

LOS ALAMITOS HIGH SCHOOL
Office of the Assistant Principal – Academics

TO: Ondrea Reed, Assistant Superintendent
FROM: Jason Farvour, Assistant Principal
SUBJECT: Request for New Course Approval – Ethnic Studies
DATE: February 2, 2021

The introduction of the Ethnic Studies course to Los Alamitos High School aims to. The course will apply for CSU / UC, A-G designation as a Category G elective, and will be a 10-credit yearlong course. UC/CSU-approved courses in Ethnic Studies exist at many other area high schools, including: University High School (Irvine), Pacifica High School (Garden Grove), and Laguna Beach High School (Laguna Beach). The course can be found as a course in English to provide credit in either grade 11 or 12, a history-social science themed course (i.e. World History & Ethnic Studies), as well as an elective course that is interdisciplinary in nature. Los Alamitos High School is proposing an elective course that will be interdisciplinary in nature. The Los Alamitos High School staff was invited to two meetings to discuss the proposal of a course in ethnic studies on both November 20, and December 4, 2020. Those who attended shared that they were interested in students having the opportunity to learn about the field of ethnic studies, as well as the history and literature of different cultural experiences within the United States across different time periods. The course as proposed will employ a service learning project for its final unit of study. The project will help connect students to “a community organization in [or near] their neighborhood” and “following a model of investigation and collaboration,” students will conduct research on a neighborhood to better understand the background of the needs of the residents and how the organization with which they have partnered is helping to support the neighborhood.

The process for this course approval has been:

- Cynthia Aviña, LAHS Spanish teacher, researched the course through her coursework during her MA at CSULB.
- The Ethnic Studies course was presented to the Leadership Council for debate and impact on current Category G elective offerings across campus. The Council recommended that the course move forward for site vote within the curriculum sub-committee.
- The Faculty Forum curriculum sub-committee met on December 9, 2020 to discuss this proposal. The subcommittee recommended the Ethnic Studies course as proposed.
- The Faculty Forum utilized a video presentation and Google Form survey to collect its recommendations. Of those that participated in the survey, 44 teachers recommended the course, and one did not. The survey closed on January 29, 2021.
- School Site Council was informed of the process for course creation and that the site is moving forward with its recommendation of Ethnic Studies.

The course targets Grade 11 and 12 students due to the independent nature of the fieldwork component as well as the research-focused coursework.

Below, please find a brief course description of Ethnic Studies:

ETHNIC STUDIES

10 credits / Grades 9-12, likely 11-12

Prerequisite: None

HS (h); CSU / UC (g)

This Ethnic Studies course aims to educate students on the ways in which race, ethnicity, and culture have shaped and continue to shape individuals and society in the United States. This course provides an in-depth study of the contributions of American ethnic groups in the United States, and is intended for students of all backgrounds and cultures. Through an interdisciplinary and humanities approach, students make connections between historical, contemporary, and personal events.

The intent of this course is to expand students' awareness of the role of ethnic groups in a diverse American society.

The primary text(s) proposed for use in the course are:

Stoskopf, Alan. *Race and Membership in American History*. Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, 2002.

Selections and excerpts from primary sources:

Boudinot, Elias. *Letter to John Ross*. 1816.

de las Casa, Bartolome. *On the Destruction of the Indies*. 1547.

FightBack! News. *The Brown Berets: Young Chicano Revolutionaries*. FighBack! News, <http://www.fightbacknews.org>

Gines de Sepulveda, Juan. *Spanish Journal on the Indians*. 1547.

Heizer, Robert F. *The Destruction of California Indians*. University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

O'Sullivan John. *The Great Nation of Futurity*. 1839.

Seale, Bobby and Huey P. Newton. *The Black Panther Party Platform 1966*. The Sixties Project, 1966.

Cc: Gregg Stone