



BENICIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT - COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE INFORMATION

SCHOOL SITE	Benicia High School
SUBJECT AREA	g - Elective
COURSE TITLE	Ethnic Studies
TRANSCRIPT ABBREVIATION	
COURSE CODE	
LENGTH OF COURSE	1 semester
UC HONORS DESIGNATION?	No
PREREQUISITES	None
CO-REQUISITES	None
INTEGRATED COURSE WITH CTE?	No
GRADE LEVEL(S)	11th and 12th
BUSD GRADUATION REQUIREMENT?	No - elective credit for Class of 2026-2028 Yes - graduation requirement for Class of 2029 and beyond

DATE OF BUSD BOARD APPROVAL	January 16, 2025
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

COURSE OVERVIEW	This Ethnic Studies course is designed to develop an understanding of how race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture have shaped and continue to shape individuals and society in the United States. This course will provide students with the knowledge to achieve an understanding of and an appreciation for the various cultures in their community, with a focus on the experiences of African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanas/os and Latinas/os, American Indian and Indigenous Peoples, and other racialized peoples in the United States. The major purpose of this course is to educate students to be politically, socially, and economically conscious about their personal connections to history. Ethnic Studies focuses on themes of social justice, social responsibility, and social change. The course spans from past to present, including politics and social reform, allowing students to identify social patterns and universal qualities present in all ethnic/cultural aspects of society, including their own. This one-semester course will focus on experiences of African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicana/o and Latina/o/x, and American Indian and Indigenous Peoples through a thematic approach that focuses on four primary themes: • Identity • History and Movement • Systems of Power • Social Movements and Equity 8 Guiding Outcomes for this course: 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 8. Developing Interpersonal Communication
STANDARDS	CA History-Social Science Content Standards Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies within CA Common Core English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

COURSE CONTENT

UNIT:	DESCRIPTION	GUIDING LESSONS & KEY ASSESSMENTS:
UNIT 1	Identity: 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. Some examples of topics that could be used to explore questions of identity are the model minority myth and its historic and contemporary implications. This unit will focus on five essential questions: 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? Learning Objectives: • Learn the theoretical foundations and lens of Ethnic Studies • Understand and apply ethnography research and methods • Research the student's family history and roots • Understand the dynamics of how race, ethnicity, and gender play a role in the construction of one's identity	Guiding Lessons (from Model Curriculum/Lessons): • Sample Lesson #6 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #8 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #10 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #20 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #30 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #32 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #26 Native American Studies • Sample Lesson #28 Native American Studies • Sample Lesson #31 General Ethnic Studies • Sample Lesson #32 AAPI Studies Assessment: Students will create projects that illustrate the intersectionality of how race/ethnicity, gender, nationality, and culture structure the student's identity topics: • Geography/environment and how it influences identity • Race/ethnicity/culture and how it influences identity • Socioeconomic status and how it influences identity • Self-perception and how one is perceived
UNIT 2	History and Movement:	Guiding Lessons (from Model Curriculum/Lessons):

	This unit is a study of the migration of various people of color to California. Within this theme of history and movement, students will explore intense migration periods. This unit will focus on five essential questions: 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? Learning Objectives: • Students will identify push and pull factors of migration, including the role war, natural resources, and ideology play in movement • Students will be able to compare and contrast factors surrounding immigration and emigration • Students will compare, contrast, and analyze various immigrant experiences and synthesize how they contribute to ethnic identity • Students will examine and critique the processes of acculturation and assimilation, weighting their potential positive and negative effects	• Sample Lesson #1 General Ethnic Studies • Sample Lesson #11 Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies • Sample Lesson #14 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #15 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #18 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #19 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #21 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #22 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #23 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #24 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #25 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #29 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #33 General Ethnic Studies Assessment Options: Interview an Immigrant Project - The interview will address an issue specific to the ethnicity of the person being interviewed, for example, immigration experience or experiences as a member of their ethnicity in school. The interview should be recorded and transcribed. Students must get a signed consent form to conduct the interview. They will have the choice to create a slide presentation, short film, or visual presentation, design an illustrated comic book, or write an essay as a final product. The final product can then be presented to the class and/or shared with the school. Research Project - Students will research information from primary and secondary sources about a specific marginalized group covered in this unit and prepare a project to present, incorporating examples of how the group was marginalized in the United States. Each presentation must include historical information from outside sources as well as visuals (maps, pictures, graphs, etc.). Students will be assessed on their use of primary and secondary sources, the strength of their evidence of marginalization, and their presentation skills. Through this assignment, and ultimately the students' presentations, students will learn how major ethnic groups within the United States have been historically discriminated
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		against. Debate - Essential Question: Should the U.S. reduce the number of people that are allowed to enter the country and work toward citizenship? Students will form debate teams to argue a position on the question. They must present researched evidence and logical reasoning and will be assessed on the strength of evidence provided and speaking and listening skills.
UNIT 3	Systems of Power: In this unit, teachers will 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 social–cultural contexts. These systems are often controlled by those in power and go on to determine how society is organized and functions. This unit will also include discussion on how women of color resisted and elevated women’s rights issues via social movements, the creation of their own organizations, writings, and other mediums. This unit will focus on five essential questions: 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? Learning Objectives: • Analyze institutional, interpersonal, and internalized oppression • Analyze media stereotypes • Analyze rights of governed and oppressed	Guiding Lessons (from Model Curriculum/Lessons): • Sample Lesson #4 General Ethnic Studies • Sample Lesson #5 General Ethnic Studies • Sample Lesson #7 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #10 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #12 Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies • Sample Lesson #16 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #20 AAPI Studies Assessment Options: Resisting Controlling Images Project - In collaborative teams, students will create a video project or slideshow presentation that demonstrates how communities are resisting controlling images using contemporary stereotyping in popular culture (advertisements, television programs, films) to understand how stereotypes are reproduced and perpetuated. Each team should give a specific example of how controlling images are being resisted in school or local society. In this assignment, students will build on the knowledge and concepts in the unit to apply them to an issue/topic they see in society. In the presentation, they will explore the key issue(s) and how communities are seeking to address the problem(s).
UNIT 4	Social Movements and Equity: This unit will explore several examples of the multitude of effective	Guiding Lessons (from Model Curriculum/Lessons): • Sample Lesson #2 General Ethnic Studies

	social movements communities have initiated and sustained in response to oppression and systems of power. In addition to learning more about the history of social movements and the gains achieved through solidarity, activism, civil disobedience, and participation in the democratic process, the class will engage in discussions on resistance to oppression, the broad support these movements mobilized, and their lasting impacts of the change. The class will also explore 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. This unit will focus on five essential questions: 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? This unit will explore one or more of the many effective social movements that communities have initiated and sustained in response to oppression and systems of power, such as: • The Civil Rights Movement • The Farm Workers Movement • Japanese American Redress and Reparations • Black Lives Matter • Mni Wiconi Water is Life: No Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock • Local Indigenous social movements such as language revitalization, cultural renewal, dam removal, and environmental advocacy; current Land Back movements	• Sample Lesson #3 All disciplinary areas • Sample Lesson #9 African American Studies • Sample Lesson #13 Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies • Sample Lesson #17 AAPI Studies • Sample Lesson #27 Native American Studies Assessment Options: In collaborative teams, students will develop a grassroots campaign that addresses a specific issue that affects society today (e.g., housing justice, racial inequality, climate justice). Students will define the main goals of your campaign, examine what has worked effectively in previous movements and adopt one or more of their strategies, and create a poster or graphic to bring awareness to their cause.
UNIT 5	Looking Forward - Celebrations & Call to Action: Closing unit focused on a high-engagement reflection for a more	Guiding Lessons (from Model Curriculum/Lessons): • Sample Lesson #8 African American Studies

	sophisticated understanding of agency, belonging, and community. Students will engage in a culminating experience as they take their place as responsible and participating members of their communities and develop a call to action based on their learning over the semester. Learning Objectives: Students acquire tools to become positive actors in their communities to address a contemporary issue and present findings in a public forum.	- Sample Lesson #10 African American Studies - Sample Lesson #20 AAPI Studies - Sample Lesson #4 General Ethnic Studies - Sample Lesson #5 General Ethnic Studies Final Project: Identify how race and ethnicity continue to shape the United States and contemporary issues, with a personal lens on a particular issue and a call to action. Students will create an action research project in which they identify a problem/issue/conflict either locally or globally and craft a project that addresses the problem, in relation to a unit of the course. The project should analyze the main issues of the problem, highlight what, if anything, is currently being done to stop it, and propose their solutions. This can be in the form of a written essay, speech, presentation, video, or other format agreed upon by the teacher and student. Final Project: Creating a Children's Book Students will create a 10-page children's book celebrating an ethnic group of their choice. Students will research and creatively present the culture, traditions, and values of their chosen ethnic group, fostering understanding and appreciation for diversity among younger audiences. This assignment encourages students to engage with ethnic studies creatively and meaningfully, allowing them to contribute to cultural understanding among younger audiences. By creating a children's book, students can bridge gaps between cultures and foster empathy and appreciation for diversity.
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COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook/E-book:				
Title	Author	Publisher	Edition	Website

Other Materials:				
CDE Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum	State Board of Education	2021	https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp	
High School Ethnic Studies Initiative Library Guide	UC Berkeley Library	2024	https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/hsesi/books	
Open Educational Resources Initiative	Academic Senate for California Community Colleges	2024	https://asccc-oeri.org/open-educational-resources-and-ethnic-studies/	