that equip them to meaningfully participate as confident and engaged citizens.

Stand-Alone Courses

This section includes an overview of sample courses that districts can use as guidance for creating their own ethnic studies courses with engaging lessons that connect with the demographics in their communities. Stand-alone courses provide students the opportunity to delve into content relevant to specific core fields and allow teachers to develop robust and focused curriculum. Overall, this approach to ethnic studies provides some of the most concentrated and comprehensive spaces for learning about a particular area within an ethnic studies core field.

The sample course overviews below address the original ethnic studies disciplines. When stand-alone ethnic studies courses were initially developed at the college level, they represented four core people of color groups: Black/African American Studies, Latina/o/x Chicano/a/x Studies, Native American Studies, and Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies. The use of these four groups as an umbrella for a myriad of ethnically and culturally diverse representations was replicated when courses in ethnic studies were developed at the high school level. It is important to note that there are groups that are sometimes addressed under the broadly defined umbrella of those core groups. For example, Arab Americans have sometimes been covered within the study of Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies. There is a range of sample UC, A–G-approved course outlines in chapter 6 which include a variety of communities that represent the rich diversity of California. A list of suggested significant events and individuals that can be included, as well as, sample lessons that are aligned to the ethnic studies principles from chapter 1 and the state-adopted content standards in history–social science, English language arts, and English language development, are available in chapter 4.

African American Studies

The study of people of African descent has taken on various academic field names, including Afro-American Studies, African American Studies, Africana Diaspora Studies, Pan African Studies, Black Studies, and Africana Studies, to name a few. While they all cover the contributions, histories, cultures, politics, and socialization of people of African

descent, naming often differs as a way denote an emphasis on particular political background or ideological approach; to express that this iteration of the field will be African-centered or focus on people of African descent in the Americas; and some names are no longer used simply due to the evolution of the field and shifting identity markers. For example, Afro-American Studies dates back to the late 1960s and is mostly no longer used. The name was largely replaced with Black Studies in response to the Black Power movement. Ethnic Studies educators and administrators are encouraged to consider student demographics, needs, interests, and current events when crafting a course or lesson, as this may help determine what will be most useful for the class. For example, if you are teaching a class with a large number of first generation students of African ancestry, perhaps an Africana or African Diaspora Studies approach would be most beneficial.

An African American Studies course can be designed to be an introduction to the study of people of African descent in the United States, while drawing connections to Africa and the African diaspora. Students explore the history, cultures, struggles, and politics of African Americans as part of the African diaspora across time. This course contends with how race, gender, and class shape life in the United States for people of African descent, while simultaneously introducing students to new frameworks like Afrofuturism. Ultimately, this course considers the development of Black identity in the United States and explores the importance African Americans played in the formation of the United States, the oppression they faced, the exploitation of Black labor, and the continued fight for liberation.

This course can provide the opportunity for students to explore Black American contributions and learn about Black excellence in all areas of American history by exploring the African American and African Diaspora experience, from the precolonial ancestral roots in Africa to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and enslaved people's uprisings in the antebellum South to the rich contributions in literature by Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and W.E.B. Du Bois, entrepreneurs including Madam CJ Walker, one of the

founders of the African American hair care and cosmetics industry, inventors, such as George Carruthers, an astrophysicist who created the ultraviolet camera/spectrograph, Otis Boykin, who invented electrical resistors used in computing, missile guidance, and pacemakers, Philip Reid, who helped construct the national Capitol and Statue of Freedom, and music artists including Nina Simone, B.B. King, and KRS-1, who have contributed to the landscape of music's influence on culture. This class is designed to engage various themes, time periods, genres and cultures along the spectrum of Blackness.

Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies

The study of people of Latinx descent has taken on various academic field names, including: Raza Studies, Chicano Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Latina/o Studies, Central American Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, Chicanx/Latinx Studies, and Xicanx/Latinx Studies, to name a few. While they all cover the contributions, histories, cultures, politics, and socialization of people from Mesoamerica, South America, the Caribbean, and the United States Southwest, naming often differs as a way to denote an emphasis on a particular experience and language evolution. For example, Chicano derived fields focused on the experiences of Mexican Americans and grew out of student activism that called for the creation of a field that addressed the history, contributions, injustices, and historical oppression of primarily Mexican Americans. Today, Chicano as an identity and the field of Chicano/a/x/ Studies has been broadened to include a range of Latinx backgrounds and experiences. Embracing the term Chicano may communicate embracing the inherent activism and social justice leanings of this field of study. As another example, the use of “@” was popularized during the early 2000s as a way to include both genders and as a nod to the burgeoning digital age. The recent use of “x” is done for two purposes. The first “x” in Xicanx replaces the “ch” because the sound produced by “x” is much more in line with the Náhuatl language and Indigenous etymologies. The second “x” renders the term gender-neutral and more inclusive of all identities.

A Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x course can explore the complexities of the Indigenous, mestizo, and Afro-mestizo populations from Latin America (the Americas and Caribbean) that have been grouped in the United States under the demographic label of Latino/a, and more recently, Latinx. Latinx populations come from different countries with varying languages and dialects, customs, and cultural practices. The common experiences that unite these diverse populations are their Indigenous and African roots/identities, the experience and ancestral memories of European colonization, cultural practices, US imperialism, migration, resistance, and colonial languages (i.e., Spanish and Portuguese).

Furthermore, this course can offer an introductory study of Chicana/o/x in the contemporary United States, focusing primarily on history, roots, migration, education, politics, and art as they relate to the Chicana/o/x experience. More specifically, this course also introduces the concept and terminology of Chicano/a, Xicanx, or Latinx as an evolving political and social identity. Lastly, students cover the birth of the 1960s Chicano Movement as well as more contemporary social movements that have sought to highlight the experiences of Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x people.

This course can delve into a wealth of topics that have defined the Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x experience ranging from Indigeneity, the European invasion of the Americas, colonial independence movements, migration to the United States, identity formation, culture, social movements, resistance to exploitative labor practices, and contributions to social systems, knowledge, and culture in the Americas. Through interactive lectures, readings, class activities, writing prompts, collaborative group projects, presentations, and discussions, students in this course can examine the cultural formation and transformation of Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x communities, the role of women in shaping Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x culture, Mexican muralism by José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, rich literature by Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa, Sandra Cisneros, and Rudolfo Anaya, inventors such as Guillermo González

Camarena, whose invention introduced the world to color television, Mexican immigrants in American culture, and much more.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies

The study of people of Asian descent in the United States has taken on various academic field names, including Asian American Studies and Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies. Additionally, various subfields have emerged out of Asian American Studies as a means of including groups that have been historically marginalized and understudied within the field. Arab American Studies, Southeast Asian Studies, Filipina/o/x Studies, and Pacific Islander Studies are just a few. Ethnic studies educators and administrators are also encouraged to consider student demographics, needs, interests, and current events when crafting a course or lesson, as this may help determine what framework will be most useful for the class.

An Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies course can be designed to be an introduction to the socio-political construction of Asian American and Pacific Islander identity in the United States. Students can explore the diverse history, cultures, struggles, and politics of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as part of the larger Asian diasporas. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders come from many different countries with varying languages, dialects, customs, and cultural practices. This field of study contends with how the history and experiences of migration, resettlement, and exclusion have intersected with race, gender, and class to shape life in the United States for people of Asian descent. Teachers may want to consider beginning with a lesson plan that addresses Asian Americans and the Model Minority Myth in a foundational course to introduce Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies. This approach can help students understand the racial formation and racialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and can guide teachers on how to build inclusive courses on a pan-ethnic identity. Ultimately, this course considers how different Asian

and Pacific Islander heritages are reflected in collective and distinctive identities, cultures, and politics.

This course can explore a broad range of topics and events pertaining to the range of Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences, and examine their contributions to the state and U.S. throughout history. Topics may include: immigration, intergenerational conflict, the myth of the model minority, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, U.S. Supreme Court Case *Lau v. Nichols* regarding the right to an equal education, colonialism and imperialism in the Pacific, and the unique experiences of communities living in the U.S. with familial ties to countries and regions in East Asia, Southeast Asian, South Asia, and West Asia.

Native American Studies

The study of Native and Indigenous people has taken on various academic field names, including, American Indian Studies, Native American Studies, and Indigenous Studies. While they all cover the histories, contributions, politics, and cultures of Indigenous peoples, the specific academic field names are often used to denote specific groups. While American Indian and Native American Studies refer to the study of Indigenous peoples in the Americas, Indigenous Studies takes a more global approach and is used to discuss Indigenous and aboriginal people beyond the US. While Mexican Americans and Latina/o/x Americans have native ancestry, their Indigenous histories are addressed in the Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x course outline.

Courses of study in this field can explore the complexity and diversity of Native American experiences from the pre-contact era to the present, highlighting key concepts like Indigeneity, settler colonialism, environmental justice, cultural retention, cultural hegemony, imperialism, genocide, language groups, language revitalization, self-determination, land acknowledgement, and tribal sovereignty. The course can provide students with a comprehensive understanding of how the role of imperialism, settler colonialism, decolonization, and genocide, both cultural and physical, of North

American Native Americans contributed to the formation of the United States. Students are exposed to the history and major political, social, and cultural achievements of various Native American tribes, their resilience and continuance into the present and future. Overall, students have an opportunity to critically engage readings, materials, and sources from Indigenous perspectives.

The course can have key goals such as: (1) foreground the rich history of sovereign and autonomous Native American tribes; (2) delve into the implications of genocide and forced land removal on Native American populations; (3) grapple with the cultural and ideological similarities and differences amongst various tribes in and outside of the California region. Students identify salient values, traditions, and customs relevant to California-based Native American populations; (4) highlight major periods of resistance and social activism, like the American Indian Movement (AIM), and recent movements around the Emeryville Shellmounds and the Dakota Access Pipeline; and (5) foster relationships with the California Native American tribal nation(s) of the land where the course is being taught.

Integrating Ethnic Studies into Existing Courses

While an increasing number of districts across the state have worked to develop and implement ethnic studies courses, there are still many districts that have not offered the course for a multitude of reasons (e.g., budgetary and other infrastructural constraints, lack of instructional resources and curriculum support, and course demands experienced by high school students seeking to complete a-g and other college and career pathway requirements). Consequently, many educators have worked diligently to include ethnic studies concepts, terms, and topics into existing courses. It is not uncommon to see ethnic studies integrated into history–social science courses, including US history, world history, economics, psychology, social studies, and geography. There are also cases of ethnic studies being included in visual and performing arts, mathematics, science, English language arts, and other subject areas.

For example, a geography teacher might develop a unit or lesson around urban geography, where students can delve into key concepts like environmental racism and ecological justice, and focus on the experiences of people of color in those spaces. Students could draw on local news stories, primary sources like housing and city planning maps, archived oral history interviews from current and past residents of the area, and literary texts that speak to the experiences of people of color in urban spaces like Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street*, Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, and the poetry of Janice Mirikitani.

This approach ensures that the intersectional lens that ethnic studies provides is salient and manifests within various subject areas. Moreover, this approach further enriches traditional subject areas by including a range of perspectives that can further elucidate the overall course content.

The Cultural Proficiency Continuum for History–Social Science, based on the work of Geneva Gay, Randall Lindsey, Stephanie Graham and others, provides an example of how ethnic studies can be integrated into history–social science courses. It asks important questions about the content and curriculum materials we use in classrooms. The selection of curriculum content and resources may be intentional or unintentional but are worthy of analysis if we are intent on providing a culturally proficient curriculum for students. In the teaching of history, as described in the *History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools*, as a story well told, we need to ask ourselves, whose story are we telling? Which perspectives are shared? What message or agenda is delivered? The Continuum can be found at

<https://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/HSS/HSS%20Cultural%20Proficiency%20Continuum%20FINAL.pdf?ver=2020-09-08-142513-047>.

Thematic/Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies Approach

Increasingly, ethnic studies curricula combine comparative and thematic approaches. The combination of these approaches offer valuable opportunities for students to learn

about the similarities as well as differences experienced by two or more groups. In addition, a comparative, thematic course or lesson plan gives teachers the option to include a variety of group experiences over time. Teachers will often identify key themes and concepts within the field that can be used to investigate the histories, contributions, and struggles of multiple groups, both individually and collectively. Identity, colonialism, systems of power, and social justice are just a few of the many concepts and themes that can be engaged within an ethnic studies course employing this approach. In doing so, teachers are able to provide a space for multiple perspectives and narratives to be included in units and lessons simultaneously. This approach also encourages students to make links across racial and ethnic lines, and foregrounds the development of allies—who will act on the behalf of the harmed group in order to make change—and solidarity building. Additionally, students are able to engage readings and materials from multiple fields, thus exposing them to new ideas and perspectives that they may not have encountered in a stand-alone ethnic studies course. As noted previously, teachers and administrators should consider their local student and community demographics when building the content of their courses.

Another way to engage this approach is by using themes to delve into several core ethnic studies areas independently. For example, during a 16-week semester, educators can divide the course up evenly, with approximately four weeks dedicated to the study of different core fields, and a salient focus on particular themes across all the core fields.

Overall, the thematic and comparative approaches often stress the importance of identifying shared struggles, building unity, and developing intercultural communication and competence.

Grade Level

Ethnic studies has primarily been taught at the college/university and high school (ninth through twelfth grade) levels. However, some districts have offered courses for grades

six through eight, and at the K–5 level ethnic studies may be included as a stand-alone unit or further integrated into the curriculum, adding balance through an ethnic studies lens. Understanding how race and ethnicity impacts society should be an essential core component of every students' K–12 education experience. The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum has been developed for educators teaching grades nine through twelve, and in alignment with the University of California and California State University System “A–G” subject requirements. Adjusting assignments, modes of assessment and readings, as well as pedagogical approach, are most important to consider when modifying the model curriculum to be developmentally appropriate and fit a specific grade level.

From a history–social science perspective, students may study the history and culture of a single, historically racialized group in the United States. Examples may include a course on African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Native American, or Chicana/o and Latina/o history.

Coursework could also focus on an in-depth comparative study of the history, politics, culture, contributions, challenges, and current status of two or more racial or ethnic groups in the United States. A course or unit could, for example, concentrate on how these groups experienced the process of racial and ethnic formation in a variety of contexts and how these categories changed over time. The relationship between global events and an ethnic or racial group's experience could be another area of study. In this vein, students could study how World War II drew African Americans from the South to California cities like Oakland and Los Angeles, how the Iranian Revolution and its aftermath affected Iranian immigrants in the United States, or how Armenian Americans mobilized to urge the U.S. government to formally acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. Many peoples came to the United States fleeing oppression, war, or genocide, including those listed above and others such as Assyrians and Jews. Alternatively, a class could focus in on the local community and examine the interactions and coalition-building among a number of ethnic and/or racial groups. In

ethnic studies coursework, students will become aware of the constant themes of social justice and responsibility, while recognizing these are defined differently over time.

As identity and the use of power are central to ethnic studies courses, instructors should reflect critically on their own perspective and personal histories as well as engage students as co-investigators in the inquiry process. A wide range of sources (e.g., literature, court cases, government files, memoirs, art, music, oral histories) and elements of popular culture can be utilized to better understand the experiences of historically disenfranchised groups—such as Native Americans, African Americans, Chicana/o and Latina/o, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. At the same time, students should be made aware of how the different media have changed over time and how that has shaped the depiction of the different groups.

Models of instruction should be student centered. For example, students could develop research questions based on their lived experiences in order to critically study their communities. Reading and studying multiple perspectives, participating in community partnerships, collecting oral histories, completing service-learning projects, or developing youth-participatory action research projects can all serve as effective instructional approaches for these studies.

Teachers can organize their instruction around a variety of themes, such as the movement to create ethnic studies courses in high schools and universities; personal explorations of students' racial, ethnic, cultural, and national identities; the history of racial construction, both domestically and internationally; and the influence of the media on the framing and formation of identity. Students can investigate the history of the experience of various ethnic groups in the United States, as well as the diversity of these experiences based on race, gender, and sexuality, among other identities.

To study these themes, students can consider a variety of investigative questions, including large, overarching questions about the definitions of ethnic studies as a field of inquiry, economic and social class in American society, social justice, social

responsibility, civic rights and responsibilities, and social change. They can ask how race has been constructed in the United States and other parts of the world. They can investigate the relationship between race, gender, sexuality, social class, and economic and political power. They can explore the nature of citizenship by asking how various groups have become American and examining cross-racial and inter-ethnic interactions among Indigenous, immigrants (forced or voluntary), migrants, people of color, and working people. They can investigate the legacies of social movements and historic struggles against injustice in California, the Southwest, and the United States as a whole and study how different social movements for people of color, women, and LGBTQ+ communities have mutually informed each other.

Students can also personalize their study by considering how their personal and/or family stories connect to the larger historical narratives and how and why some narratives have been privileged over others. Lastly, students may consider how to improve their own community, what constructive actions can be taken, and how they can provide a model for change for those in other parts of the state, country, and world.

Introduction to Ethnic Studies

This section contains a sample course outline for a general Introduction to Ethnic Studies course utilizing a thematic approach. Districts can use this outline as guidance for creating their own ethnic studies courses that reflect the student demographics in their communities.

The thematic course draws from the four core disciplines that were the original basis of ethnic studies in California and provides opportunities for educators to utilize the themes to make connections to their classroom demographics. These disciplines have continued to evolve and change over time. African American Studies has had various academic names but focuses on the experiences of people of African descent in the United States, while drawing connections to Africa and the African diaspora.

Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies covers the contributions, histories, cultures, politics,

and socialization of people from Mesoamerica, South America, the Caribbean, and the United States Southwest. Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies has grown to incorporate various subfields as a means of including groups that have been historically marginalized and under studied within the field, such as Arab American Studies. Finally, Native American Studies covers the histories, contributions, politics, and cultures of Indigenous people in the Americas. While the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum does not endorse any particular field or subfield over another, ethnic studies educators and administrators are encouraged to consider student demographics, needs, interests, and current events when crafting a course or lesson, as this may help determine what content framework will be most useful for the class.

Introduction to Ethnic Studies Course Outline

Course Overview: This course is designed to help students develop an intersectional and global understanding of the impact of race and racism, ethnicity, and culture in the shaping of individuals and communities in the United States. They will learn about the interlocking systems of oppression and privilege that impact all people. Students will be exposed to a multitude of histories, perspectives, and cultures with the goal of students being able to build critical analytical and intercultural communication skills; develop an understanding of geo-historical and cultural knowledge and contributions; foster humanism and collaboration across lines of difference; learn the value and strength in diversity; develop a rigorous historical understanding of the development of racial and ethnic identities in the United States; and engage in civic action, community service, and/or community education to bring positive change that helps build a future society free of racism and other forms of bigotry associated with white supremacy, white nationalism, and institutional racism¹⁵.

¹⁵ Institutional racism: the systemic normalization or legalization of racism and discrimination. This often emerges via the unequal and inequitable distribution of resources, power, and opportunity. Institutional racism is also referred to as systemic and/or structural racism. Some examples including segregation in schools, redlining by banks and government agencies, etc.

Course Content: Given the interdisciplinary nature of ethnic studies, students will be exposed to many subject areas, including, but not limited to, history, geography, literature, sociology, anthropology, and visual arts.

The use of a thematic approach to teaching ethnic studies is incredibly generative as students are able to consider an array of inquiry-based questions—from more overarching questions around racial formation and their own ancestral legacies, to more focused inquiries that may address issues in their communities, like a public health inequity that is manifesting in ways that are racially or economically discriminatory. Themes also allow students to delve into various perspectives simultaneously, where they are able to draw connections across racial and ethnic groups.

Throughout the course, each unit and lesson plan should be founded on the guiding values and principles of ethnic studies as described in chapter 1:

1. Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)
2. Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and people of color by providing a space to share their stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth
3. Center and place high value on the pre-colonial, ancestral knowledge, narratives, and communal experiences of Native People/s and people of color and groups that are typically marginalized in society
4. Critique empire-building in history and its relationship to white supremacy, racism and other forms of power and oppression

5. Challenge racist, bigoted, discriminatory, imperialist/colonial beliefs and practices on multiple levels
6. Connect ourselves to past and contemporary social movements that struggle for social justice and an equitable and democratic society; and conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for a post-racist, post-systemic racism society that promotes collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing

Further, they should support and develop the key outcomes of

1. pursuit of justice and equity;
2. working toward greater inclusivity;
3. furthering self-understanding;
4. developing a better understanding of others;
5. recognizing intersectionality;
6. promoting self-empowerment for civic engagement;
7. supporting a community focus; and
8. developing interpersonal communication.

Some ethnic studies teachers begin lessons by acknowledging that they are on native land, and honor the specific Indigenous peoples who are the original caretakers and have had a close relationship to that land in the past and present. Each sample theme below includes sample lessons located in chapter 4. They are designed to show how a teacher might cover a particular portion of a theme. Please note that these lessons are meant to serve as examples for how teachers can organize a course around these central themes. They are not exhaustive, nor do they constitute a scope and sequence or full curriculum. Teachers and administrators are encouraged to address themes and specific content that are reflective of the demographics of their communities. Many of the sample lessons provided in chapter 4 can be adapted to tell the stories of other groups. Further, many of the lessons could be used to support an alternate theme. For

example, the Redlining Lesson located in the Systems of Power theme, also fits within the theme of History and Movement.

Sample Theme #1: Identity

1. What factors shape our identities? What parts of our identities do we choose for ourselves? What parts are determined for us by others, by society, or by chance?
2. What dilemmas arise when others view us differently than we view ourselves?
3. How do our identities influence our choices and the choices available to us?
4. What factors influence our identity, and in turn, the choices we make?
5. How is identity shaped and reshaped by our specific circumstances?

Identity is a key theme for adolescents. As one text notes, “Adolescence is, by definition, a time of transition, when young people begin to take their places as responsible and participating members of their communities. As young people weigh their future choices, they wrestle with issues of loyalty and belief. The adolescent’s central developmental questions are ‘Who am I?’ ‘Do I matter?’ and ‘How can I make a difference?’ They seek people and paths that are worthy of their loyalty and commitment, challenge hypocrisy, and bring passion and new perspectives to enterprises that capture their imaginations and engage their involvement.”¹⁶

Adolescence brings with it new abilities to think abstractly and meta-cognitively, so this exploration of identity is developmentally responsive. The high-engagement reflection on ourselves, who we are, who we relate to, how we relate to others, how we are perceived by others, and how our identity influences our perspective, choices, and impact, builds schema for a more sophisticated understanding of agency, belonging, and community and for deep ethical reflection. It also provides an initial basis for delving into the tension between the universal and particular—understanding and drawing out

¹⁶ Bardige and Barr, p. 666.

universal lessons on human behavior while respecting the integrity of particular moments and experiences.

Our society—through its particular culture, customs, institutions, and more—provides us with the labels we use to categorize the people we encounter. These labels are based on beliefs about race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, economic class, and more. Sometimes our beliefs about these categories are so strong that they prevent us from seeing the unique identities of others. Sometimes these beliefs also make us feel suspicion, fear, or hatred toward some members of our society. Other times, especially when we are able to get to know a person, we are able to see past labels and, perhaps, find common ground and value and appreciate differences. Some examples of topics that could be used to explore questions of identity are the "model minority" myth and its historic and contemporary implications for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, the experiences of Arab Americans and the rise of Islamophobia and discrimination against Sikhs in the aftermath of 9/11 and the War on Terror, the recent rise in antisemitic violence, hatred, and rhetoric, and the way that Native Americans have challenged the use of native iconography and dress for mascots on college campuses and professional sports leagues.

Sample Theme #2: History and Movement

1. What does it mean to live on this land? Who may become an American? What happens when multiple narratives are layered on top of each other?
2. How should societies integrate newcomers? How do newcomers develop a sense of belonging to the places where they have arrived?
3. How does migration affect the identities of individuals, communities and nations?
4. How do ideas or narratives about who may belong in a nation affect immigration policy, the lives of immigrants, and host communities?

5. What role have immigrants played in defining notions of democracy?

Another theme that this course could focus on is an in-depth study of the migration of various people of color to California. Within this theme of history and movement, teachers will develop and facilitate instructional opportunities for students to explore intense migration periods like:

- The Second Great Migration (1940–1970) – The mass exodus of African Americans from the rural South to urban cities across the Northeast, Midwest, and West. Students could focus on the World War II era, in particular port cities like Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, and Richmond, whose African American populations skyrocketed with the increase of job opportunities to support the maritime, munitions, and other military industries. Teachers can discuss how this period of migration reshaped urban cities in California; grapple with how the influx of African American migrants impacted racial politics and dynamics in the state; and highlight the major contributions African Americans made to the political, socioeconomic, and cultural life of the state.
- Southeast Asian Refugee Crisis – Students can discuss the implications of the Vietnam War on Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, Iu-Mien, and Laotian populations into the 1970s and 1980s, and how experiences from the Vietnam War continue to affect Southeast Asian Americans today. Beyond learning about the war, the fall of Saigon, the era of the Khmer Rouge, and other significant events of this period, students can also delve into the experiences of Southeast Asian immigrants, the racial enclaves they created in California (Sacramento, Long Beach, and Fresno are just a few cities with vibrant Southeast Asian refugee communities), their contributions, and ongoing struggles.
- Native American Removal – Students will be able to discuss early settlers and the US government's often fraught engagement with Native American tribes dating back to the eighteenth century. Sample topics and events include:

California Indian history, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, forced relocation, the creation of Reservations, broken treaties, and the enacting of genocide against Native American peoples. Overall, these topics will provide students with a better understanding of the struggles many Native American tribes endured, while also connecting those struggles to western expansion, manifest destiny, and the establishment of the contiguous US.

- Migrants and Refugees from Latin America – Students can discuss the growing number of refugees from Central America, beginning with refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua in the late 1970s. Beyond learning about US intervention in the region, students can explore the experience of recent refugees in California, for example the mass exodus of Salvadorans fleeing the war-torn country during the 1980s, later settling in California in large numbers. These latest refugees can be considered along with the Indigenous Latinx community in the United States (such as the Zapotec, Maya, Nahuatl, Lenca, Quechua), which have faced historic loss of lands and rights. Related topics include the 1910 Great Mexican Migration, the Great Depression, Mexican repatriation, the Bracero Program, and Operation Wetback. Additionally, students should delve into the migration of Central American, Latin American, and Caribbean populations. This history can help students better contextualize current controversial discussions on immigration. Further, students can learn how California and the Southwest were part of Mexico from 1810–1848 (see map of Disturnell).
- Populations Displaced by War and Genocide – Students can conduct studies of how other populations affected by war or genocide have migrated to the United States. Historical examples include the population of Armenian Americans that settled in California in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide, the effect that World War II and the Holocaust had upon the American Jewish population, and the Southeast Asian Refugee Crisis. A more contemporary study could be based

on the migration of Iranians, Iraqis, Syrians, Afghans, along with other refugees from the Middle East to California and the United States as a result of the recent wars in that region. Topics can include the experiences of the members of these groups and the political shifts and reactions that each event prompted within the United States. The CDE's *Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide* (2002) is a useful resource on these topics

(<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/im/documents/modelcurrichrgenoc.pdf>).

- South Asian Immigration – Students can explore South Asian immigration to California. The challenges and opportunities faced by South Asian immigrants to California will allow students to learn about socio-economic issues, identity, religion, culture, racism, immigration reform and legislation, and political contributions to anti-imperial and anti-colonial movements. For example, the 1800s progressing to the early twentieth century saw waves of workers on the Western Pacific Railroad in 1910 and former soldiers who had served in the British colonial army in East Asia. Legislation such as *United States vs. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923) and the US Immigration and Nationality Act (1965) affected South Asian immigration significantly. The contributions of Dalip Singh Saund to politics opened doors for minority communities to rise above prejudice and racism when he became the first-ever Asian, the first Indian, and the first Sikh to be elected to the United States Congress (1957–1963). The founding of Stockton Gurdwara, the first-ever Sikh place of worship in the United States in 1912, served as a focal point for immigrants across communities and was linked to the founding of the Gadar Party, which opposed British rule in India.

In addition to learning more about the history of migration from these various perspectives, teachers can help facilitate discussions on xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment, while emphasizing the nation's history of being a home for immigrants, the merit-based promises offered by a capitalist economy, and the value of having a diverse citizenry.

Making Connections to the *History–Social Science Framework*

Chapter 14 of the framework includes an outline of an elective ethnic studies course. This course outline includes a classroom example (page 313) where students engage in an oral history project about their community. This example includes discussion of redlining and other policies that resulted in “white flight” and the concentration of communities of color into certain neighborhoods.

Teachers can expand upon the classroom example, and connect it to the themes described in this model curriculum.

Sample Theme #3: Systems of Power

1. What is the relationship between the individual and society?
2. How does society divide people into groups?
3. What is the relationship between individual power and collective power?
4. How do social systems influence the choices we make?
5. What are the implications for a society when it categorizes people into a social hierarchy?

Another theme that can be covered in this type of ethnic studies course is systems of power. Teachers can introduce the theme by defining and providing examples of systems of power, which can include exploitative economic systems and social systems like patriarchy. These are structures that have the capacity to control circumstances within economic, political, and/or social–cultural contexts. These systems are often controlled by those in power and go on to determine how society is organized and functions.

In introducing this theme, teachers should consider taking one system of power, like sexism and patriarchy, and offering perspectives across the various ethnic groups.

Discussions of systems of power should include both the struggles that come with being entangled and impacted by these systems, but also resistance to them. Systems of power can be analyzed using the four “I”s of oppression (ideology, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized).

Building on the theme of sexism and patriarchy, teachers can concentrate on the various ways in which women and femmes of color have been oppressed and how they have resisted. Alternatively, this section can include a discussion on how women of color resisted and elevated women’s rights issues (e.g., adequate reproductive health care and equal pay) via social movements (e.g., the second wave feminist and #Metoo movements), the creation of their own organizations, through writings (literature, poems, and scholarly works), and other mediums.

Further, in addressing this theme, systems of power, teachers may plan a lesson that addresses U.S. housing inequality, including issues of redlining and racial housing covenants.

Making Connections to the *English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework*:

Chapter 7 of the framework includes a snapshot activity entitled, “Investigating Language, Culture, and Society: Linguistic Autobiographies” (page 726). This lesson example has students reflect on their own histories of using language in different contexts, and reflects a number of the ethnic studies themes described in this model curriculum. This could be a useful lesson to explore the ways that language is utilized as a system of power.

Sample Theme #4: Social Movements and Equity

1. How have social movements addressed different kinds of discrimination or oppression? What debates and dilemmas remain unresolved?

2. What debates and dilemmas from past historical moments remain unresolved?
Why?
3. What does equity entail? What is the difference between equality and equity?
Why does this matter?
4. How can one make a difference in the community?
5. What skills and tools are needed to create change in society?

Another theme that this course could explore is the multitude of effective social movements communities have initiated and sustained in response to oppression and systems of power. Teachers can develop and facilitate instructional opportunities for students to explore major social movements like:

- The Civil Rights Movement
- The Farm Workers Movement
- Japanese American Redress and Reparations
- Black Lives Matter
- Mni Wiconi¹⁷ Water is Life: No Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock
- Local Indigenous social movements such as language revitalization, cultural renewal, dam removal, environmental advocacy, etc. Current Land Back movements, such as the transfer of Wiyot Land back to Wiyot Tribe by the city of Eureka as one example

In addition to learning more about the history of social movements and the gains achieved through solidarity, activism, civil disobedience, and participation in the

¹⁷ Mni Wiconi, or “water is life,” originates from the Sioux tribe located in the Midwestern states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The term is from the Lakota language.

democratic process, teachers can help facilitate discussions on resistance to oppression, the broad support these movements mobilized, and their lasting impacts of the change. The teacher can also introduce situations where young people engaged in protest against injustice, such as the lunch counter sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement or the 1968 East Los Angeles student walkouts to advocate for improved educational opportunities and protest racial discrimination.

Making Connections to the *History–Social Science Framework*:

Chapter 16 of the framework discusses a number of civil rights movements that were created in response to political, economic, and social discrimination. Teachers can build upon the example of the struggle to preserve the San Francisco Bay Area shellmound sites of the Ohlone people and have students compare that to some of the other movements referenced in the framework, such as the 1969–1971 occupation of Alcatraz or the American Indian Movement’s 1972–73 standoff at Wounded Knee in South Dakota. This lesson can also be connected to the Social Movements and Student Civic Engagement lesson in chapter 4.

Sample Lesson and Unit Plan Templates

Two sample templates for developing an ethnic studies curriculum are provided below. The first contains both general concepts that are common to other content areas and some specific areas that are specific to ethnic studies. A discussion of the specific components of this template follows.

The second is a unit plan template that allows teachers to curate a more dynamic, responsive, and relevant learning experience. This tool is meant to serve as the bridge between a larger course overview, which maps out the overall year’s (or semester’s)

scope and sequence, and the day-to-day lesson plans, which provide detailed teacher moves and preparation specific to a lesson.¹⁸

¹⁸ Other frameworks for developing ethnic studies lessons exist online. For example, Christine Sleeter has produced a Teaching Works article that describes a curriculum planning framework focused on ethnic studies content that is culturally responsive to the lived experience of students, and a book that elaborates on the framework and offers examples. See Christine Sleeter, *Designing Lessons and Lesson Sequences with a Focus on Ethnic Studies or Culturally Responsive Curriculum* (University of Michigan: Teaching Works, 2017), http://www.teachingworks.org/images/files/TeachingWorks_Sleeter.pdf (accessed June 1, 2020), and Christine Sleeter and Judith Flores Carmona, *Unstandardizing Curriculum: Multicultural teaching in the standards-based classroom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017).

Table: Sample Lesson Template

Sample Lesson Template	
Lesson Title:	Grade Level(s):
Ethnic Studies Values and Principles Alignment:	
Standards Alignment:	
Lesson Purpose and Overview (1-2 paragraph narrative explanation):	
Key Terms and Concepts (Ties into larger unit key terms but may also include terms specific to the lesson):	
Lesson Objectives ("Students will be able to..."):	
1. 2.	
Essential Questions (Ties lesson to larger unit purpose):	
1. 2.	
Lesson Steps/Activities:	
1. Community Builder/Cultural Energizer (5-10 minutes) 2. 3. 4. 5. Conclusive Dialogue (student and community reflection)	
Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection:	Materials and Resources:
•	•
Ethnic Studies Outcomes:	

Lesson Title and Grade Level(s): Add title of the lesson and grade level.

Ethnic Studies Values and Principles Alignment: Each lesson should draw from and be informed by the ethnic studies values and principles described in chapter 1.

Standards Alignment: Lessons should be aligned to the academic content standards adopted by the SBE. In the *History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools*, grade nine is reserved as an elective year. Therefore, most ethnic studies courses that are offered as electives will not align to specific grade-level history–social science content standards. However, teachers may want to show alignment to standards in the grade eleven United States History and Geography course or the grade twelve Principles of American Democracy course as a way of demonstrating how ethnic studies content connect to other history–social science disciplines. However, the history–social science standards also include a set of Historical and Social Sciences Analysis skills for grades nine through twelve. These skills, organized under the headers of Chronological and Spatial Thinking, Historical Research, Evidence, and Point of View, and Historical Interpretation, do connect directly with the objectives of a rigorous ethnic studies course.

Other standards that could be addressed are the *California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS for ELA/Literacy)* and the *California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards)*. The *CCSS for ELA/Literacy* include grade-level expectations for student skill development in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, with an expectation on the skills needed to prepare students for college and careers. In particular, the writing and reading expectations for students in ethnic studies courses should align strongly with the expectations in the *CCSS for ELA/Literacy*. The *CA ELD Standards* provide progressions across the grade levels for students at the emerging, expanding, and bridging levels of English language acquisition.

Lesson Purpose and Overview: Each lesson should have a brief narrative overview of the lesson and its purpose. This narrative should describe how the lesson is connected to the broader unit, describe the specific concept(s) and/or topic(s) that students will engage, and begin to highlight some of the texts (i.e., primary and scholarly sources) that students will delve into. The purpose of this section is to provide a clear description on how the lesson topic connects to skill development, and to provide a glimpse into the overall lesson.

Key Terms and Concepts: The lesson outline should also have a list of the critical academic vocabulary specific to ethnic studies that students will learn over the course of instruction. These terms and concepts should connect directly to the lesson topic.

Lesson Objectives: The lesson objectives identify what the desired takeaways are from the lesson. In other words, when the lesson is concluded, a student should have gained an understanding of the lesson content and be able to demonstrate that knowledge using specific skills. It is essential that lesson objectives to be written with active verbs based on cognitive demand (example: students will be able to infer the imperialist motives of Columbus using his journals).

Essential Questions: The use of essential or guiding questions is an approach that was used within the *History–Social Science Framework* to support student inquiry. Framing instruction around questions of significance allows students to have choice and agency to develop and engage with their content knowledge in greater depth. This approach transforms students into active learners, as they are able to conduct research and evaluate sources in an effort to develop a claim about the question.

Lesson Steps/Activities: The steps in the lesson should be clear and discrete. In addition to more conventional lesson activities, teachers should consider including a cultural energizer and/or community building activity at the start of each lesson. They can include traditional icebreakers that involve movement, music, and games, and

community-unity chants. The class can also begin with silent reflection on a question related to the lesson, followed by small group sharing, and culminating with a larger class wide discussion. Energizers or community builders should typically take no more than 10–15 minutes, depending on the activity. If done well, the energizer/community builder will pique student interest in the lesson; generate energy and enthusiasm for learning; and facilitate connection between students, the teacher, and the larger community.

Another activity to consider at the end of the lesson is a community reflection. This activity concludes the lesson with a meaningful reflection of student experience as it pertains to the objectives of the day. Teachers can facilitate this portion in various ways. For example, teachers can ask students to complete a silent, pen-to-paper response to a prompt. Teachers should create prompts that encourage students to reflect upon learnings and challenges, outstanding questions, connections to prior learning, and so on. The key to this portion of the lesson is that it be used to meaningfully review key takeaways, clarify misunderstandings, answer questions, generate questions, and connect to the larger purpose of the course.

Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection: Instruction cannot be known to be effective if the teacher is unable to determine if the students have mastered the content. Furthermore, students should be able to apply skills and knowledge learned to solve problems. Therefore, it is important to include both formative and summative assessment within the lesson plan. Formative assessment takes place during instruction and allows the teacher to modify that instruction to assist learning. Summative assessments measure student achievement or progress toward mastery of the content, may take place at the end of a lesson, unit, or term, and may take the form of a performative task.

Materials and Resources: The selection of materials and resources can be difficult. At the very least, there needs to be sufficient resources for students to conduct the lesson activities, address the essential questions, and achieve the lesson objectives.

However, it should be noted that students can be self-directed to share their lived experiences and conduct research to identify more resources for inclusion and further investigation. There is certainly a range of primary and secondary sources that can accomplish these goals. But teachers need to be aware of some concerns when selecting resources. Online resources are plentiful, but have to be approached with caution. Links often expire, and while the content is usually available somewhere else, it can at times be difficult to find the new location. A web page that hosts a resource may also have content or links that can take students to sites that are inappropriate or offensive.

That particular issue is less present in print materials, but those materials also need to be reviewed carefully. The *Education Code* has requirements for social content that prohibit districts from adopting instructional materials that include advertising or contain content that demeans, stereotypes, or patronizes various specified groups.¹⁹ There are also potential copyright issues when using sources that are not within the public domain. For these reasons, local educational agencies (LEAs) may wish to focus on resources that are not commercial in nature, or websites that are from *.gov, *.edu, or, in some cases, *.org domains. When commercial products, such as a textbook or DVD, are used, LEAs should make sure that those materials are or have been properly vetted through state requirements and the local selection process for instructional materials (see below).

Ethnic Studies Outcomes: Each lesson should address one or more of the outcomes described in chapter 1.

¹⁹ More information about these requirements can be found in the State Board of Education's *Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content, 2013 Edition*. Available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/lc.asp> (Accessed July 23, 2020).

Table: Sample Unit Plan Template

Sample Unit Plan Template					
Unit Title:				Week #: <u> </u> of <u> </u>	
<p align="center">Unit Overview</p> <p>A general summary of what students will study, and why, during the unit, including concepts, content, and skills. Places the unit within the context of a yearly (or semester long) course of study.</p>					
<p>Unit Enduring Understandings:</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>					
<p>Essential Questions:</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>					
Unit Planning/Description of Week:					
Standards Alignment:					
Learning Experiences and Instructional Sequence					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Student Learning Outcomes and Formative Assessments
Lesson Sequence: 1. 2. 3.					<p><i>By the end of this week, students should know and/or be able to...</i></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p><i>as demonstrated by...</i></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>

Engagement and Activity Tracker (On a scale of 1–5, 5 representing high engagement/multi-model activity, rate each day's learning sequence, below.)
5–
4–
3–
2–
1–

Summative Assessments/Performance Tasks:

Identify when the summative assessment(s) will be given and indicate where it will be administered in the appropriate week. What will students know and be able to do at the end of the unit? Plan backwards from your summative assessment(s), keeping in mind what students will need to be successful.

Unit Overview: A general summary of what students will study, and why, during the unit, including concepts, content, and skills. Places the unit within the context of a yearly (or semester long) course of study.

Unit Enduring Understandings: An Enduring Understanding is a statement that summarizes important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom.

Essential Questions: An Essential Question is an overarching question that provides focus and engages students. Framing instruction around questions of significance allows students to develop their content knowledge in greater depth.

Unit Planning/Description of Week: Provide a brief overview of what students will be engaging for the week.

Standards Alignment: Units should be aligned to the academic content standards adopted by the SBE.

Learning Experiences and Instructional Sequence: Identify and sequence the daily and/or weekly instructional experiences and best practices that will allow students to meet the student learning outcomes independently. Allows instructor to consider and plan an engaging learning experience for students, including appropriate activities, differentiation and best practices, for all students.

Student Learning Outcomes and Formative Assessments: Describes how students will demonstrate what they know and are able to do related to the unit outcomes. Formative assessments are ongoing and allow teachers to monitor learning and build student capacity towards the unit's summative assessment.

Engagement and Activity Tracker: This tool allows teachers to keep the diverse learning community in mind while planning. In ethnic studies, it is paramount that energizers, engaging multimodal activities, and a multiplicity of student tasks are utilized throughout the learning experience. Teachers can use this section to rate both their lessons and instructional sequence for the unit and ensure that moments tending toward the static and less active, are followed by periods of dynamic activity, and that moments of intensive, individual, silent and sustained reading or writing are followed by collective discussion and multimodal exercise.

Summative Assessments/Performance Tasks: These should be administered at the end of each unit. They assess understanding, knowledge, and skills. Summative assessments can be in the form of a culminating writing assignment, a class publication, the delivery of an oral presentation, etc. They should also address the essential questions. And finally, they should provide students opportunity to demonstrate agency in a real-world context.

