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University of California, Irvine

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Jomar Lopes, Olivia Woolsey*, Courtney Quach, D. Adams, D. Henderson, Isabel Kim, M.

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University of California, Irvine

*Corresponding author: owoolsey@uci.edu

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Abstract

Ethnic Studies courses, which center the counternarratives of racialized communities, are rapidly expanding across California in advance of a high school graduation requirement for the class of 2029-30. However, content and pedagogical guidance for practitioners remains limited. To learn how teachers throughout the state have aligned Ethnic Studies courses with existing principles defined by scholars, we conducted a mixed-method content analysis of 298 course syllabi submitted to the University of California, Office of the President between 2019-2022. Course syllabi exhibit the strongest alignment with hallmarks demonstrating student agency, drawing on student experiential knowledge, and promoting structural analysis. Syllabi show weaker alignment with hallmarks that expand beyond the oppressed view of marginalized communities and those that emphasize community engagement. We find statistically significant variation in alignment patterns across course classification and public versus private schools. These findings highlight the need for additional localized support to ensure high-quality Ethnic Studies development and implementation across the state.

Keywords: Ethnic Studies, Course Syllabi, Disciplinary Conceptualizations

Introduction

Ethnic Studies courses – courses that prioritize the “first person [counter]narratives of communities of color within critical discussions of power” (Tintiangco-Cubales & Duncan-Andrade, 2021) – are rapidly expanding across California high schools. Though historically driven by student demands for access to relevant, community-centered learning experiences (Hu-DeHart, 1993), Ethnic Studies recently gained considerable institutional support. In 2021, citing Ethnic Studies’ potentially transformative effects on students’ social and academic outcomes, California Governor Gavin Newsom formally authorized AB 101, mandating Ethnic Studies as a state-wide, high school graduation requirement for the class of 2029-30 (Office of the Governor, 2021). The adoption of the graduation mandate contributed to the proliferation of Ethnic Studies courses in California K-12 schools (Tintiangco-Cubales & Duncan-Andrade, 2021; Penner & Ma, 2023).

Despite this groundswell of support, the graduation requirement has since been called into question due to the lack of additional state funding to support course development and teachers as many offer the course for the first time (Rosales & Thornton, 2025). Moreover, an abundance of research suggests “scaling,” or expanding curriculum access across contexts is wrought with difficulties (Coburn, 2003; Cohen & Ball, 2007; Firestone, 2015; Fullan, 2000; Smith & O’Day, 1991). Between variation in teachers’ sense making of reform (c.f., Coburn, 2001, 2003), fragmented instructional guidance (i.e., varied disciplinary frameworks, scarce textbook availability; c.f., Young and Kolluri, 2025), and unequal district-level support (c.f., Ball et al., 2011; Spillane et al., 2002), it remains unclear how Ethnic Studies has thus far been implemented and what conditions make robust implementation more likely. Without an understanding of this process, California is at risk of adopting Ethnic Studies programs that fail to replicate the social-

emotional and academic gains observed in high-quality district-level implementations (Bisht et al., 2025; Bonilla et al., 2021; Dee & Penner, 2021; Sleeter, 2011).

This study aims to address this gap in our understanding of Ethnic Studies implementation across the state by exploring the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent are Ethnic Studies courses throughout California aligned with core hallmarks of Ethnic Studies teaching and content?
- (2) How does the alignment of Ethnic Studies syllabi with disciplinary hallmarks vary within and across California regions over time?
- (3) What factors predict stronger Ethnic Studies syllabi alignment with disciplinary hallmarks?

To answer these questions, we conduct a mixed methods analysis of high school Ethnic Studies syllabi submitted by teachers to the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) between 2019-2022. Syllabi across subject areas are submitted every year to verify that they meet alignment expectations for the University of California (UC) A-G entrance requirements. The syllabi for our sample were submitted across a variety of subject areas within the A-G content areas. They were identified for our sample because they contained specific key words signaling they could potentially meet a proposed Ethnic Studies requirement (Area H) for admission into the University of California system (Lee, 2022). We evaluate these course syllabi for their alignment with Ethnic Studies' disciplinary ideals as inductively generated by Sleeter and Zavala (2020) from their review of the field. To understand key tenets of Ethnic Studies, Sleeter and Zavala's (2020) seven hallmarks articulate a set of core elements structuring effective courses.

We find that Ethnic Studies' syllabi show the strongest alignment with hallmarks that support student agency, drawing on student experiential knowledge, and promoting the

macrostructural analysis of social systems. Conversely, hallmarks emphasizing community-level problem identification and engagement towards solutions (praxis) show relatively weaker levels of alignment. Results from a series of regression models examining the factors predicting alignment with disciplinary hallmarks show that group specific Ethnic Studies courses (e.g., Asian American Studies) had lower alignment scores than general Ethnic Studies courses, and that public schools had higher alignment scores than private schools (who voluntarily adopted the course). By contrast, we found no evidence of significant differences in course alignment across county-level political characteristics, year of submission, region, or racial demographics of the school from which the syllabus was submitted. Our findings extend the growing body of Ethnic Studies implementation literature by providing novel insights into how teachers are incorporating Ethnic Studies hallmarks across the state, illuminating the need for infrastructure across California regions to strengthen course alignment with disciplinary ideals and improve student access to well-designed courses.

Background

Ethnic Studies from Higher Education to K-12

Before being implemented in schools at any level, Ethnic Studies was taught in the home by families and in marginalized communities (Ethnic Studies Collective, 2025). With similar goals of critically addressing systemic barriers and uplifting personal histories, communities shared cultural knowledge through informal Ethnic Studies. The discipline of Ethnic Studies emerged in higher education in the 1960s in response to scholar- and student-led protests demanding more equitable learning experiences for students of color (Hu-DeHart, 1993). These protests, led by the Third World Liberation front—a multi-ethnic student coalition—problematized the Euro-centric

perspectives that characterized their schooling experiences. Protestors particularly called for greater access to higher education for racially minoritized students, increased representation of racially minoritized faculty, and a curriculum that valued marginalized historical narratives and community-based pedagogies (Tintiangco-Cubales et al. 2014; Gonzales et al., 2009; Third World Liberation Strike Demands, 1969). Such efforts ultimately culminated in the first College of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University in 1969, and the gradual adoption of Ethnic Studies courses across California and U.S. universities (Daus-Magbual et al., 2023; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015; Sacramento, 2019; Cabrera and Meza, et al 2013).

Although Ethnic Studies’ formalization in higher education strengthened the discipline’s academic legitimacy, its diffusion into K-12 settings remained markedly slow and uneven, in part due to limited empirical support (see Sleeter, 2011, for a review). Early research supporting Ethnic Studies was often limited to qualitative, case-study evaluations of culturally responsive teaching practices (Belgrave et al., 2000; Lewis et al., 2006), or correlational studies, documenting positive associations between culturally relevant course materials and student engagement (Bean et al., 1999), content relatability (Brozo et al., 1996), and motivation (Rickford, 2001). Yet, without stronger empirical evidence, the development of K-12 Ethnic Studies remained primarily driven by localized community interest.

Research emerging in the 2010s began to draw stronger empirical claims around Ethnic Studies course-taking. Morel and colleagues (2019; as cited by de Los Rios et al., 2015) found that Ethnic Studies’ pedagogies improved students’ sense of identity and confidence with writing; similarly, Cabrera and colleagues (2014) found positive associations between Mexican American Studies course-taking and student academic outcomes on reading, writing, and math assessments. Dee & Penner (2017) and Bonilla, Dee, & Penner (2021) extended this evidence base by providing

causal evidence linking the encouragement to take Ethnic Studies in San Francisco Unified School District with increases in overall GPA, increased attendance rates, and graduation credits earned. Together, this emerging body of research provided provocative empirical support for what many Ethnic Studies proponents had long contended— namely, that culturally relevant learning experiences could yield valuable social and academic outcomes.

These early insights persist throughout the nascent literature. Studies examining K-12 Ethnic Studies courses demonstrate the positive effects of Ethnic Studies course-taking on measures of critical consciousness and self-reflection (Luntao et al., 2023; Pinedo et al., 2024), racial-identity development (Gillespie et al., 2024), academic engagement and attainment (Bonilla et al., 2021), and holistic student well-being (Cunanan et al., 2023; Sleeter and Zavala, 2020). In sum, the culminating body of literature underscores the promise of Ethnic Studies as both a socially conscious and academically enriching K-12 intervention, capable of providing students with culturally enriching learning experiences, and reducing deeply entrenched, opportunity gaps (Gay, 2002; De Los Rios et al., 2015; Lopez et al., 2022).

California’s Model Curriculum: Another Curriculum up for Debate

In an effort to harness these gains and broader community advocacy for Ethnic Studies courses, members of the California legislature commissioned the development of a state-wide Ethnic Studies model curriculum in 2016 (AB 2016) to be voluntarily adopted by districts. However, the state’s model curriculum was met with considerable backlash around content perceived as anti-white, critical of global events, or related to indigenous ways of knowing (Cunanan et al., 2023; Bell et al., 2022; Sacramento 2019). After multiple revisions, the state's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) was formally adopted in March of 2021, offering teachers state guidelines,

organized around the state's six core principles (i.e., the “6C’s”).¹ Shortly after, in October 2021, California Governor Newsom signed AB 101, making Ethnic Studies a state-wide high school graduation requirement for the class of 2029-30.

This legislative authorization has contributed to the proliferation of Ethnic Studies courses across the state, and has also surfaced tensions and controversies around what constitutes high-quality Ethnic Studies instruction. Indeed, Ethnic Studies scholars and practitioners have historically drawn from a wide range of epistemological traditions (Black, Asian, Latinx, Native American Studies), which differ in the extent to which they prioritize elements explicated in the ESMC such as critiques of systemic issues and community focused praxis (Reyes McGovern and Buenavista, 2016; Sleeter and Zavala, 2020; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015). Compounding this epistemological fragmentation, Ethnic Studies remains deeply contested with proponents describing the discipline as a “liberatory project,” and critics characterizing the discipline as ahistorical, racially divisive, and/or anti-American (Sleeter, 2011; Delgado, 2012; Cabrera et al, 2014).

Although these concerns surrounding Ethnic Studies are often characterized as unique, perhaps due to its explicit exploration of race and power (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020), controversies surrounding curricula and standards can be found in many disciplines. For example, during the late 20th century, “math wars” arose in response to the *Standards*, a mathematics instruction reform emphasizing mathematical reasoning, conceptual understanding and students’ mathematical self-concept over traditional mathematics’ instruction focus on procedural fluency and rote memorization (Schoenfeld, 2004). Similarly, debates around reading instruction (i.e., the reading wars and the science of reading; Castles et al., 2018; Semingson & Kerns, 2021) pit whole-

¹ The 6 C’s are detailed further in Appendix Table 1.

language or phonics-based approaches against one another, resulting in wide-spread legislation requiring phonics instruction in teacher education programs, even as many educators advocated for a balanced approach (Baumann et al., 1998). In this way, contemporary tensions between Ethnic Studies and traditional History-Social science curriculum mirror earlier debates over how more established disciplines should be taught (Banks, 2012). Nevertheless, epistemological fragmentation and ongoing disciplinary contention is likely to shape how practitioners from across varied regional and socio-political contexts understand and intend to implement the discipline at scale.

Conceptual Framework

To understand whether Ethnic Studies syllabi across the state aligned with prevailing disciplinary hallmarks, this paper brings together insights from the literature examining how policies and curricula scale and Ethnic Studies content and pedagogy. We draw on Remillard and Heck’s (2014) conceptualizations of “teacher-intended curriculum” — which position course syllabi as a lens into teachers’ interpretations of course content— and Sleeter and Zavala’s (2020) inductively generated Ethnic Studies hallmarks. By situating our analysis at the intersection of these frameworks, we provide novel insights into teachers’ breadth and depth of engagement with Ethnic Studies principles across the state and identify the considerations likely to shape future course development.

Syllabi as Evaluative Material

Following Remillard and Heck (2014), we conceptualize syllabi as the *teacher-intended curriculum*, which represent “the interpretations and decisions teachers make in order to envision and *plan* instruction.” Although syllabi do not capture teachers’ day-to-day instructional decisions,

course syllabi function as “structured documents” that can provide insight into “teacher knowledge, beliefs about, and [appropriate pedagogical] practices” (Remillard and Heck, 2014 p. 714). Scholars have thus used course syllabi to analyze portrayals of marginalized communities and their histories (Caputo-Levine & Lynn, 2022; Kinkaid and Fritzsche, 2022; Schroeder et al., 2021), identify trends in formal syllabi components (e.g., syllabi disclosure of university policies; Doolittle & Siudzinski, 2010), and most pertinent for this study, to examine teachers’ multicultural education conceptualizations (Gorski, 2009; Weiler & Brinegar, 2024). These course syllabi thus provide insight into teachers’ instructional priorities and pedagogical orientations, as reflected in how they articulate and plan their courses (for similar methods and content analyses, see Jiménez & Lerch, 2019; Porter, 2002; Polikoff et al., 2011; Cateté et al., 2018; and Stegeman et al., 2016).

Ethnic Studies Hallmarks

To date, there are various approaches to understanding the field of Ethnic Studies (Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015; Reyes McGovern and Buenavista 2016; Sleeter and Zavala, 2020). Here, we draw on Sleeter and Zavala’s (2020) Ethnic Studies hallmarks to understand syllabi alignment with core disciplinary goals. In their review of the field, Sleeter and Zavala identify seven disciplinary hallmarks that characterize effective, enacted Ethnic Studies. These include: (1) fostering *criticality*, or student capacity for examining the role of societal structures in shaping group experiences and outcomes; (2) exploring *counternarratives* or under-represented perspectives that challenge the neutrality of historical constructions; (3) employing *intersectional* analysis to examine how different aspects of identity shape group experiences and; (4) *culturally responsive teaching*, connecting course material to students’ lived experiences and cultural frames of reference. Additionally, effective Ethnic Studies courses (5) treat *students as intellectuals*,

respecting and fostering student choice, curiosity, and thinking; (6) support students in *reclaiming their cultural identities*, by fostering student knowledge of where they come from and the historical contributions of their communities and; (7) encourage students to engage in *community responsive change* efforts, by employing practices that bridge classrooms to communities and social movements.

Although scholars including Tintiangco-Cubales et al., (2015), Reyes McGovern and Buenavista (2016), and others have outlined alternative descriptions of the key dimensions of Ethnic Studies pedagogy and practice, we utilize Sleeter and Zavala’s (2020) Ethnic Studies hallmarks due to their specific focus and elaboration on content and pedagogy. Sleeter and Zavala’s hallmarks represent a comprehensive and readily available curricula frameworks for guiding teachers’ Ethnic Studies practice prior to the completion of the state's model curriculum and during our analysis period.² Importantly, there is substantial conceptual coherence between California’s Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (CAESMC) and all dimensions of Sleeter and Zavala's Ethnic Studies Hallmarks (see Appendix Table 1 for comparisons).

Existing research that examines individual district Ethnic Studies programs also points to the importance of one or more of these hallmarks or similarly identified core Ethnic Studies principles (Young & Kolluri, 2025; Acosta & Mir, 2012). For example, Nygreen et al. (2025) describe observing lessons on colonialism that engage in criticality, culturally relevant content, and community. Likewise, Kolluri and Edwards (2023) unpack the significance of counternarratives to Ethnic Studies courses as well as the tensions that arise in determining how to incorporate them into the curriculum. Each of these single-district examples provides evidence

² We opted not to use other frameworks, such as McGovern and Buenavista Ethnic Studies tenets, which were in an unpublished presentation, or California’s liberated model curriculum, which was being revised at the time of our analysis.

of how Ethnic Studies hallmarks shape curricula and students’ classroom experiences in their respective locations. However, it remains unknown whether Ethnic Studies implementations across the state also align this closely with some or all of the course hallmarks identified in the literature.

Data and Methods

To understand Ethnic Studies course syllabi alignment with prevailing hallmarks, we conduct a mixed-method content analysis of teacher-submitted course syllabi from across California between 2019-2022. These syllabi were identified by UCOP as potentially satisfying an Ethnic Studies requirement for college admissions across the University of California (UC).³ Such courses included keywords like “Race” or “Ethnic” in their course titles. Using a PDFreader, we identified 4,285 Record IDs or syllabi titles that made it past the initial UCOP criteria screening for inclusion across each year (1,279 in 2019-20; 1,344 in 2020-21; and 1,662 in 2021-22). From this sample, our research team identified “unique Ethnic Studies courses” within and across each year, excluding syllabi with duplicate titles and course overviews, as well as “blank” syllabi that were missing all key data points (course objectives, readings, assignments). This reduced our sample from 4,285 courses to 716 unique courses (220 in 2019-20, 209 in 2020-21, and 272 in 2021-22). The majority of these dropped syllabi were not blanks, but duplicates of the same content distributed by a curriculum company. One of these organizations may have multiple Ethnic Studies courses that they have sold to districts across the state to use. These schools submitted identical content to UCOP, which we then dropped all but one to identify the unique syllabi. The “blank” syllabi contained only contextual information which included the record ID, school name, district,

³ This potential requirement (Area H) was being considered, but was not adopted (Kodialam, 2024).

honors type, length of course, grade level, and course subject. We coded syllabi with as little as the course overview so that we would not drop any unique syllabi.

To prepare our dataset for mixed-methods analysis, we then stratified the syllabi by year and by region, obtaining an analytic sample of 300 unique syllabi and further ensuring at least 20% of syllabi submitted from each region across 2019-2022 were represented (Sharma, 2017).⁴ Figure 1 depicts the ten California Census regions we used to stratify our sample.

[Figure 1 here]

We subsequently excluded two course syllabi with school identifiers that revealed that they were not from California high schools, one from a K-8 school and the other from an online course housed in Nevada. Table 1 below shows the average student characteristics of our sample from each region. It includes average school size in the region, as well as racial demographics.

[Table 1 here]

Analytic Strategy

Qualitative Rubric Development and Application

To analyze syllabi alignment with core disciplinary principles, we used deductive and inductive coding techniques to develop a “general purpose [Ethnic Studies] rubric,” an analytic tool designed to capture Ethnic Studies constructs across a range of assignments (Stegeman et al., 2016). Rubric development occurred in five phases, and the final rubric that we used to code syllabi is presented in Table 2.

[Table 2 here]

⁴ The California Census divided the 58 counties in the state into 10 regions for resource distribution and organizational purposes. The 10 regions include Superior California, North Coast, San Francisco Bay Area, Northern San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, Southern San Joaquin Valley, Inland Empire, Los Angeles County, Orange County, and San Diego Imperial.

During phase 1, our initial research team of three (one undergraduate student, one graduate student, and the project PI) deductively coded a subset of course syllabi in our analytic sample (N=10) for all seven of Sleeter and Zavala's (2020) Ethnic Studies hallmarks. These constructs served as our rubric's "evaluative criteria," or deductive theoretical codes, and are represented as the columns at the top of our rubric (Stegeman et al., 2016).

Researchers independently bucket coded this subset (N=10) of syllabi at the paragraph-level (Saldaña, 2021) to capture full assignment descriptions and rationales, and to develop a preliminary understanding of how well Sleeter and Zavala's hallmarks mapped onto course syllabi content. For example, syllabi instances that discussed social identity and its interactions with social stratification (i.e., inequality) were coded as *Multiplicity and Intersectionality*, and *Criticality*. During weekly team meetings, researchers shared independently developed memos in comparative data matrices describing their rationale for bucket code applications within each syllabus. This allowed us to align our understanding of our guiding constructs, to develop general coding parameters for when to apply (or not apply) particular bucket codes and ensure that coders had the same understanding of the constructs (Andrade & Du, 2005).

During phase 2, we tested the deductive codes against an additional 35 course syllabi, continuing to write memos and fill in comparative data matrices (McCarthy et al., 2021). Here, we observed qualitative differences in how deeply syllabi occurrences engaged with each hallmark. For example, in some occurrences under *Community Engagement* students were tasked with conducting interviews with family members for the purpose of writing an essay, while others required students to interview community members with the goal of understanding and addressing local needs (e.g., organizing food banks, volunteering in community organizations). To make sense of these differences, we identified exemplar and anti-exemplar occurrences across each of our

constructs that we perceived to be most and least aligned with Sleeter and Zavala’s (2020) description of their hallmarks. These were used as conceptual anchors, aiding our research team in creating initial “levels of theoretical engagement” in our rubric (between 0-3), with 0 indicating absence, anti-exemplars being ranked as 1’s (indicating surface-level engagement), and exemplars rated as 3’s (indicating deep engagement). Course syllabi that were qualitatively distinct from “1” but failed to meet the threshold for a “3” were rated as 2 (indicating moderate engagement with disciplinary hallmarks).

To further develop and refine our rubric’s correspondence to hallmark depth, we conducted a round of second-level analysis in which we inductively sub-coded all deductively coded occurrences at the sentence-level. Inductive codes that were consistently present across all three coders, were added to their respective constructs’ quality definition as descriptors. For example, in our inductive coding of the *Criticality* code, we noticed three recurring inductive codes: 1) structural language (e.g., patriarchy, classism, systemic racism); 2) texts written from critical theoretical perspectives; and; 3) opportunities for students to reflect on and change their social worlds (praxis). Table 3 provides a coding example for *Criticality* with excerpts from a syllabus. See Appendix Tables A2 through A7 for coding examples for the additional six hallmarks.

[Table 3 here]

These inductive codes were then corroborated with Sleeter and Zavala’s hallmarks and assigned a level of engagement (0-3) based on their articulated theoretical centrality. Structural language was placed at a lower level as its presence may signal a superficial adoption of critical terminology rather than a substantive shift in pedagogical orientations; contrastingly, praxis was placed at the highest level of engagement, reflecting theoretical articulations that position reflection and action as the ultimate aim of critical Ethnic Studies courses (see Table 2 for rubric

definitions). Importantly, for a syllabus to receive a 3 in *Criticality*, all three inductive elements, structural language, critical texts, and praxis, were required to be present throughout the syllabus. This process was repeated for the remaining six hallmarks.

During phase 3, we iteratively refined vague rubric language, and “quantified” some dimensions to communicate clear expectations and reduce subjectivity amongst our raters (McCarthy et al, 2021; Tan, 2020). Terms such as “at times,” “some”, and “most” in our rubric were replaced with more precise language like “at least one instance.” Although quantified rubrics risk scoring a syllabus with multiple-surface level activities as higher than one in-depth, long-term project, our rubric aims to balance both frequency and depth of engagement with key Ethnic Studies hallmarks.

During phase 4, we recruited and trained an additional 5 undergraduate students so that our team was now composed of 6 undergraduate students, 1 graduate student, and the project PI. Every week, triads/dyads composed of at least one experienced coder from the original team independently coded syllabi. During whole group meetings, we compared trainees’ codes and final scores (i.e., alignment with each hallmark) to those of more experienced coders to improve trustworthiness; in cases where there were coding disagreements, coding justifications (direct evidence from syllabi) were compared, and syllabi were assigned a final score via consensus discussions. Where appropriate the rubric was further refined to improve clarity and ensure that coders understood the constructs before team consensus coding discussions. After the rubric was refined and finalized the research team coded our initial sample of 150 syllabi, with each syllabus scored by two coders who reached a consensus score via dialogic processes. In cases where disagreements persisted, a third coder who was a member of the core team reviewed the syllabus independently and the three coders discussed the syllabi until reaching a consensus.

During phase 5, we expanded our research team and trained an additional 6 coders, following a similar training and coding process. The expansion of our team increased the original scope of our study, from 150 to 300 course syllabi, with analysis concluding once the full corpus of data was coded and assigned a final score.

[Figure 2 here]

Quantitative Analysis

Upon completion, we merged our course syllabi data with a dataset created to understand Ethnic Studies adoption trends across California (Penner and Ma, 2023). This dataset contains a wide range of information from 2018-19, including considerations such as the regional political context, district and school urbanicity, neighborhood characteristics, proximity to nearest college (UC, CSU, CC), total student enrollment, school-type classification (private, charter, traditional public), staff and student demographics, and other relevant school-level characteristics. In cases where school-type classifications and racial demographic data were missing, we used information from the Private School Universe Survey (NCES, 2021).

We utilized Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to identify relationships between our seven hallmarks and to determine whether there were multiple constructs underlying them or a singular unifying construct. The analysis yielded one principal component with an eigenvalue greater than 1 accounting for 53% of the variance. The second principal component had an eigenvalue of 0.85 and accounted for 12% of the variance. All of the hallmarks loaded onto the first principal component at less than .5, falling between .31 and .44. This demonstrates that there is one component that accounts for the majority of the variance thus there is an underlying factor correlating the hallmarks (see Appendix Table 8 for additional details). The other components had an eigenvalue of less than 1 and are disregarded.

We report basic descriptive statistics on the degree to which courses align with each Ethnic Studies hallmark, and provide this for each region and by other key characteristics of the course. We then examine whether various features of the school context predicted high-integrity (meaning more highly aligned with the hallmarks) Ethnic Studies courses using a series of Ordinary Least Squares regression models. These models predicted overall average scores, as well as individual hallmark scores, as a function of school demographics, size, location, school type, course submission year, course length, course classification and distance to higher education using a model of the following form:

$$ES_s = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Race}_s + \beta_2 \text{Enrollment}_s + \beta_3 \text{Republican}_s + \beta_4 \text{Distance_UC}_s + \beta_5 \text{Distance_CSU}_s + \beta_6 \text{Distance_CC}_s + \beta_7 \text{Private}_s + \beta_8 \text{Charter}_s + \beta_9 \text{Other}_s + \beta_{10} \text{Course_Length}_s + \beta_{11} \text{Course_Classification}_s + \eta_s + \theta_s + \varepsilon_s$$

where ES_s is an indicator for the average or hallmark score from a specific school's (s) syllabus; Race_s is the percent of students at a school self-reporting as Black, Hispanic/Latine, Asian, Filipino, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Multiracial); Enrollment_s is school enrollment; Republican_s is percent of the county that voted for a Republican presidential candidate; Distance_UC_s , Distance_CSU_s , and Distance_CC_s are the distance in miles from the nearest University of California, California State University, and community college, respectively; Course_Length_s is an indicator for courses that were less than a full year (with full year courses serving as the reference category); $\text{Course_Classification}_s$ compares general Ethnic Studies courses (the omitted category) to Group Specific (e.g., Asian American Studies), Multi-Group Literature (e.g., Ethnic Literature), Multi-Group History (e.g., Race and Gender in U.S History), and Other (e.g., Artivism: Ethnic Studies in the Visual Creative Arts); and Private_s , Charter_s , and Other_s are a series of indicators for whether a school was a private, charter, or other non-traditional public school (e.g., continuation schools and adult education centers), with traditional public schools serving as the reference category. We also

include region (η) and year fixed effects (θ) and cluster our standard errors by school because some schools submitted multiple courses selected for our sample during this panel.

Findings

We find that the alignment of Ethnic Studies high school course syllabi with Ethnic Studies hallmarks varies widely across courses, and that there are statistically significant differences across school type and course characteristics. Below, we describe the variation we observe in syllabi alignment, provide insight into the contextual predictors of highly aligned courses, and conclude with implications for future policy, practice, and research.

Syllabi Alignment with Disciplinary Hallmarks

We begin by examining course syllabi's alignment with core Ethnic Studies hallmarks across California's ten regions in the aggregate between 2019 and 2022. As shown in Table 4, the mean alignment score averaged across all hallmarks was 1.67 (SD = 0.67). This suggests that course syllabi across California, on average, were weakly to moderately aligned with Sleeter and Zavala's (2020) disciplinary hallmarks. However, we begin to see notable variation in course alignment when examining the mean scores of *each* hallmark in the aggregate.

[Figure 3 here]

As shown in Figure 3, none of the seven hallmarks have more than 40% of syllabi that are highly aligned. However, five of the seven hallmarks (*Curriculum as Counter Narrative*, *Students as Intellectuals*, *Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy*, *Criticality*, and *Intersectionality and Multiplicity*) have more than 50% receiving scores of 2 or 3, suggesting moderate or high alignment across those hallmarks. Of these, four (*Students as Intellectuals*, *Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy*, *Criticality*, and *Intersectionality and Multiplicity*) have relatively few

zeros, indicating that relatively few syllabi failed to engage with that hallmark altogether. By contrast, 18% of syllabi have no alignment with the *Curriculum as Counter Narrative* hallmark. Although relatively few syllabi completely fail to engage with the *Reclaiming Cultural Identities* hallmark (4%), just over half (51%) of the syllabi demonstrate only weak engagement with this hallmark. Finally, we find that *Community Engagement* is the hallmark that syllabi are least likely to include: over half of the syllabi (56%) have no engagement, and only 7% exhibit high alignment.

To the extent that syllabi correspond to teacher practice, they suggest that many students are in courses that are only partially aligned with Ethnic Studies hallmarks. For example, the distribution of scores for *Student as Intellectuals* suggests that most Ethnic Studies courses provide weak-to-moderate opportunities for students to develop key academic skills (e.g., writing, comparative analysis), to reflect on experiential knowledge, and to leverage their academic agency as indicated by opportunities for student choice. Similarly, the *Criticality* and *Intersectionality* scores suggest that California Ethnic Studies and related courses often provide weak-to-moderate opportunities for students to engage with a set of structural language and theoretical lenses needed to interrogate existing social systems and to understand how said systems intersect to create unique layers of experience for marginalized groups. It is important to note that these syllabi indicate that there are relatively few courses where students move beyond identifying social problems to change their immediate social environments. That is, intersectional analysis was oftentimes “de-personalized,” with students learning about how systems shape minoritized communities with relatively few opportunities for students to reflect on how existing social structures shape their *personal* experiences or how they might respond.

This lack of opportunities for students to engage in action to change their immediate social environments was further corroborated by our analysis of the *Community Engagement* hallmark,

which highlights that few students across California were provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage with their communities. As the majority of our syllabi lack these experiences, we conclude that *Community Engagement* is absent in the majority of high school Ethnic Studies and related course classrooms.

Although rarely entirely absent, *Reclaiming Cultural Identities* is another hallmark that lacks deep engagement, as half of the syllabi that cover this hallmark do so only superficially. Courses would often explore historically oppressed and contemporary group identities, and highlight positive cultural referents, but there were relatively fewer examples of syllabi (n=54) working to develop cross-group solidarity or providing opportunities for students to learn about their hyper local contexts. This dearth of localized learning needed for a 3 in *Reclaiming Cultural Identity* is consistent with the lower mean scores seen in *Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy*, which also requires teachers to actively solicit students' hyper local experiential knowledge.

Overall, scores from these syllabi indicate that Ethnic Studies and related courses in California are somewhat aligned with disciplinary ideals, but that there is substantial room for improvement. Comparing across hallmarks, we see that California Ethnic Studies courses are more closely aligned with hallmarks emphasizing student choice and academic skill development such as critical thinking and systemic analysis. However, Ethnic Studies courses earn the most zeros in hallmarks that center community engaged pedagogies pushing students to reflect on and change their immediate social worlds. Weak alignment in such areas deviates from disciplinary ideas around critical pedagogy, in which schooling moves from an academic exercise to a vehicle for community empowerment.

Syllabi Variation by Regions, and School and Course Features

We next examine variability in hallmark alignment across regions and by school types (private, charter, traditional public, and other), course length (full year and less than a year), course disciplinary classification (comparative ethnic studies, group specific, multi-group history, multi-group literature, and other), and over time. Table 4 shows the mean alignment scores for each of the seven Ethnic Studies hallmarks across region and other predictors of interest.

[Table 4 here]

Looking first at region, we see that the North San Joaquin Valley⁵ region is the highest scoring region with an average score of 2.06, and has the highest average alignment on six of the seven hallmarks (*Reclaiming Cultural Identities* being the sole exception). Perhaps surprisingly, we find that syllabi from the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area regions were relatively low (only the North Coast had a lower average score).⁶ Both Los Angeles and the Bay Area were early adopters of Ethnic Studies and played a key role in the origins of Ethnic Studies. Community-based organizations and grassroots movements in these areas were fundamental to the implementation of Ethnic Studies in higher education and have long been proponents of their integration into K-12 schools. These results suggest that a dense ecosystem of community-based organizations does not necessarily translate into high school courses that are aligned with Ethnic

⁵ The North San Joaquin Valley region includes Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne counties

⁶ To understand a possible explanation for these unexpectedly low scores, Appendix Table 9 presents regional differences separately by school type, yielding similar findings across sectors, but with private schools consistently having lower scores than other sectors. Our San Francisco Bay Area sample included more syllabi from private schools than public schools, and Los Angeles had more syllabi from charter schools than public schools. Given the substantial differences between private and public schools (and, to a lesser extent, charter schools and public schools), one potential explanation for the relatively lower than expected regional scores might be related to the regional school composition. Appendix Table 9, however, suggests that this is not the case. It is nonetheless important in interpreting the results to note that SFUSD schools represent a small fraction of the schools from the San Francisco Bay Area region, which includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano counties. Although San Francisco Unified School District is the largest district in this region, our sample only includes 4 syllabi from the district ranging in average scores from 1.71 to 2.29.

Studies hallmarks. We see that this is the case even for hallmarks like *Community Engagement* where we might expect this ecosystem to be most salient, as syllabi from the Los Angeles region have the lowest average levels of community engagement at 0.43. Comparing across disaggregated hallmark scores by region broadly, we see some evidence of regional variability (see Table 6 below for results from a multivariate regression framework).

Table 4 also reports mean alignment by course characteristics like length of course, subject classification, and school type. We find that syllabi from private schools consistently exhibit less alignment with Ethnic Studies hallmarks than traditional public schools, with syllabi from charter schools falling somewhere in between private and traditional public schools. We also see pronounced differences by course length, with year-long courses typically exhibiting higher levels of alignment with hallmarks than partial-year courses (though as we see below in Table 6, these differences are only statistically significant in two of the seven hallmarks).

Because Ethnic Studies requirements could potentially be met through courses across many disciplines, we examine whether there are potential differences in alignment by course classification. Among our sample of 298 course syllabi, 43% of courses were General Ethnic Studies courses, while group specific literature (e.g., “Asian American Literature”) and group specific Ethnic Studies classes (e.g., “African American Studies”) represent 37% of the courses. Multi-group, comparative literature courses exhibited the highest average score, with an average score of 2, and General Ethnic Studies was the next highest, with an average score of 1.87. Group Specific courses (e.g. Asian American Studies) performed the lowest with an average of 1.45, excluding the “Other” category.

Predictors of Syllabi Alignment & Depth

We build on these bivariate analyses with multivariate regression models that examine the relationship between district and school level characteristics and course syllabi alignment scores. Table 5 predicts average alignment scores (i.e., scores averaged across all hallmarks), using a series of three models: a baseline model, a model that adds region fixed effects, and a final model that includes both region and year fixed effects.

[Table 5 here]

Table 5 presents regression results that examine the degree to which Ethnic Studies course alignment levels are predicted by the racial composition of students, school size, course length, course classification, distance to higher educational institutions, school type (e.g., private or charter school), the percentage of voters for a Republican presidential candidate in the county, region, and year. We find no relationship between average Ethnic Studies alignment scores and student racial composition, school size, the percentage of voters for a Republican candidate, year, distance from a higher education institution, or regions.⁷ We find stark differences between public and private schools, with public-school Ethnic Studies courses averaging significantly higher levels of average alignment than private schools (which were adopting the courses voluntarily). We also find that Group Specific courses (e.g., Asian American Studies) have significantly lower levels of alignment than General Ethnic Studies courses.

We build on these analyses by providing estimates predicting alignment with each hallmark separately in Table 6. We again see that private schools reflect lower alignment scores in their Ethnic Studies courses, as they scored significantly lower on three of the seven hallmarks (*Students as Intellectuals*, *Criticality*, and *Community Engagement*). These negative coefficients

⁷ In addition to testing whether specific regions vary from Los Angeles (our omitted category) in the regression model, we also conduct an F-test that confirms that the region indicators are not jointly significant ($F(9, 214) = 1.11$ Prob > F = 0.3586).

demonstrate that private school Ethnic Studies courses lack alignment with a substantial number of Ethnic Studies hallmarks. We find no significant differences in hallmark scores for charter schools as well as schools in our Other category.

[Table 6 here]

Looking at our other school-level predictors, we find that larger schools have significantly higher scores for three hallmarks: *Students as Intellectuals*, *Criticality* and *Reclaiming Cultural Identities*. As with the overall results in Table 5, however, we find that relatively few dimensions of the social and demographic context of high schools significantly predicted hallmark scores. Percentage of American Indian and Alaska Native students predicted greater alignment in three hallmarks, and lower alignment in one. Also, a greater percentage of Pacific Islander students predicted greater alignment in one hallmark. Although we find some significant coefficients when examining individual hallmarks, we do not find evidence of systematic patterns related to school racial/ethnic composition.

Turning to distance from a CSU and community college, we find that being further from a CSU predicts significantly higher scores in *Intersectionality and Multiplicity*, and being further from a community college predicts significantly higher scores in *Criticality*. However, being further from a community college did predict significantly lower alignment scores in *Intersectionality and Multiplicity*. Thus, in spite of the important role that California State Universities played in the founding of Ethnic Studies, we find little evidence that proximity to a CSU contributes to high school Ethnic Studies course alignment, but rather the opposite in one hallmark.

Although we find relatively little regional variation when we examine scores across all hallmarks, when we look at individual hallmarks, we find that four of the ten regions had at least

one instance of significant hallmark-level score variation. These results do not follow a clear pattern (e.g., we do not see statistically significant results indicating that one region is consistently higher across hallmarks) but do provide evidence of regional variation in adoption. By contrast, our results examining changes over time in both Tables 5 and 6 find no significant changes in hallmark alignment across the three years of our panel.

Given the large number of different comparisons that we are making, it is of course possible that some of the individual relationships that are significant may be spurious. As we are estimating 217 coefficients in Table 6, we might expect between 8 and 9 coefficients to be significant just by chance. However, for many predictors we find higher rates of significant coefficients than we would expect just due to chance. For student racial composition we find 5 out of 49 coefficients are significant, for school type 3 of 21 estimates are significant, for school size 3 of 7, for distance to a CSU and community college 1 of 7, and 4 of 63 coefficients for region are significant. These results suggest that although no single predictor explains the presence (or absence) of all seven hallmarks, multiple factors collectively help us understand the conditions that shape Ethnic Studies syllabi and their alignment with existing scholarship (Sleeter and Zavala, 2020). Future research aimed at developing a more nuanced conception of when and how different aspects of context shape the alignment of Ethnic Studies courses offered with specific hallmarks will be important for better understanding these processes.

Turning to course-level considerations, we find courses that are less than a full year have significantly lower alignment scores than full year courses in two hallmarks. Although we find no significant differences in overall average score, these courses score significantly lower in *Students as Intellectuals* and *Community Engagement*. For course classification, we use General Ethnic Studies courses as a reference group and see that Group Specific courses have significantly lower

alignment scores for five of the seven hallmarks (*Students as Intellectuals, Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy, Criticality, Reclaiming Cultural Identities, Community Engagement*). The Multi-Group History courses also scored significantly lower for *Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy* and *Intersectionality and Multiplicity*. These course characteristic findings demonstrate that General Ethnic Studies courses and full year courses are more aligned with the seven disciplinary hallmarks than group-specific courses or single semester courses.

The results are also informative regarding which factors are not closely related, and the patterns for which we see little evidence. For example, in the results discussed above we do not find that syllabi from schools located closer to CSU's were more closely aligned with Ethnic Studies hallmarks, or that syllabi from schools in Los Angeles or the San Francisco Bay Area were more closely aligned. We likewise find no evidence that the political context relates to hallmark scores. That is, it does not appear to be the case that counties with a higher percentage of voters for a Republican candidate differ in their schools' syllabi from those with a higher percentage of Democratic voters. Given the (mis)conceptions of Ethnic Studies as representing “woke” politics due to its critique of power and colonial relationships, one might expect the political context to shape course alignment. However, our results do not support the idea that political party preferences of the school context predict either overall average alignment or individual hallmark scores, even for hallmarks that measure critiques of current systems of power, youth participatory action research, or positive understandings of minority identities.

Discussion

Drawing on 298 syllabi from high schools across California, this study provides a snapshot of California's K-12 Ethnic Studies content coverage in Ethnic Studies and related courses. Our

findings indicate that in the aggregate these courses are somewhere between weakly (i.e., a score of one) to moderately (a score of two) aligned with Ethnic Studies disciplinary hallmarks. We find evidence of substantial variation across school types, so that the average Ethnic Studies course in traditional public schools is moderately aligned with Ethnic Studies hallmarks, while the average course in a private school is only weakly aligned. This highlights an important difference in course quality between public school settings where the graduation requirement would take effect and private school settings where the course would remain fully optional.

Within schools, we found that Comparative Literature courses and General Ethnic Studies courses were the most aligned with disciplinary hallmarks, with Ethnic Studies general courses performing the highest in *Community Engagement* and *Intersectionality*. Furthermore, we find that year-long Ethnic Studies courses outperformed half-year courses. Taken together, our findings illuminate the salience of structural analysis and community-based pedagogies found in public schools' Ethnic Studies programs, and point to the disciplinary value of yearlong Ethnic Studies courses.

While weakly-to-moderately aligned in the aggregate, the disaggregated data highlights a more nuanced understanding with both positive and negative variation by hallmarks across regions. For instance, while regions were relatively consistent in their weak-moderate alignment, North San Joaquin Valley scored higher in five of the seven disciplinary hallmarks suggesting program strengths that stakeholders can learn from. Conversely, areas that we might have expected to have syllabi that were well-aligned with disciplinary hallmarks like the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles both scored relatively low, suggesting opportunities for program growth and the potential need for program support.

Finally, we find that county-level voting trends did not predict significant differences in

Ethnic Studies syllabi alignment. This undermines evidence suggesting political contexts are negatively shaping Ethnic Studies course syllabi due to associations with Critical Race Theory (Bell, 1980, 2018). We do, however, theorize that the granularity of voting data could be obscuring syllabi alignment trends. We utilize county-level political results whereas district-level voting data could reveal “micro-political” climates, and paint a more nuanced understanding of the role of political context in shaping teachers’ course ideation.

Although this study provides the first broad overview of the alignment of high school courses with Ethnic Studies hallmarks, it is important to note its limitations. First, we evaluated course syllabi submitted to the UC Office of the President, where schools get courses approved for the UC admissions course requirements. Although our data collection process yielded a rich set of teacher-submitted syllabi from across the state, teachers were only required to submit course syllabi for approval if they wanted courses to count towards UC admissions, potentially contributing to self-selection bias (Bethlehem, 2010). Moreover, the initial pool of courses from which we drew our sample included courses that the UCOP identified as courses districts might have been able to use to meet a requirement that was being considered, but was not ultimately adopted because they covered topics like race/ethnicity or said something like Ethnic Studies in the title. Thus, although most schools want as many of their courses to count towards UC admissions requirements as possible, Ethnic Studies was not an A-G requirement for the UC, and schools may have written these syllabi to meet A-G requirements for “U.S History” or “English”, without explicitly aiming to develop an Ethnic Studies course.

Similarly, although syllabi provide valuable insights into teachers’ understanding of disciplinary ideals via planned content objectives and assignments, syllabi cannot fully capture the curriculum as enacted (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). That is, teacher-syllabi represent idealized, and

at other times politically negotiated, course overviews and progressions, and thus cannot fully capture the day-to-day activities in teachers' classrooms nor the full breadth of interactions with students. Indeed, while course syllabi could be indicative of teachers' enacted practice, syllabi also could be capturing shifts in technical syllabi language, rather than deep change in core beliefs, pedagogical strategies, and relational dynamics (Pak et al., 2020). This limits our ability to make definitive statements about enacted course quality, and our results should therefore be understood with this caveat in mind.

Finally, our rubric was designed primarily to measure Ethnic Studies syllabi alignment with hallmarks outlined by Sleeter and Zavala (2020). This means that our rubric is most sensitive to capturing qualitative distinctions in Ethnic Studies courses, which often have a unique set of institutional language, and is less sensitive to distinctions in adjacent courses (i.e., African American Literature, Asian American Art, and Race & Social Movements).

As schools intensify their efforts to develop and expand Ethnic Studies course offerings—whether or not AB 101's graduation requirement still takes effect—it is increasingly important to understand how well these courses align with Ethnic Studies courses, and to provide a guiding framework for Ethnic Studies educators. Given the various definitions of Ethnic Studies, curriculum development is a challenge for Ethnic Studies teachers. As a field that faces a contentious sociopolitical climate and minimal state guidance, Ethnic Studies educators can draw upon the approach used here as a resource tool to guide their classroom instruction. Our study reveals that the alignment of course syllabi varies substantially, with many courses only weakly aligned with Ethnic Studies hallmarks. Further research could expand on this work and explore whether this trend remains consistent years after AB 101 was formally adopted.

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Figures

Figure 1. California Census Regions

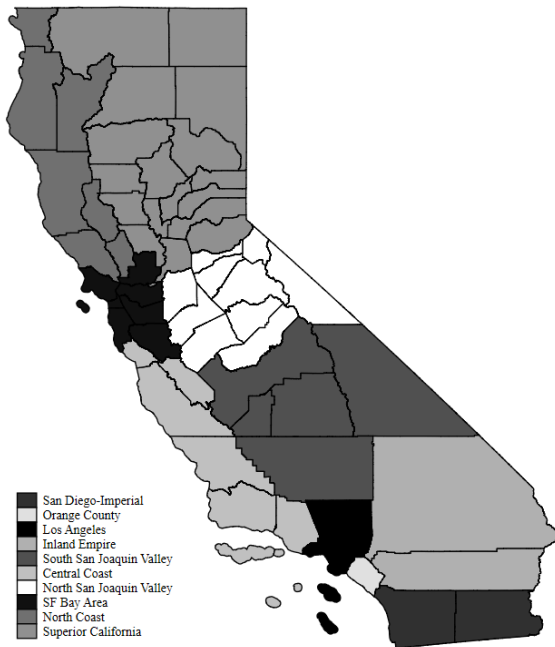
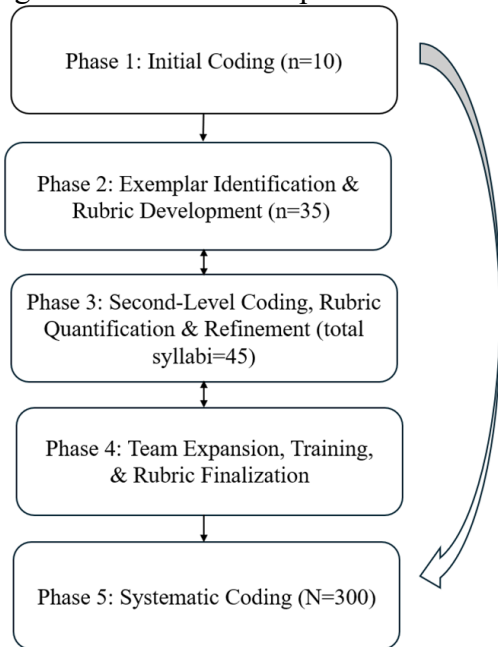
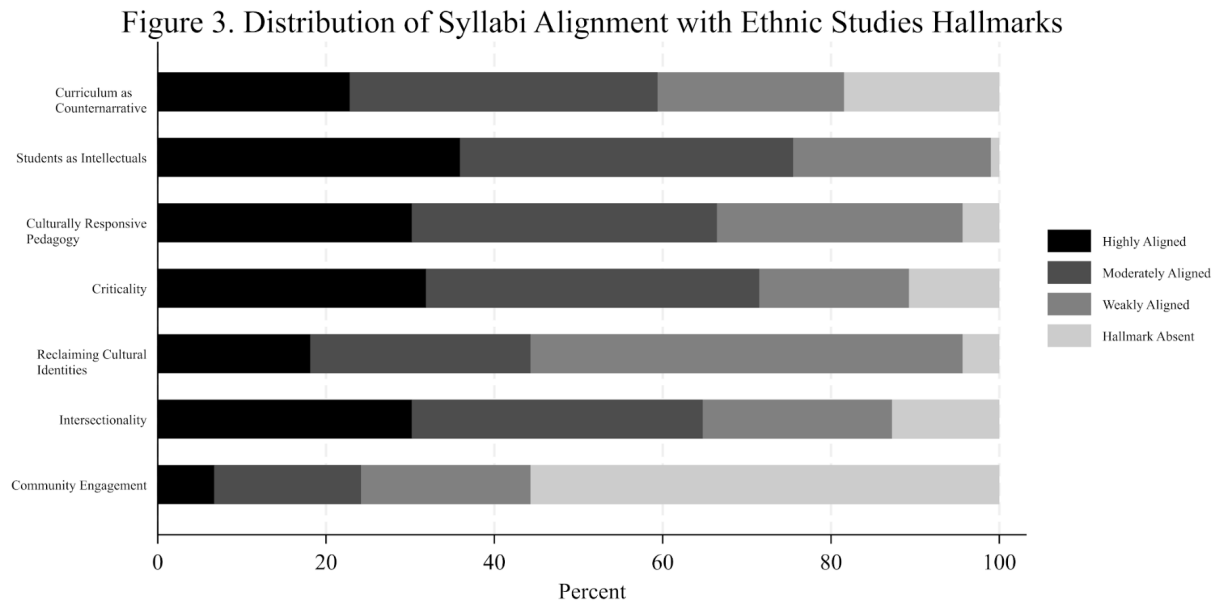


Figure 2: Rubric Development and Coding Process





Tables

Table 1. Average Student Characteristics by Region

	N (%)	Total Students	% White	% African American	% Asian	% American Indian/Alaska Native	% Two or More Races
Regions							
Superior California	30 (10.1%)	1,264.35	28.33	10.63	9.68	1.53	4.39
North Coast	21 (7.0%)	621.71	45.72	4.39	1.73	15.49	7.10
SF Bay Area	51 (17.1%)	1,225.90	22.52	11.14	20.22	0.29	5.57
North San Joaquin Valley	20 (6.7%)	1,596.05	17.48	6.79	13.20	1.06	2.10
Central Coast	32 (10.7%)	1,519.91	25.21	1.55	2.71	0.21	1.76
Southern San Joaquin Valley	16 (5.4%)	2,152.44	14.04	8.80	5.46	0.80	1.22
Inland Empire	33 (11.1%)	1,559.64	14.26	6.39	3.25	0.43	1.79
Los Angeles County	44 (14.8%)	1,056.1	12.72	11.13	3.31	0.29	3.09
Orange County	21 (7.0%)	1,985.19	21.63	1.35	24.80	0.14	1.96
San Diego-Imperial	30 (10.1%)	1,202.32	33.82	5.76	6.69	2.20	6.55
Total	298 (100.0%)	1,356.37	22.95	7.16	9.30	1.76	3.74

Table 2. Ethnic Studies Syllabus Rubric

Hallmark	3-Strong Evidence	2-Moderate Evidence	1-Weak Evidence
Curriculum as Counter Narrative	-3+ perspectives from marginalized communities -1+ critical text or theory mentioned -Strongly and directly connects reading to the dominant narrative being challenged. -Tools for praxis	-2+ instances of perspectives from marginalized communities -1+ critical text or theory mentioned -Vaguely connects reading to dominant narrative being challenged	-2+ instances of perspectives from marginalized communities
Students as Intellectuals	-2+ instances of students as experts -1+ instances of reflection -1+ instances of experiential knowledge -3+ student choice assignments -1+ example or strong implication of sharing expertise beyond the classroom	-3+ examples of skill development -1 example of content reflection or 1 example of experiential knowledge -2+ student choice assignments	-All activities insular to classroom -2+ examples of skill development
Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy	-3+ culturally relevant topics -3+ examples of reflection to personal/communal history -1+ example of hyperlocal communal reflection	-2+ culturally relevant topics -2+ pieces of reflection connecting course to personal and/or communal history	-2+ culturally relevant topics -No connection to personal history
Criticality	-3+ key terms alluding to structural forms of oppression and/or texts written by critical authors -1+ forms of critique and response to limiting condition/praxis	-2+ key terms that allude to structural forms of oppression -3+ texts written by critical authors/perspectives -1+ critiques of limiting condition	-1+ key terms that allude to structural forms of oppression OR 2 texts written by critical authors
Reclaiming Cultural Identities	-Historical +contemporary perspectives included -3+ positive cultural referents -1+ instances of reflection -1+ instance of building group pride/cross group appreciation/cross and intragroup solidarity -1+ integration of hyperlocal element	-Historical and contemporary perspectives included -2+ positive cultural referents -1+ instance of building group pride/cross group appreciation/cross and intragroup solidarity	-Mainly historical perspectives -Hyper focus on oppressed identities -No positive cultural referents
Intersectionality and Multiplicity	-3+ examples of intersectionality (explicitly discussed or strongly implicated) -1+ instance of reflection involving intersectionality	-1+ instances of intersectionality implied/stated -2+ examples of intersectionality	-1+ instances of intersectionality implied/stated OR examples or intersectionality
Community Engagement	-2+ instances of uni-directional engagement -2+ instance of bi-directional engagement -Engagement at community-level	-1+ instances of uni-directional engagement -1+ instance of bi-directional engagement -Engagement at school-level	-2+ instances of uni-directional engagement OR 1 instance of bi-directional engagement

Table 3. Criticality Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“Through a deeper analysis of how structural controls and institutions impact different racial/ethnic groups in the US, students will use critical thinking skills to identify and evaluate the forms of resistance that specific groups use(d) to counter oppressive structural controls and institutions. Students will compare how institutions, such as public education, legal system, immigration system, health care system, housing system, labor system, prison/detention institutions, and economic system, have functioned over time to impact groups’ oppression, identity, and resistance. Students will connect the learning from this unit to their own community and reflect on ways that structural controls, institutions, and resistance have impacted their lives. Students will determine the extent to which gains have been made concerning inequality and potential next steps towards working towards equity and equality.”
Level 1:	“Counter oppressive structural controls and institutions.” “Oppression, identity and resistance” “inequality, equality, equity” - Structural Language And/Or “Readings: Ronald Takaki – Chapter 15 of A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America; Michelle Alexander –excerpts from The New Jim Crow, Rodolfo Acuna - Chapter 2 of Occupied America; Angela Davis - Chapter 1 and 5 of Are Prisons Obsolete?” - Critical Texts
Level 2:	“Students will focus on comparing how institutions, such as public education, legal system, immigration system, health care system... have functioned to impact groups’ oppression.” - Critique of Limiting Condition
Level 3:	“Students will connect the learning from this unit to their own community and reflect on ways that structural controls, institutions, and resistance have impacted their lives. Students will determine the extent to which gains have been made concerning inequality and potential next steps towards working towards equity and equality.” - Praxis (assuming “thinking of next steps towards working towards equity and equality.” is paired with actual community engagement here or elsewhere in the syllabus).

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Table 4. Hallmark Averages by School and Course Characteristics

	Average Score	Curriculum as Counter Narrative	Students as Intellectuals	Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy	Criticality	Reclaiming Cultural Identities	Intersectionality and Multiplicity	Community Engagement	N	Percentage of Sample
School Type										
Public	1.82 (0.65)	1.76 (0.99)	2.26 (0.78)	2.37 (0.83)	2.09 (0.92)	1.66 (0.87)	1.94 (1.00)	0.97 (1.03)	165	55.37
Private	1.25 (0.61)	1.38 (1.06)	1.58 (0.72)	1.87 (0.95)	1.38 (0.95)	1.36 (0.79)	1.38 (0.90)	0.26 (0.65)	53	17.79
Charter	1.62 (0.60)	1.54 (1.04)	2.14 (0.68)	1.91 (0.80)	1.90 (0.94)	1.51 (0.75)	1.88 (1.05)	0.54 (0.86)	59	19.80
Other	1.76 (0.71)	1.62 (1.16)	2.10 (0.83)	2.45 (0.79)	2.10 (0.89)	1.71 (0.85)	1.86 (0.85)	0.86 (0.96)	21	7.05
Course Classifications										
General Ethnic Studies	1.87 (0.60)	1.58 (1.13)	2.27 (0.78)	2.22 (0.74)	2.22 (0.80)	1.56 (0.81)	2.28 (0.78)	0.98 (1.08)	128	42.95
Group Specific	1.45 (0.62)	1.63 (0.85)	1.82 (0.74)	1.59 (0.88)	1.58 (0.93)	1.63 (0.82)	1.41 (1.01)	0.50 (0.78)	111	37.25
Multi-Group Literature	2.0 (0.70)	2.29 (0.85)	2.48 (0.60)	2.29 (0.85)	2.43 (0.93)	1.52 (0.98)	2.14 (1.01)	0.90 (1.00)	21	7.05
Multi-Group History	1.74 (0.67)	1.90 (1.00)	2.24 (0.89)	1.90 (0.83)	2.10 (1.00)	1.86 (0.73)	1.48 (0.81)	0.71 (0.85)	21	7.05
Other	1.21 (0.75)	1.00 (1.12)	2.12 (0.78)	1.47 (0.94)	1.18 (1.13)	1.12 (0.93)	1.06 (0.97)	0.53 (0.94)	17	5.70
Region										
Superior California	1.63 (0.77)	1.57 (1.1)	2.03 (0.85)	1.8 (0.85)	1.97 (0.96)	1.37 (0.85)	1.87 (1.14)	0.83 (0.95)	30	10.1
North Coast	1.51 (0.75)	1.24 (1.04)	2.1 (0.7)	1.95 (1.07)	1.57 (1.29)	1.76 (0.83)	1.19 (1.25)	0.76 (1.09)	21	7.0
SF Bay Area	1.59 (0.69)	1.55 (1.05)	2.04 (0.87)	1.96 (1.0)	1.75 (1.04)	1.33 (0.79)	1.78 (0.95)	0.71 (0.92)	51	17.1
N San Joaquin Valley	2.06 (0.37)	2.20 (0.7)	2.65 (0.59)	2.1 (0.55)	2.6 (0.5)	1.55 (0.76)	2.3 (0.73)	1.1 (1.17)	20	6.7
Central Coast	1.75 (0.73)	1.59 (1.21)	2.28 (0.77)	2 (0.95)	2.06 (0.95)	1.5 (0.95)	1.91 (1.23)	0.97 (1.12)	32	10.7
S San Joaquin Valley	1.66 (0.57)	1.63 (0.96)	2.06 (0.68)	1.75 (0.86)	1.94 (0.85)	1.81 (0.75)	1.69 (1.08)	0.75 (1.13)	16	5.4
Inland Empire	1.66 (0.65)	1.64 (1.06)	1.97 (0.73)	2.06 (0.79)	1.91 (0.88)	1.85 (0.87)	1.64 (0.86)	0.58 (0.71)	33	11.1
Los Angeles	1.65 (0.56)	1.61 (0.97)	1.93 (0.85)	1.95 (0.86)	2.0 (0.75)	1.59 (0.79)	2.16 (0.71)	0.43 (0.79)	44	14.8
Orange	1.61 (0.59)	1.57 (0.81)	1.95 (0.81)	1.86 (0.85)	1.76 (1.0)	1.67 (0.73)	1.62 (0.81)	0.81 (0.87)	21	7.0
San Diego-Imperial	1.73 (0.77)	1.90 (1.06)	2.27 (0.69)	1.7 (0.79)	1.87 (1.07)	1.7 (0.88)	1.8 (1.06)	0.9 (1.09)	30	10.1
Course Length										
Half Year	1.49 (0.57)	1.43 (1.04)	1.81 (0.78)	1.77 (0.89)	1.75 (0.88)	1.49 (0.75)	1.75 (0.96)	0.46 (0.84)	93	31.21
Full Year	1.75 (0.69)	1.73 (1.02)	2.24 (0.76)	1.99 (0.86)	2.0 (0.99)	1.62 (0.87)	1.85 (1.02)	0.88 (1.0)	205	68.79
Year										
2019-20	1.56 (0.67)	1.53 (0.99)	1.93 (0.80)	1.83 (0.91)	1.8 (0.95)	1.56 (0.82)	1.66 (1.05)	0.60 (0.88)	90	30.20
2020-21	1.68 (0.65)	1.67 (1.09)	2.14 (0.78)	1.92 (0.88)	2.02 (0.96)	1.52 (0.81)	1.87 (1.03)	0.70 (0.95)	86	28.86
2021-22	1.75 (0.66)	1.69 (1.02)	2.20 (0.77)	1.99 (0.84)	1.95 (0.97)	1.64 (0.86)	1.91 (0.94)	0.90 (1.03)	122	40.94
Total	1.67 (0.67)	1.64 (1.03)	2.10 (0.79)	1.92 (0.87)	1.93 (0.96)	1.58 (0.83)	1.82 (1.00)	0.75 (0.97)	298	100.0

Parentheses are standard deviation

Table 5. Average Score Predictors with Region and Year Fixed Effects

	(1) No FE	(2) Region FE	(3) Region and Year FE
Racial Demographics			
% White Omitted			
% African American	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.004)
% American Indian	0.005 (0.003)	0.004 (0.003)	0.004 (0.003)
% Asian	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.005)
% Filipino	0.006 (0.017)	-0.007 (0.017)	-0.008 (0.017)
% Hispanic	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.003)
% Pacific Islander	0.030 (0.049)	0.054 (0.048)	0.054 (0.048)
% Multiracial	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.011 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.010)
School Type			
Public Omitted			
Private	-0.263 (0.140)	-0.356* (0.145)	-0.355* (0.146)
Charter	-0.031 (0.100)	-0.081 (0.104)	-0.076 (0.105)
Other	0.109 (0.174)	0.124 (0.188)	0.121 (0.188)
School Characteristics			
Total Enrollment	0.081 (0.055)	0.090 (0.059)	0.092 (0.059)
Distance to UC	-0.003** (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)
Distance to CSU	0.004 (0.002)	0.005 (0.003)	0.005 (0.003)
Distance to Community College	0.010 (0.006)	0.008 (0.006)	0.008 (0.006)
% Vote Republican	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.003)
Course Length			
Full Year Omitted			
Less than Full Year	-0.171 (0.091)	-0.134 (0.092)	-0.133 (0.092)
Course Classification			
General Ethnic Studies Omitted			
Group Specific	-0.397*** (0.083)	-0.374*** (0.083)	-0.362*** (0.083)
Multi-Group Literature	-0.036 (0.199)	-0.026 (0.205)	-0.029 (0.204)
Multi-Group History	-0.226 (0.163)	-0.153 (0.181)	-0.149 (0.179)
Other	-0.526* (0.227)	-0.560* (0.243)	-0.547* (0.246)
Region			
Los Angeles Omitted			
Superior California		-0.230 (0.211)	-0.226 (0.210)
North Coast		-0.167 (0.287)	-0.161 (0.288)
SF Bay Area		-0.031 (0.142)	-0.028 (0.144)
N San Joaquin Valley		0.114 (0.175)	0.122 (0.175)
Central Coast		-0.030 (0.159)	-0.028 (0.160)
S San Joaquin Valley		-0.072 (0.191)	-0.084 (0.189)
Inland Empire		-0.204 (0.171)	-0.197 (0.173)
Orange		-0.100 (0.182)	-0.100 (0.182)
San Diego - Imperial		0.141 (0.153)	0.137 (0.155)
Year			
2019-20 Omitted			
2020-21			0.056 (0.085)
2021-2022			0.075 (0.086)
Constant	1.928*** (0.283)	2.055*** (0.314)	1.988*** (0.322)
R-Squared	.2433	.2654	.2676
N	298	298	298

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the school level

Table 6. Regression Predictors by Hallmark

	Curriculum as Counter Narrative	Students as Intellectuals	Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy	Criticality	Reclaiming Cultural Identities	Intersectionality and Multiplicity	Community Engagement
Racial Demographics							
% White Omitted							
% African American	-0.015 (0.008)	0.001 (0.004)	0.002 (0.006)	-0.006 (0.006)	-0.009 (0.005)	-0.011 (0.006)	0.000 (0.006)
% American Indian	-0.000 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.004)	0.013*** (0.004)	-0.011* (0.005)	0.017*** (0.004)	-0.008 (0.004)	0.019*** (0.004)
% Asian	0.001 (0.007)	0.001 (0.005)	-0.005 (0.005)	0.002 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.006)	0.000 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.006)
% Filipino	-0.045 (0.029)	-0.006 (0.019)	-0.013 (0.022)	-0.037 (0.028)	0.012 (0.026)	-0.004 (0.023)	0.027 (0.027)
% Hispanic	-0.003 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.004)	0.003 (0.004)	0.000 (0.003)
% Pacific Islander	0.132 (0.088)	-0.021 (0.061)	0.140* (0.056)	0.075 (0.062)	-0.100 (0.052)	0.015 (0.074)	0.156 (0.090)
% Multiracial	-0.007 (0.017)	-0.010 (0.013)	-0.019 (0.014)	-0.012 (0.014)	-0.020 (0.013)	0.007 (0.019)	-0.010 (0.012)
School Type							
Public Omitted							
Private	-0.305 (0.239)	-0.462** (0.161)	-0.386 (0.213)	-0.496* (0.209)	-0.047 (0.187)	-0.458 (0.236)	-0.375* (0.184)
Charter	0.012 (0.180)	0.011 (0.134)	-0.255 (0.131)	-0.025 (0.151)	0.059 (0.147)	-0.105 (0.164)	-0.283 (0.179)
Other	0.141 (0.321)	0.125 (0.216)	0.134 (0.228)	0.334 (0.231)	0.256 (0.245)	-0.098 (0.230)	-0.002 (0.254)
School Characteristics							
Total Enrollment	0.159 (0.089)	0.161* (0.064)	0.023 (0.077)	0.161* (0.075)	0.166* (0.079)	-0.011 (0.091)	0.008 (0.082)
Distance to UC	-0.005 (0.003)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)
Distance to CSU	0.008 (0.005)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.005)	0.003 (0.004)	0.011** (0.004)	0.001 (0.004)
Distance to Community College	0.021 (0.012)	0.008 (0.009)	0.010 (0.009)	0.022* (0.009)	0.001 (0.009)	-0.017* (0.007)	0.009 (0.010)
% Vote Republican	-0.006 (0.005)	-0.005 (0.003)	0.003 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.000 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.005)	0.001 (0.004)
Course Length							
Full Year Omitted							
Less than Full Year	-0.156 (0.164)	-0.255* (0.111)	-0.110 (0.126)	-0.100 (0.133)	-0.005 (0.131)	-0.041 (0.133)	-0.295* (0.136)
Course Classification							
General Ethnic Studies Omitted							
Group Specific	0.130 (0.139)	-0.373*** (0.107)	-0.574*** (0.117)	-0.555*** (0.123)	-0.024 (0.119)	-0.696*** (0.126)	-0.427** (0.141)
Multi-Group Literature	0.517 (0.269)	-0.019 (0.183)	0.024 (0.227)	0.013 (0.257)	-0.119 (0.277)	-0.296 (0.270)	-0.338 (0.305)
Multi-Group History	0.363 (0.240)	0.004 (0.226)	-0.448* (0.216)	-0.086 (0.247)	0.179 (0.228)	-0.781*** (0.201)	-0.316 (0.234)
Other	-0.587 (0.363)	0.002 (0.290)	-0.511 (0.296)	-0.893** (0.312)	-0.393 (0.290)	-1.215*** (0.294)	-0.261 (0.285)
Region							
Los Angeles Omitted							0.093 (0.290)
Superior California	-0.297 (0.318)	-0.088 (0.222)	-0.525* (0.266)	-0.334 (0.273)	-0.190 (0.243)	-0.350 (0.291)	0.255 (0.430)
North Coast	-0.507 (0.532)	-0.006 (0.271)	0.005 (0.331)	-0.380 (0.371)	-0.059 (0.356)	-0.519 (0.303)	0.257 (0.209)
SF Bay Area	-0.079 (0.252)	0.045 (0.180)	0.085 (0.212)	-0.291 (0.203)	-0.135 (0.189)	-0.228 (0.189)	0.314 (0.390)
N San Joaquin Valley	0.295 (0.286)	0.432 (0.263)	-0.242 (0.244)	0.198 (0.240)	-0.170 (0.257)	-0.056 (0.236)	0.455 (0.260)
Central Coast	-0.223 (0.302)	0.286 (0.192)	-0.103 (0.231)	-0.056 (0.211)	-0.268 (0.259)	-0.339 (0.226)	0.172 (0.350)
S San Joaquin Valley	0.056 (0.319)	-0.044 (0.260)	-0.331 (0.286)	-0.092 (0.352)	-0.006 (0.242)	-0.439 (0.341)	0.047 (0.234)
Inland Empire	-0.399 (0.279)	-0.088 (0.195)	-0.094 (0.244)	-0.374 (0.232)	0.013 (0.219)	-0.607** (0.200)	0.448 (0.250)
Orange	-0.338 (0.316)	0.001 (0.213)	-0.031 (0.242)	-0.390 (0.290)	-0.082 (0.233)	-0.460* (0.231)	0.451 (0.260)
San Diego – Imperial	0.239 (0.252)	0.399* (0.180)	-0.242 (0.215)	-0.061 (0.248)	0.113 (0.227)	-0.071 (0.255)	
Year							
2019-2020 Omitted							
2020-2021	0.097 (0.143)	0.167 (0.101)	0.014 (0.114)	0.159 (0.117)	-0.018 (0.119)	0.060 (0.120)	0.017 (0.127)
2021-2022	0.077 (0.136)	0.179 (0.104)	-0.003 (0.112)	-0.016 (0.126)	0.056 (0.107)	0.060 (0.127)	0.173 (0.121)
Constant	1.889** (0.584)	2.212*** (0.358)	2.378*** (0.427)	2.530*** (0.395)	1.753*** (0.431)	2.568*** (0.505)	0.715 (0.388)
R-Squared	0.1847	0.2748	0.2689	0.2708	0.1603	0.3165	0.2379

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the school level

Appendix

Appendix Table 1. Summarized Ethnic Studies Hallmarks

Sleeter and Zavala (2020)		McGovern and Buenavista (2016)		California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum	
Hallmarks	Definition	Tenets	Definition	CAESMC 6 C's	Definition
Curriculum as Counter Narrative	Honors knowledge production, interrogates white supremacist subjugation and misrepresentation, and challenges assimilationist ideals.	Question White Supremacist Notions of Ideological Objectivity	Critical examination of knowledge; What and whose knowledge is assumed as truth	Center	Center and place high value on the precolonial ancestral knowledge, narratives, and communal experiences of Native People/s and people of color and groups that are typically marginalized in society
Students as Intellectuals	Respecting and fostering students' curiosity and thinking	Anti-Essentialist Representations of Racialized Communities	Studying racial groups through multidimensional and intersectional lenses.	Connect	Connect ourselves to past and contemporary social movements that struggle for social justice and an equitable and democratic society, and conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for a post-racist, post-systemic-racism society that promotes collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing
Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy	Drawing upon students lived experiences and sociocultural environments	Community Grounded Praxis in teaching of content	Curriculum grounded in local contexts, responsive to needs of community, communities as knowledge holders and creators, collective and individual empowerment.	Cultivate	Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity,20 self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
Criticality	Structural analysis of racism and colonialism that works toward dismantling multiple forms of oppression	X	X	Critique	Critique empire building in history and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, and other forms of power and oppression
Reclaiming Cultural Identities	Deep knowledge of where students come from and the historical contributions of their communities	Individual empowerment and Collective self-determination, and Social Transformation	Knowledge of self and placing oneself in community. ARC (Access, Relevant, Communities)	Challenge	Challenge racist, bigoted, discriminatory, and imperialist/colonial beliefs and practices on multiple levels
Intersectionality and Multiplicity	Attending to students' multiple social identities and their interactions	X	X	Celebrate	Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by providing a space to share their stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth
Community Engagement	Pedagogies and practices that bridge classrooms to communities and social movements	X	X	X	X

Appendix Table 2. Curriculum as a Counter Narrative Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“Students will analyze <i>Monster</i> by Walter Dean Meyers in different artistic mediums to aid in analyzing dehumanization and how dehumanizing techniques are used in society in different mediums and forms. Read: “Trial of the Genocide of Native Californians: A Role Play.” by Aimee Riechel. Interview by Miguel Zavala. <i>Rethinking Ethnic Studies</i> ; students will be expected to present their own youth action that could be implemented. Simultaneously, students will be reading about action in the novel <i>The Hate U Give</i> by Angie Thomas; Literature Circle options: <i>Burro Genius</i> , <i>Breaking Through</i> , <i>The Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian</i> , <i>On the Come Up</i> , <i>American Born Chinese</i> , <i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> ”
Level 1:	“Literature Circle options: <i>Burro Genius</i> , <i>Breaking Through</i> , <i>The Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian</i> , <i>On the Come Up</i> , <i>American Born Chinese</i> , <i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> ” - Perspective from Marginalized Communities
Level 2:	“Read: ‘Trial of the Genocide of Native Californians: A Role Play.’ by Aimee Riechel” - Critical Text
Level 3:	“Students will be expected to present their own youth action that could be implemented. Simultaneously, students will be reading about action in the novel <i>The Hate U Give</i> by Angie Thomas.”- Strongly and directly connects reading to dominant narrative being challenged; Tools for praxis

Appendix Table 3. Students as Intellectuals Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“This course will further develop students’ analytical and critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, as well as speaking skills, through a critical analysis of a wide variety of historical and contemporary issues of race, ethnicity, and identity in fiction and nonfiction texts.; Through the oral interviews, learn about family’s history and experiences. Simultaneously, challenge the “Master Narrative” with their own narratives and family’s history by sharing it in the form of a narrative writing paper; Choice #1: choose one policy and argue for or against the policy in a class debate; Choice #2: Apply Freire’s dialogical approach to one of the struggles that an ethnic minority group faced; Choice #3: look up a policy, summarize the policy, and analyze how the policy impacted specific ethnic groups; After reading and participating in a Socratic Seminar on an excerpt from Paulo Freire’s <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>, students will apply Freire’s dialogical approach to one of the struggles that an ethnic minority group faced. “Students will write a 500 word report that explains their proposal for how to help the community through their proposed project for the organization they chose. Students will produce a plan to execute this project, complete with a time line, proposal, model, and rubric for evaluation.”
Level 1:	“This course will further develop students’ analytical and critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, as well as speaking skills, through a critical analysis of a wide variety of historical and contemporary issues of race, ethnicity, and identity in fiction and nonfiction texts.” - Skill Development
Level 2:	“After reading and participating in a Socratic Seminar on an excerpt from Paulo Freire’s <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>, students will apply Freire’s dialogical approach to one of the struggles that an ethnic minority group faced. Students will analyze how the ethnic group used Freire’s approach to liberate itself from its oppressors.” - Content-Specific Reflection Or “Through the oral interviews, learn about family’s history and experiences.” “After reading and participating in a Socratic Seminar” - Experiential Knowledge Choices #1, 2, and 3 for assignment - Student-Choice Assignments
Level 3:	Participating in a Socratic Seminar - Students as Experts “Students will write a 500 word report that explains their proposal for how to help the community through their proposed project for the organization they chose. Students will produce a plan to execute this project, complete with a time line, proposal, model, and rubric for evaluation.” - Sharing Expertise Beyond the Classroom

Appendix Table 4. Culturally Responsive and Mediated Pedagogy Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“This course focuses on immigration and intercultural race relations for the major cultures of color in the United States: African American and Latina/o, and Native American. Students will create a poem or song centered on the contributions of Latino/Hispanic cultures. Students will write a critical piece on the portrayal of Asian cultures in Hollywood. Groups will be discussed historically and in relation to the dominant American culture. write a 650-word analysis of one of the songs that deals with life in Los Angeles. This analysis will provide historical context, interpretation of lyrics, along with a personal connection or disconnect with the song. Students will also create a poem that depicts their own struggle with critical race theory and how it has played out during their high school years. Each student will create a website that depicts everything they have learned and how that has affected their lives. Each student will give an oral presentation that is centered on a current event and is linked to an ethnic group and experience within the United States. The student will give a summary of the current event along with a connection to the class, another ethnic group we have learned in class, or a personal experience they have.”
Level 1:	“This course focuses on immigration and intercultural race relations for the major cultures of color in the United States: African American and Latina/o, and Native American. Students will create a poem or song centered on the contributions of Latino/Hispanic cultures.” - Culturally Relevant Topics
Level 2:	“This analysis will provide historical context, interpretation of lyrics, along with a personal connection or disconnect with the song. Students will also create a poem that depicts their own struggle with critical race theory and how it has played out during their high school years. Each student will create a website that depicts everything they have learned and how that has affected their lives.” - Personal/Communal History Reflection
Level 3:	“Groups will be discussed historically and in relation to the dominant American culture. write a 650-word analysis of one of the songs that deals with life in Los Angeles.” - Hyperlocal Element

Appendix Table 5. Reclaiming Cultural Identities Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“This unit will use a textbook as a historical reference and have three guest Artists from the Chicano Art Movement talk about their work. I have spoken with several key Chicano Artists who have committed to participate as guest speakers. They include Wayne Healy and David Botello of East Los Angeles. Once the mural is complete and unveiled, students will now have the opportunity to reflect on the process and explain how creating a mural is an empowering experience. Students will be required to reflect and give a testimonial on the transforming effect the class has had on them as artists and individuals. Students can also draw information and inspiration from the guest artist lecture series at the beginning of the course, along with the field notes taken during the mural site visits in Los Angeles County. Many historians and scholars trace the Chicano mural movement back to the Mexican mural movements, from its roots in both the massive wall paintings of the Mesoamerican civilization and in the 16th century Catholic churches that used wall-sized paintings to introduce Christianity to Mexico. This unit will focus around the 1920s, it is during this time that Mexico produced some of its most iconic muralist. Mexican artists known as 'los tres grandes', Jose Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera. This unit will also use multimedia examples to showcase Mexican murals in order to compare and contrast with Chicano murals that students saw in unit 1.”
Level 1:	“Many historians and scholars trace the Chicano mural movement back to the Mexican mural movements, from its roots in both the massive wall paintings of the Mesoamerican civilization and in the 16th century” - Historical Perspectives
Level 2:	“Three guest Artists from the Chicano Art Movement talk about their work” - Contemporary Perspective “Jose Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera.” - Positive Cultural Referents “This unit will also use multimedia examples to showcase Mexican murals in order to compare and contrast with Chicano murals that students saw in unit 1.” - Cross Group Appreciation
Level 3:	“Students will now have the opportunity to reflect on the process and explain how creating a mural is an empowering experience.” - Reflection “Students can also draw information and inspiration from the guest artist lecture series at the beginning of the course, along with the field notes taken during the mural site visits in Los Angeles County.” - Hyperlocal Element

Appendix Table 6. Intersectionality and Multiplicity Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“In this unit, students will explore key concepts of race, ethnicity, identity, prejudice, and discrimination. In doing so, students will examine how race and ethnicity shape society and how constructs of race manifests within society. Students will also examine their own identities through a critical lens by exploring the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and identity.” “How have women of color struggled for justice throughout history?”
Level 1:	“intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and identity” - Implication of Multiplicity Or “How have women of color struggled for justice throughout history?” - Examples of Intersectionality
Level 2:	“How have women of color struggled for justice throughout history?” - Multiplicity and Intersectionality Examples and Statements
Level 3:	“Students will also examine their own identities through a critical lens by exploring the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and identity” - Intersectionality Reflection

Appendix Table 7. Community Engagement Coding Excerpt

Original Text Excerpt:	“Students will produce a historical narrative of 1,500 words, based on an oral interview with a family member or other adult important in the student’s life.” “Based on these investigations, students produce public service announcements for distribution in their schools that challenge particular stereotypes in terms of institutional, interpersonal, and internalized oppression.” “Students build on their knowledge of communities and community organizing to design and implement a learning service project with a community organization in their neighborhood. Following a model of investigation and collaboration, students first conduct research on a neighborhood of their choice (either the school neighborhood or the neighborhood where they live). Students will need to create an outline of a project they would like to lead to assist the organization. Students further develop the oral history skills they learned in Unit 3 by conducting an oral history with an activist in the community organization, with a focus on how the activist became involved with the organization, the nature of the activist’s work, and the affects of the activist’s involvement on his or her life. Students participate in one event important to the community-based organization and write a report summarizing their experience. The report concludes with ideas on how the student could apply the lessons learned in the learning service project within the school community.”
Level 1:	“Students will produce a historical narrative of 1,500 words, based on an oral interview with a family member or other adult important in the student’s life.” - Uni-Directional Engagement Or “Students participate in one event important to the community-based organization and write a report summarizing their experience. The report concludes with ideas on how the student could apply the lessons learned in the learning service project within the school community.” - Bi-Directional Engagement
Level 2:	“Based on these investigations, students produce public service announcements for distribution in their schools that challenge particular stereotypes in terms of institutional, interpersonal, and internalized oppression.” - Engagement at School-Level
Level 3:	“Students build on their knowledge of communities and community organizing to design and implement a learning service project with a community organization in their neighborhood.” - Engagement at Community-Level

Appendix Table 8. Principal Component Analysis**Principal Components/Correlation**

Component	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Component 1	3.71813	2.86951	0.5312	0.5312
Component 2	.848621	.10239	0.1212	0.6524
Component 3	.746231	.178304	0.1066	0.7590
Component 4	.567927	.142207	0.0811	0.8401
Component 5	.42572	.034473	0.0608	0.9009
Component 6	.391247	.089123	0.0559	0.9568
Component 7	.302124	.	0.0432	1.0000

Principal Components (Eigenvectors)

Variable	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Component 6	Component 7	Unexplained
CCN	0.3539	0.2624	0.5249	-0.6302	-0.0702	0.2086	0.2912	0
SAI	0.4195	-0.0476	-0.2066	-0.1088	-0.4212	-0.7597	0.1126	0
CRMP	0.4095	-0.1090	-0.2402	0.3276	-0.5318	0.5761	0.2017	0
C	0.4387	-0.2284	0.1385	-0.0994	0.0350	0.0882	-0.8469	0
RCI	0.3068	0.6905	0.2371	0.5673	0.1767	-0.1267	-0.0610	0
IM	0.3502	-0.5922	0.2944	0.2810	0.4672	-0.0947	0.3658	0
CE	0.3492	0.1934	-0.6797	-0.2700	0.5330	0.1212	0.0839	0

Appendix Table 9. Average Scores by Region and School Type

	All Schools	Public	Private	Charter	Other
Region					
Superior	1.63 (30)	1.70 (24)	(.)	1.11 (4)	1.86 (2)
North Coast	1.51 (21)	2.01 (10)	0.71 (2)	1.02 (7)	1.5 (2)
SF Bay Area	1.59 (51)	1.77 (20)	1.31 (19)	1.83 (10)	1.21 (2)
N San Joaquin Valley	2.06 (20)	2.05 (13)	(.)	1.98 (6)	2.71 (1)
Central Coast	1.75 (32)	1.86 (22)	0.98 (6)	2.43 (2)	2.14 (2)
S San Joaquin Valley	1.66 (16)	1.60 (14)	(.)	(.)	2.07 (2)
Inland Empire	1.66 (33)	1.63 (19)	1.52 (3)	1.48 (6)	2.06 (5)
Los Angeles	1.65 (44)	1.85 (16)	1.23 (8)	1.78 (17)	1 (3)
Orange	1.61 (21)	1.77 (15)	1.25 (4)	1.43 (1)	.71 (1)
San Diego - Imperial	1.73 (30)	2.18 (12)	1.35 (11)	1.38 (6)	2.71 (1)

N in parentheses

Appendix Table 10. Average Score Predictors for Public Schools

	Region and Year FE
Racial Demographics	
% White Omitted	
% African American	-0.005 (0.007)
% American Indian	-0.001 (0.005)
% Asian	-0.000 (0.007)
% Filipino	-0.014 (0.021)
% Hispanic	0.004 (0.004)
% Pacific Islander	0.067 (0.109)
% Multiracial	0.046 (0.026)
School Characteristics	
Total Enrollment	0.075 (0.075)
Distance to UC	0.004 (0.003)
Distance to CSU	0.002 (0.004)
Distance to Community College	-0.008 (0.009)
% Vote Republican	-0.002 (0.005)
Course Length	
Full Year Omitted	
Less than Full Year	-0.235 (0.150)
Course Classification	
General Ethnic Studies Omitted	
Group Specific	-0.228 (0.128)
Multi-Group Literature	0.144 (0.250)
Multi-Group History	0.039 (0.299)
Other	-0.501 (0.454)
Region	
Los Angeles Omitted	
Superior California	-0.179 (0.290)
North Coast	-0.005 (0.516)
SF Bay Area	-0.100 (0.297)
N San Joaquin Valley	0.101 (0.285)
Central Coast	-0.096 (0.225)
S San Joaquin Valley	-0.400 (0.274)
Inland Empire	-0.315 (0.292)
Orange	0.140 (0.324)
San Diego - Imperial	0.243 (0.307)
Year	
2019-20 Omitted	
2020-21	0.128 (0.136)
2021-2022	0.170 (0.147)
R-Squared	.1918
Constant	1.424** (0.515)
<i>N</i>	165

Appendix Table 11. Average Score Predictors with Region and Year FE by Higher Education Distance

	(1) Distance to UC	(2) Distance to CSU	(3) Distance to Community College	(4) Distance to College
Racial Demographics				
% White Omitted				
% African American	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)
% American Indian	0.003 (0.004)	-0.000 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.004)
% Asian	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)
% Filipino	-0.007 (0.018)	-0.007 (0.017)	-0.006 (0.018)	-0.006 (0.018)
% Hispanic	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
% Pacific Islander	0.057 (0.055)	0.081 (0.052)	0.072 (0.054)	0.077 (0.053)
% Multiracial	-0.018 (0.011)	-0.018 (0.010)	-0.018 (0.010)	-0.016 (0.010)
% White				
School Type				
Public Omitted				
Private	-0.523*** (0.154)	-0.492** (0.149)	-0.497** (0.152)	-0.485** (0.149)
Charter	-0.142 (0.115)	-0.141 (0.118)	-0.140 (0.119)	-0.127 (0.117)
Other	0.036 (0.203)	0.084 (0.204)	0.082 (0.210)	0.104 (0.208)
School Characteristics				
% Vote Republican	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
Total Enrollment	0.062 (0.058)	0.093 (0.061)	0.084 (0.063)	0.093 (0.062)
Distance to UC	-0.001 (0.001)			
Distance to CSU		0.006* (0.002)		
Distance to Community College			0.008 (0.007)	
Distance to College				0.014 (0.007)
Region				
Los Angeles Omitted				
Superior California	-0.178 (0.209)	-0.233 (0.211)	-0.204 (0.208)	-0.212 (0.209)
North Coast	-0.194 (0.282)	-0.239 (0.261)	-0.278 (0.274)	-0.249 (0.258)
SF Bay Area	0.014 (0.165)	-0.016 (0.162)	-0.001 (0.162)	-0.005 (0.161)
N San Joaquin Valley	0.285 (0.157)	0.192 (0.159)	0.244 (0.157)	0.242 (0.153)
Central Coast	0.011 (0.176)	-0.037 (0.175)	-0.016 (0.178)	-0.021 (0.174)
S San Joaquin Valley	-0.156 (0.201)	-0.221 (0.190)	-0.184 (0.199)	-0.180 (0.200)
Inland Empire	-0.102 (0.178)	-0.241 (0.173)	-0.154 (0.174)	-0.187 (0.173)
Orange	-0.148 (0.180)	-0.163 (0.180)	-0.141 (0.178)	-0.139 (0.178)
San Diego – Imperial	0.167 (0.172)	0.161 (0.165)	0.150 (0.171)	0.142 (0.168)
Year				
2019-20 Omitted				
2020-21	0.112 (0.084)	0.102 (0.085)	0.107 (0.084)	0.104 (0.084)
2021-22	0.176 (0.089)	0.155 (0.090)	0.167 (0.090)	0.161 (0.089)
Constant	1.916*** (0.302)	1.821*** (0.306)	1.831*** (0.308)	1.775*** (0.309)
R-Squared	0.1722	0.1882	0.1761	0.1857

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Standard errors in parentheses are clustered at the school level