



Ethnic Studies Now Coalition
Committee on Curricular Integrity

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**Subject: The CA History-
Social Science Framework,
Ethnic Studies,
Open Review & Comment Period**

**Executive Summary of the Report to the
California Department of Education
Instructional Quality Commission**

February 29, 2016

Regions Throughout California and Beyond

Dear California Department of Education Instructional Quality Commission, and
California State Board of Education,

The Ethnic Studies Now Coalition is the grassroots organization and network of ethnic studies researchers and scholars, K-16 practitioners, students, and community members, that has initiated and organized campaigns to make ethnic studies a graduation requirement in public school districts across California. Ethnic Studies Now as a collective movement has helped to expand ethnic studies offerings and initiate graduation requirements in many public school districts across the state, and is also invested in the curricular integrity of ethnic studies programs, courses, and policy.

The following executive summary of the report outlines 4 Core Concepts that are critical to the incorporation of ethnic studies curricula and are seen as fundamental to paying down the historical educational debt (Ladson-Billings), commonly referred to as the "achievement gap", pervasive in the schooling experiences of underserved communities.

These Core Concepts may be considered the Four Ethnic Studies Geo-Historical Macroscales (in press, Praeger), and they are in reference to *Field Draft 2 of the CA History-Social Science Framework, Chapter 14, Ethnic Studies description, pages 412-417*. Ethnic Studies Now's



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Committee on Curricular Integrity has prepared a primer on key academic language and concepts in ethnic studies to submit to the Instructional Quality Commission. Of the larger report we have selected these four interwoven core concepts to focus on in order to help teachers and students experience the transformational effects ethnic studies has demonstrated it is capable of achieving (higher attendance rates, higher standardized test scores, higher graduation and college going rates). These four core concepts nest other critical concepts within them, and we have selected these four together as the most imperative big picture additions to the CA HSS Framework's section on ethnic studies. An introduction to the four interweaving concepts are presented below, followed by signatories who are scholars and researchers, K-16 practitioners, students, and community members, who together, all support the curricular inclusion of:

The four scales: 1) Indigeneity/Roots, 2) Colonization/Dehumanization, 3) Hegemony, and 4) Regeneration/Transformation/Social Justice

With respect and gratitude to the Indigenous people of the land where any course is taking place, the basic premise of the four Core Concepts are that a) all human beings have holistic, multidimensional, and intersectional (pre-colonial) ancestral indigenous roots upon our planet, b) for the ancestral legacies of many students of color, colonization and forced diaspora attempted to eliminate and replace these roots with a Eurocentric colonial model of themselves, c) hegemony normalized this process and historical amnesia, translating to a superficial historical literacy and decontextualized relationship to history today, negatively impacting academic identity, d) honest acknowledgement and study of this historical process is necessary, as a cause of empowerment, social justice, regeneration, revitalization, restoration, and rigorous college going expectations.

❖ **As a holistic, multidimensional, intersectional, and intergenerational human being:**

How do the four scales relate to each other, and to history, geography, society, culture, your ancestors, you, and your present and future community/communities?

1. *Indigeneity/Roots.*

- **Which groups of people are Indigenous to the land where this class is taking place, and to each continent of our planet?**
- **How does the social construction of race relate to Indigenous geographic ancestry?**
- **Where are your 1491 CE ancestors Indigenous to; where are your roots located?**
- **How do Indigeneity and Indigenous roots relate to history, geography, society, culture, your ancestors, you, and your community/communities? Past, present, and for future generations?**

2. *Colonization/Dehumanization*



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- Where has Eurocentric colonization taken place locally and globally?
 - How do colonization, dehumanization, and diaspora relate to the social construction of race and Indigenous roots?
 - Where are your 1491 CE ancestors Indigenous to; what is the relationship of your ancestral legacy to colonization and diaspora?
 - How does colonization, dehumanization, and diaspora, relate to history, geography, society, culture, your ancestors, you, and your community/communities? Past, present, and for future generations?
3. *Hegemony*
- What is the relationship of hegemony to historical amnesia, how is it normalized, and how has this taken place locally and globally, historically and today?
 - Where are your 1491 CE ancestors Indigenous to; what language(s) did they speak, what worldviews and cultures did they live, and what is the relationship of your ancestral memory to hegemony?
 - How does hegemony relate to the social construction of race, ancestral memory, the media and stereotypes, oppression (institutional, interpersonal, internal, ideological), and to widespread geo-historical illiteracy today?
 - How do indigeneity, colonization, dehumanization, and hegemony, relate to history, geography, society, your ancestors, you, and your present and future community/communities? Past, present, and for future generations?
4. *Regeneration/Transformation/Social Justice*
- What is the relationship of remembrance, restoration, revitalization, and regeneration to social justice?
 - How does being transformational relate to indigeneity, colonization, and hegemony? How does being transformational relate to your educational identity, self-determination, graduating high school, and going on to college?
 - Where are your 1491 CE ancestors Indigenous to; what language(s) did they speak, what worldviews and cultures did they live and what can we learn from them, how might it be possible to regenerate your ancestral memory in this course?
 - How do regeneration, transformation, and social justice relate to history, geography, society, ecology, you, and your community/communities? Past, present, and for future generations?

Ethnic Studies' purpose is to serve as a bridge from formal education spaces to community involvement, advocacy, organizing, service learning and activism. Ultimately, students in Ethnic



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Studies leverage their education towards the betterment of their communities, a critical hope that shapes their engagement with their own education. This allows students to become freedom dreamers and to take their new knowledge back to their own communities as a redemptive project. This is re-humanization, regeneration of geohistorical and ancestral consciousness, both critical of oppression, and motivated by social, ecological, and educational justice; it is transformative for students and the world (Solorzano & Bernal).

We have also attached a longer in depth, living report for your consideration in this and future development of Ethnic Studies Courses and curriculum. Today, as our imperative ask of curricular integrity, we believe that these four Core Concepts are essential to any course in Ethnic Studies and must be explicitly interwoven in.

The following signatories include leading ethnic studies researchers and scholars, K-16 practitioners, and community supporters who are in support of including these four core concepts in the CA History-Social Studies Framework's description of Ethnic Studies.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

José Lara
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