

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Title: Ethnic Studies (UC, CSU) **Grade Level:** 9-12

Credit: 5 credits (semester)

Prerequisite: None

Textbook: "A Different Mirror for young People: A history of Multicultural America" by Ronald Takaki, adapted by Rebecca Steffoff, additional contemporary articles

Course Description:

Ethnic studies is an interdisciplinary class that encompasses many subject areas including history, literature, economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science. A central theme to the ethnic studies course is the historic struggle of communities of color, taking into account the intersectionality of identity (gender, class, sexuality, religion, among others), to challenge racism, discrimination, oppression and the systems that continue to perpetuate inequality. The focus on the experiences of these groups provides an opportunity for students to learn of the histories, cultures, struggles, and contributions to American society of these historically marginalized peoples which are often untold in U.S. history courses. Lessons will focus on the four foundational disciplines alongside the themes of (1) Identity, (2) History and Movement, (3) Systems of Power, and (4) Social Movements and Equity to make connections to the experiences of all students. By the end of the class, students will have learned about efforts for justice and equity, worked toward greater inclusivity, furthered their self understanding, developed a better understanding of others, be able to recognize intersectionality, promote self-empowerment for civic engagement, support a community focus, and develop interpersonal communication skills.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

1. Understand the role they can play individually and collectively in challenging the forces of inequity.
2. Work toward greater inclusivity.
3. Gain a deeper understanding of their own identities, ancestral roots, and knowledge of self.
4. Develop an appreciation for the complexity of diversity and how it continues to shape the American experience.
5. Recognize Intersectionality.
6. Promote self-empowerment for civic engagement.
7. Develop interpersonal communication.

Overarching Course Essential Questions:

1. How have race and ethnicity been constructed in the US?
2. How have they changed over time?
3. How do race and ethnicity continue to shape the US and contemporary issues?

Example Student Activities:

- Guest Speakers
- Field Trips/Virtual Field Trips
- Socratic Seminar
- Class discussions
- Ted Talks

Example Student Assessment:

- Reflective essay
- Autobiographical poem
- Visual timeline of anti-immigration legislation
- Children's book
- Biographical sketch of a famous person in history that has challenged sexism/heterosexism
- Resisting Controlling Images Project
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Comparison of other communities to "The Hill"
- Census project
- Action Research Project
- Observe community organization meeting project
- Literature circles
- Current events journal
- Myth busters handbook on common stereotypes
- [One pager project](#)
- Create a social map of own school

Unit 1: Community Building (1-2 weeks)

Essential Question(s): What is ethnic studies and why is it important?

Learning Goals: Students will see the humanity and value in each individual student; Recognize that each student has their own wealth of experience and knowledge that will shape their worldviews and values, and diverse viewpoints are respected; Establish a community where students engage each other with respect, trust, love, and accountability.

Historical Elements: History of the Ethnic Studies Movement

Contemporary Elements: Assembly Bill 2016, PVPUSD Board of Education Goals

Major Theory and Concepts:

- Community building
- Respect for differing values and viewpoints

Text/Readings:

- Chapter 1 (Looking at history through a different lens)
- Selected readings from “A Different Mirror” (“ADM”)
- <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-03-18/ethnic-studies-finally-approved-california-schools>

Vocabulary:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Minority/Majority
- Culture
- Identity
- Stereotype
- Discrimination
- Prejudice
- Ancestors
- Marginalized
- Disenfranchised

Possible Activity/ Discussion:

- Establish ground rules/norms
 - Emphasize importance of listening and critical thinking
- Define Community and identify different communities
 - Where does PV fit as a community compared to LA/CA/USA, etc.
- Culture and Community
- Concentric Circles

Possible Assessments:

- Class norms
- Self reflection, link to PV, community where they live, how they got there, ancestors, etc.
- Socratic Seminar
- Mind map
- Goal setting
- Bias analysis
- Letter to self

Unit 2: Identity (2 weeks)

Essential Question(s): Who am I? What is my identity? What does it mean to be human? What is my story? What privileges do I have? How do I use those privileges? What factors shape our identities? How does identity influence our choices and privilege?

Learning Goal: Students will be able to discuss how a person's identities inform their beliefs and actions and how intersectionality can affect one's position in society.

Historical Elements: Anti-Semitism

Contemporary Elements: Islamophobia, Native Iconography, Xenophobia

Major Theory and Concepts: Intersectionality, universal and particular (pg. 33/49), social stratification, social inequality, model minority myth, identity formation (Erikson)

Text/Readings:

- pg 447/563 for additional resources and readings
- Selected readings from "ADM"
- "Anti-Defamation and Mascots"
- "Are You Ready For Some Controversy? The History of 'Redskin'" • "Sports teams that retired Native American mascots, nicknames"

Vocabulary:

- Identity
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Oppression
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Ability/disability
- Age
- Class
- Binary/non-binary
- Spectrum
- Perception
- Social construct
- Intersectionality
- Multicultural(ism)
- Implicit Bias
- Diversity
- Ethnocentric
- Appropriation

Possible Activity/Discussion:

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

- Dominant Narrative Lesson (30 of 563)
- Ted Talk “The Danger of a Single Story”
- Social Map of School
 - Perceptions of other students/student groups
- Tree of Life
- Artistic representation of identities
 - Art
 - Soundtrack/Album cover
 - Oral History
 - Social Media
- Internal Bias Quiz - Project Implicit
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- Invisible Knapsack
- PBS Documentary: In Whose Honor
- “Redskins Is a Powerful Name” Video
- Imagined Ancestry Article and Activity
<https://pulitzercenter.org/builder/lesson/activities-extend-student-engagement>
-) • Concentric Circles

Possible Assessment:

- Where I’m From Poem
- “In Whose Honor” Video & Questions (pg. 449/563)
- Self-Reflection Letter (<http://blindspot.fas.harvard.edu/Book>)

Unit 3: History and Movement (4 weeks)

Essential Question(s): How does migration affect the identities of individuals, communities and nations? How do ideas or narratives about who may belong in a nation affect immigration policy, the lives of immigrants, and host communities? How was the racial identity in CA shaped by turning points in history? How did racial policies like colonialism and segregation affect the local community?

Learning Goal: Students will be able to examine complex history of immigration (push and pull factors for immigration – laws, war, discrimination), specifically to CA and it’s ties to modern issues; Students will explore their personal stories to see how it impacted their families. Students will identify and analyze historical contexts of various groups within their migration story.

Historical Elements:

- Immigration Chart/Timeline/Legislation (pg. 114 of 563)

Contemporary Elements:

- Dream Act/Immigration Laws

- Gentrification of communities/ethnic enclaves
 - i.e. Little Tokyo, Little Ethiopia, etc.
- Are there pockets where enclaves have not been gentrified?

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

- Invisibility: Removal of certain groups from film and media
 - Connection to Hollywood
- White Flight – history and movement section, social elements

Major Theory and Concepts:

- Push and pull factors of immigration

Text/Readings:

- Interior China Town
- Selected readings from “ADM”
- Selected readings from “The Color of Law”
- Us and Them: A History of Intolerance in America by Jim Carnes

Vocabulary:

- Gentrification
- Xenophobia
- Migration
- Invisibility

Possible Activity/Discussion:

- Case study following family and changes over the years (pg. 34 of 59)
 - Boyle Heights
 - Different groups with different location
 - South East Asia Refugee Crisis
 - Native Americans and their history/role in CA
 - Migrants and Refugees from Latin America
 - Populations displaced by war and genocide
- PBS Documentary: Asian Americans (Breaking Ground)
- PBS Documentary: Chicano! (Quest for a Homeland)
- KCET Documentary: Lost LA (Before the Dodgers)
- Land Acknowledgments
- Concentric Circles

Possible Assessment:

- Interview an Immigrant
- Children’s book – tell a story of immigration
- Census Project
- Current Events

Unit 4: Systems of Power (4 weeks)

Essential Question(s): How do social systems influence the choices we make? What is the relationship between individual power and collective power? What are the implications for a society when it categorizes people into a social hierarchy?

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

Learning Goal: Students will be able to define and provide examples of systems of power, including exploitative economic systems and social systems. Students will be able to analyze and understand the implications of systems of power in different social systems and how it impacts individual choice.

Historical Elements:

- Segregation
- Jim Crow Laws
- Native American Boarding Schools
- Gender socialization
- Movements for Women's Rights
- United Farm Workers Movement

Contemporary Elements:

- Mass incarceration
- State Power
- Police Reform
- Systemic Racism
- Occupy Wallstreet

Major Theory and Concepts:

- Appropriation
- Representation
- Hierarchy
- Sexism
- Patriarchy
- Media

Text/Readings:

- Selected readings from *The New Jim Crow*
- Selected readings from "The Color of Law"
- Selected readings from "ADM"
- *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson
- "Mass Incarceration" by Bryan Stevenson
- *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Patillo Beals
- <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/fall-2018/what-is-white-privilege-really>
- https://psychology.umbc.edu/files/2016/10/White-Privilege_McIntosh-1989.pdf
- Us and Them: A History of Intolerance in America by Jim Carnes • <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/03/20/atlanta-shooting-victims/> -

What we know about the victims of the Atlanta shootings

Vocabulary:

- Systemic Racism
- White Supremacy

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

- Heteronormativity
- Ableism
- Othering
- Marginalization
- Appropriation
- Representation
- Hierarchy
- Sexism
- Patriarchy
- Red-lining
- Forced Assimilation
- Wage Gap
- Glass Ceiling

Possible Activity/Discussion:

- PBS Documentary: Eyes on the Prize (Little Rock, Birmingham) •
- PBS Documentary: Chicano! (Struggle in the Fields)
- Film: Dolores
- PBS Documentary: Asian Americans (A Question of Loyalty)
- Concentric Circles

Possible Assessment:

- Current Events
- One Pager
- Literary Circles
- PSA
- Action Research Project
- Socratic Seminar

Unit 5: Social Movement and Equity (4-6 weeks)

Essential Question(s): 1) What debates and dilemmas from past historical moments remain unresolved? Why? 2) What does equity entail? What is the difference between equity and equality? Why does it matter? 3) How can one make a difference in the community? 4) What skills and tools are needed to create change in society?

Learning Goal: Students will explore effective social movements communities have initiated and sustained in response to oppression, and systems of power.

Historical Elements:

- Modern Civil Rights movement
- Japanese American redress and reparations
- Women's movement

Contemporary Elements:

- Anti-Asian Violence

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

- BLM
- Dakota access pipeline
- Farm workers movement
- LGBTQ movement
- Me Too
- Women's Movement

Major Theory and Concepts:

- Advocacy
- Activism
- Civil Disobedience
- Community builder/cultural energizer

Text/Readings:

- *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* by Ronald Takaki
- Letter from Birmingham Jail, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Black Lives Matter Platform
- *Us and Them: A History of Intolerance in America* by Jim Carnes
- Declaration of Sentiments (1848)
- NOW Statement of Purpose

Vocabulary:

- Social Justice
- Empowerment
- Self-Determination
- Activism
- Resistance
- Agency

Possible Activity

- PBS Documentary: *Of Civil Wrongs & Rights: The Fred Korematsu Story*
- PBS Documentary: *The Murder of Emmett Till*
- PBS Documentary: *Eyes on the Prize (Little Rock, Birmingham)*
- PBS Documentary: *Mankiller*
- PBS Documentary: *Asian Americans (Good Americans)*
- PBS Documentary: *Chicano! (Taking Back the Schools)*
- Concentric Circles

Possible Assessment:

- Socratic Seminar
- PSA
- Action Research Project
- Counter-Narrative Media
- Future Oriented Project: Imagine what can be

Ethnic Studies Page 1 of 1

- Research/interview on major social movements

