



Santa Rosa City Schools Course Proposal: Ethnic Studies (MS)

Proposal Submitted By Teaching and Learning

Overview:

Ethnic Studies course teaches students to explore their identity, their family history, and their community history through the lenses of race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture. This course seeks to educate students to be politically, socially, and economically conscious about their personal connections to local and global histories. Students will learn foundational concepts and vocabulary to help them navigate the landscape of Ethnic Studies. By studying the histories of race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture, students will cultivate respect and empathy for individuals and solidarity with groups of people locally, nationally, and globally. Middle school Ethnic Studies students will learn to honor the historical legacy of people of African Americans, Indigenous, Latino, and Asian people, and the social movements and mass struggle against injustice including the establishment of ethnic studies programs in public schools and university curricula. This course aims to provide an emancipatory education that will foster active social engagement and community building and inspire students to critically engage in self-understanding and self-determination as they learn how to effectively seek social justice for all. All parts of the course will be taught with a mixture of direct, indirect, and interactive instruction along with experiential learning, independent study, and instructional skills. These methods and strategies will ensure all learning styles are addressed.

This course, while stand-alone, has been written in sequence with Santa Rosa City Schools' high school Ethnic Studies offerings.

Graduation Requirements: Specify which requirement is met. (High School only)

n/a

UC a-g Requirements: Specify which requirement is met. (High School only)

n/a

Explain the rationale for course addition or modification. How does this fit in with district/site goals? If this course is replacing a current course, which course is it replacing and why? Will this course require new sections? Be explicit.

Ethnic Studies seeks to “address content considered missing from the traditional curriculum and to encourage critical engagement through the analysis and critique of history as it relates to historically disenfranchised groups” (California History-Social Science Framework). Research shows that Ethnic Studies increases graduation rates, improves attendance and results in greater engagement and higher grades.

In July 2020, Santa Rosa City Schools approved Ethnic Studies as a course of study and as a graduation requirement. This course will align with and prepare students for the high school elective class that will meet the Ethnic Studies requirement.

Explain the measurable learning outcomes

Students will demonstrate analytical and literacy skills essential to the history and social sciences discipline.

Students will engage in “a range of anti-bias, multicultural, and social justice issues” and will build “knowledge and skills related to both prejudice reduction and collective action”(Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards). Specifically, students will:

- think independently and critically about issues of race, ethnicity, identity, and power in American society
- understand the ideas of community assets and cultural wealth
- develop positive social identities based on their membership in multiple groups in society.
- Students will develop language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups.
- Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
- Students will recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than representatives of groups.
- Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination).
- Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.
- Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.
- Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and will evaluate what strategies are most effective.

- Engage in collective action that challenges inequality directly by raising consciousness and focusing on improving conditions for under-represented groups.

Course Description (To be used in the course catalog)

This course is designed for students to become politically, socially, and economically conscious about their connections to local and global histories. Ethnic Studies encourages students to explore the historic struggles, current experiences, and perspectives of people of color, including where the axes of racial and ethnic identity intersect with gender, class, sexuality, and other components of what may define an individual or community. Fundamentally, this course helps students build inter-ethnic understanding and socio-cultural bridges in an increasingly multicultural and multiethnic nation through the lens of local issues. Through engagement, inquiry, analysis, reflection, and critique, students in the Ethnic Studies course will develop a more inclusive understanding of the United States of America and its past by examining dominant narratives and critical or counter-narratives, centering the history of people in the United States, California, and Sonoma County and their relationship to systems of power. Ethnic Studies attempts to develop students' awareness of civic and social responsibility, justice, and their ability to be agents of change in their communities. To encourage engagement, community organizations will be engaged to collaborate with students to learn about and address local challenges directly with community members. Ethnic Studies challenges racism, discrimination, and oppression and the systems that continue to perpetuate inequality (CaliforniaHistory-Social Science Framework).

Detailed Course Design

(Course design should include the objectives, activities, assessments, and standards to be addressed in this course.)

Unit 1: Introduction to Ethnic Studies

This course will use the writings of Ronald Takaki's book, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, and *This Book is Anit-Racist* to focus on the history of Ethnic Studies and set the foundation for expectations, skills, and key vocabulary that will be needed throughout the course. Students will get an introduction to foundational concepts and frameworks of Ethnic Studies, and how these concepts and frameworks will be used to assess and analyze historical and current events. Students will learn to apply a sociological lens in researching and discussing issues, which include race and racism, classism, gender and sexism, oppression, and popular resistance. Students will learn that Ethnic Studies emphasize a multitude of experiences and perspectives in history.

Essential Questions

1. What is Ethnic Studies and how might our participation in the course positively impact our intellectual development, the improvement of our school culture, and increase our community pride?
2. How do we define our various identities: global, national, state, local, and community?
3. How do social constructions affect us and how do we affect social constructions?
4. How well can Ethnic Studies fit within current subject matter disciplines?

Sample Assignments and Activities

1. Establishing Routines and Expectations

- **Respect Agreements:** Students will co-create respect agreements to create a common understanding of the relationships between the following stakeholders: adult to adult, adult to student, student to adult, and student to student. Respect agreements will be created collaboratively using Socratic Seminars to develop common definitions of respect to allow for rigorous, respectful discourse that highlights the contributions and challenges (both historical and present) of diverse peoples. This activity serves as a foundation for students to engage in shared inquiry in a respectful manner.

2. After reading an introduction to Ethnic Studies, students will discuss the unit's essential questions to hear and learn about their peers' perspectives. They will record their thoughts and insights in their journals.

Unit 2: Identity and Culture

Students will examine race, ethnicity, and culture. This examination will include a discussion of Who Am I and What Is My Identity. Students will explore the ways identity and history are constructed and produced in our everyday lives through community practices and media representation. Students are taught to see the ways that gender, race, sexuality, class, and nationality are created and constructed, and how they are upheld through institutions and official history. Students will be able to define their ethnicity and explore ways in which their own ethnic identity contributes to their sense of self. Students will identify examples of cultural appropriation and explain why they constitute appropriation and not celebration.

Essential Questions

1. Who am I and what are my Social Identities?
2. What is Race? What is Ethnicity?
3. What is Racism (From the Personal Perspective)
4. What is Racism (From the Institutional Perspective)
5. What does Anti-Racist mean?

Key Terms:

Social Identity, dominant culture, social identities, privilege, intersectionality, systems of oppression, privilege, equity, resistance, consciousness, identity, racism, sexism, classism, ableism, culture, popular culture, cultural appropriation, institution, bias, ethnicity, colonization, decolonization, social construct, prejudice, critical analysis, dehumanization, humanization, invisibility, “otherization”

Media

- “What’s Wrong with Cultural Appropriation?”
<https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/06/cultural-appropriation-wrong/>

Sample Assignments

1. Pull out a notebook and establish it as your class journal (make sure it’s a notebook you’ll want to keep coming back to, one that you can carry around with you). For the next five minutes, write down everything you can think of that makes you who you are. You are going to create a list of identities.
2. Rings of Culture and Tree of Life Project: Students will analyze Sharroky Hollie’s Rings of Culture to identify their own identities, specifically: age, orientation, nationality, socioeconomic, religious, gender, and ethnicity. Students will create a Tree of Life (project) that analyzes the student’s family history and roots and how race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, geography, experiences, and culture have influenced their identity. Students will create a visual image to represent their history (roots), trunk (values), and branches (other cultural influences) along with a written component that analyzes the tree’s elements.

Unit 3: Systems of Power

This unit will focus on the introduction of political, social/cultural, and economic systems both historically and currently. Students will analyze issues of power and privilege. This unit will connect these systems with local history and current circumstances through collaboration with local organizations and community partners.

Some of the groups researched in this unit will include (but not be limited to): African-Americans/Blacks; Asian-Americans; Eastern/South Europeans (specifically Jewish peoples); Latin Americans; LGBTQ+; Middle Easterners (specifically people from Islamic regions); Native Americans/First Nations; Pacific Islanders.

Essential Questions

1. What is the dominant culture?
2. What is privilege?
3. What is intersectionality?

Sample Assignments

1. Notice Who Has the Power(Activity 2 on pg 65 in *This book is Anti-Racist*)
Grab your ethnic studies notebook and begin an observation around your school and community. To understand how systems of power are upheld, write down and respond to the following questions:

- Who is the head of your school?
- Who is the president or prime minister of your country?
- Who are the authors you're reading in school? By choice?
- Who are the celebrities you see (in magazines and in the newspapers)? What is the race of each of these folk?
- Do these people fit neatly into the imaginary box? Do they reflect the dominant culture? If they do not, do they uphold ideas that fit into that box?
(Jewell p. 43)

2. How Did We Get Here Project: Students will work in groups to research a specific ethnic group to learn how the history of the U.S.A. and Sonoma County has impacted that group politically, economically, socially, and emotionally. Groups will work with local organizations to create a PSA or other informational campaign to educate the local community about that group's historical experiences and current circumstances. Some of the organizations that will collaborate with students include groups that represent (but are not limited to): African-Americans/Blacks; Asian-Americans; Eastern/South Europeans (specifically Jewish peoples); Latin Americans; LGBTQ+; Middle Easterners/West Asians; Native Americans/First Nations; Pacific Islanders.

Unit 4: Point of View

Students will explore the meaning of the words prejudice and microaggression, and will examine the difference between internalized and personal racism. Students will analyze and evaluate how these concepts inform how others see and treat them vs how they see and treat others. Students will also explore their history, the history they carry with them, and how that also informs their world view and ideals of diversity. Students will explore "diversity" and the advantages and struggles diversity brings various peoples considering the geographical, economic, and political context.

Students will discuss the push and pull factors for the seven core groups and evaluate various interactions as a result of reasons to leave one place and choose to live in another. Through various readings and discussions, students should explore their own value of diversity to better understand how diversity impacts their own identity and worldview.

Essential Questions

1. To what extent do internal and external social, political, and interpersonal factors shape our resistance and identity?

2. How does prejudice play a role in perceptions of people seen as racially “different?”
3. What are the similarities and differences between prejudice and discrimination?
4. How can you identify some possibilities that lead to a reduction of prejudice between groups?
5. How do potential employers respond to ethnic-sounding names?

Sample Assignments

1. Grab your journal and write about your history. What is your history? Where are you from? What stories of your life have shaped you into who you are at this moment? What is the history of your family or culture? What are the stories you are always told? What are the stories you don't know enough about and would like to know more about (p. 60, Jewell and Durand)

2. Diversity Presentation and Community Interview

Throughout the unit, students will research the diversity in their community and spend time identifying people who are different from them and their families. Working with local organizations, students will connect with a member/members from these groups. Through interviews and other mediums, students will research information based on these resources and then share their findings to the class in a detailed essay (or other medium) and poster board with visual and anecdotal data, emphasizing what they learned about people different from them as well as interviewees.

Unit 5: Disrupt, Transform, Change, and Take Action

In this unit, students will observe how communities and individuals have moved from being subjects of history to agents of change. Students will learn about examples of how communities have resisted oppression through acts of self- and collective empowerment through mural-making, school-reform, activism around social services, and movements that improve their community. Students will address an issue in their community to research and propose a solution.

Essential Questions

1. How do I/we stand up and speak out?
2. What happens if I/we don't say anything?
3. How can I/we disrupt racism and change the “normal?”
4. In what ways does popular culture continue to be used as a tool of resistance and promote people's empowerment against oppression?

Key Terms: hegemony, counter-hegemony, power, resistance, consciousness, popular culture, intersectionality, oppression, structural controls, colonization, decolonization, liberation, dialogue, humanization, dehumanization

Sample Assignments

1. Students will compare and contrast at least 2 forms of media to examine ways that the production of popular culture affirms or resists oppression. Students will then create an original interdisciplinary project that uses at least 2 forms of media to present themes related to resistance, strengthening a sense of community, and reaffirming their identity.
2. What actions are you comfortable with? Create a list of injustices and actions to counter them that you are willing to do/participate in.
3. Community Action Project: Students will find an example in their community of a social issue that was transformed by collective organizing. In the process, they will identify a community organization that has been responsible for transformation and change around this specific social problem. They will summarize the issue, identify the community impacted by this issue, determine the key players in the issue's resolution, and show how a community came together to enact transformation, change, and understanding. This project will constitute the final assignment of the unit, and students will be responsible for a presentation to the class. Suggestions include community activism around city planning, space, policing, environmental justice, and official histories of our cities, county, state, and country.

Unit 6: Social Justice in Action: Working in Solidarity Against Racism

Students will explore the privilege that they may have and how to use it, identify inequities in their own lives, and identify ways in which they may be perpetuating or challenging them. Students will explore what it means to be an “ally,” with an emphasis on the term ally being viewed as a verb and not a noun. Students will define how they build relationships, how to love themselves, how they grow and explore their freedom.

Essential Questions

1. How do you spend your privilege?
2. What does *allyship* and *holding the door open* mean?
3. How do you build relationships?
4. How do we learn to listen to others?
5. How has your understanding of Ethnic Studies, race, political movements, and systems of power changed throughout this class?
6. What can we do in our individual lives to make sure others are treated with respect and dignity, and not based on stereotypes and prejudice?
7. What can we do as a class or as a school to make sure our community is welcoming of people from different backgrounds – different races, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, gender, and sexual orientations?
8. And what about as a city, state, nation, or world? What can we do to make a difference in promoting equality and understanding across divides and in the face of intolerance?

Sample Assignments

1. Go back to the imaginary box in your notebook. Draw a box inside of it and write down the identities you hold that are part of the dominant culture. On the outside of the box, write down your identities that are marginalized. Those identities of yours that are inside the box are where you should hold power. This is the privilege you can spend. Use the agency that comes with those identities to work in solidarity with folks who exist outside the box. Those identities of yours that are outside the box are where you are marginalized. This is where you have been systematically oppressed. While you do not hold privilege and power here, you do have the experience and knowledge. Sharing this if you are able to, can be powerful in building solidarity with folks that do have agency in their identities. (Jewell pg 124)

2. Ask yourself a few questions... Who will you listen to? What is it that you will listen to? When will you listen and when will you interrupt? How will you listen so that you are really and truly hearing what is being said? (jewel pg 131)

3. For this assignment you will write a personal essay describing how your understanding of race and identity has evolved over the duration of this course. The primary intent of the assignment is REFLECTION - that is, for you to look back over the work you've done in class, and in doing so, document YOUR OWN THINKING.

Using a connect/extend/challenge/reflect framework, you will produce an essay of at least five and no more than seven paragraphs in which you:

- Write an introduction, explaining your prior understanding of race and identity, and describing how at least one idea from class materials (readings, videos, activities, discussions, notes, etc.) CONNECTs to something you already knew.
- Include TWO body paragraphs, each detailing one new idea from class materials (readings, videos, activities, discussions, notes, etc.) that EXTENDED your understanding, and describing what it was about that idea that shifted your thinking.
- Provide another body paragraph describing something that is confusing/puzzling/challenging about a concept covered, and explaining what it is about it that remains a CHALLENGE for you.

Write a conclusion that REFLECTS back on your new understanding of race and identity by describing what it all means for you, personally.

Literature: Excerpt(s) from Prophetic Fire (Cornel West); *The Hate You Give* - Thomas; [As country listens to Florida teens, Black Lives Matter youths feel ignored](#); [How the Dreamers Learned to Play Politics](#); [The Youth Group That Launched a Movement at Standing Rock](#); [NYTimes lesson plan on youth-led movements](#); “The Courage of Colin Kaepernick” (Michael Eric Dyson); other related current event articles

Film: *Selma* - Ava DuVernay

Film: *Ferguson: A Report from Occupied America* (Director, Orlando De Guzman)

2016)

Film: Viva La Causa:

<https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/exploring-the-film-a-lesson-from-viva-la-causa>

Websites: [PBS timeline of youth-led movements](#); [Larry Itliong and the Filipino farmworkers](#)

Budget- budget figures must be included even if they are an estimate.

Projected Costs	Start-up	Ongoing
Personnel (Not to include classroom instructor unless a new section is needed)	0-\$20,000 per site (dependent on section allocation and/or whether personnel is needed.)	Yes
Instructional Material Supplies per student (textbooks, software, etc.)	\$10,000 one-time start up	Replace texts as needed
Services (training, equipment maintenance, contracts, etc.)	\$30,000	Yes, as needed for training teachers
Capital Outlay (remodeling, technology, etc.)		
Total Projected Costs	\$40,000, plus section allocation	

Instructional Materials- must include an estimate for new materials even if none have been selected. Place in the chart above.

Type	Publisher	Title	ISBN	Author	Copyright	# Have/Need
Book						
Book						

Funding Source(s) for Costs and Instructional Materials

Grants (indicate specific grant and grant timeline)	
Categorical Funds (include related programs)	

Career Technical Education (must be for an approved CTE course)	
Department Funds	
Other (be specific)	

District Principal Review and Approvals:

Principals' Signatures	Site	Approved / Not Approved
Valerie Jordan	Ridgway HS	Approved
Kimberly Clissold	Santa Rosa High	Approved
Adam Paulson	Montgomery High	Approved
Aida Diaz	Santa Rosa Middle	Approved
Ed Navarro	Rincon Valley MS	Approved
Laura Hendrickson	Comstock MS	Approved
Katie Barr	Maria Carrillo HS	Approved
Stacy Desideri	Piner HS	Approved
Vicki Zands	LCMS	Approved
Mitch Tucker	HSMS	Approved

District Department Chair Review and Approvals:

Department Chair Signatures	Site	Approved / Not Approved
Rainbow Ashton / Electives Chair	LCMS	Approved
Kathryn Howell	LCMS	Approved
Greg Karussos	HSMS	Approved
Ricky Alcala	EAHS	Approved
Simone Harris	MHS	Approved
Sarah Walls	PHS	Approved
James Hart	MCHS	Approved
Nzinga Woods	SRHS	Approved

