



**TO:** Chief Executive Officers  
Chief Instructional Officers  
Chief Student Services Officers  
Academic Senate Presidents  
Articulation Officers  
Curriculum Chairs

**FROM:** Dr. Aisha Lowe, Vice Chancellor, Educational Services and Support  
Dolores Davison, President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

**RE:** Ethnic Studies Implementation

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This memorandum provides guidance regarding the California State University's (CSU) course review and approval process for the new Area F ethnic studies requirement (lower-division CSU general education requirement established to fulfill title 5, §89032) and an update on next steps for the implementation of the California Community Colleges' (CCC) ethnic studies graduation requirement.

### **CSU Area F Ethnic Studies Course Review and Approval**

Assembly Bill 1460 was signed into law in August 2020. This legislation requires each CSU campus to offer courses in ethnic studies beginning fall 2021, and requires that "commencing with students graduating in the 2024–25 academic year, the California State University shall require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement, the completion of, at minimum, one three-unit course in ethnic studies." Additionally, AB 1460 requires CSU "to develop core competencies to be achieved by students who complete an ethnic studies course."

To comply with AB 1460, the CSU Office of the Chancellor (CSUCO) created a new GE Breadth Area F. Given the California Community Colleges essential intersegmental collaboration with CSU in support of CCC students' transfer and academic success, all California Community Colleges are expected to provide the ethnic studies courses our students will now need to prepare them for transfer to the CSU system. For courses to fulfill Area F, the course must meet three of the five core competencies listed in the CSU Guiding Notes for GE Course Review as updated in December 2020 by the CSU Chancellor's Office, and have the appropriate prefix as stated in the Guiding Notes. Most community colleges submitted ethnic studies courses for review to the CSUCO by the extended deadline of February 5, 2021.

During the CSUCO course review process of the courses submitted by the February 5, 2021 deadline, many of the courses submitted by community colleges were not approved. For those courses that

## **Ethnic Studies Implementation**

October 6, 2021

were denied, colleges had an opportunity to resubmit courses for re-review. During the re-review process, community colleges continued to face high levels of course disapprovals. In discussion with CSUCO regarding the causes of the high level of course disapprovals the below information was provided.

The primary issues found with courses that were **not** approved were:

- The competencies were **not** listed within the Course Outline of Record (COR). CSUCO's feedback (as well as the instructions given throughout the process) clearly state that this information must be in the COR.
- The competencies **were** included in the COR, however, there was no clear link between the competencies and the course content described in the COR. In those instances, the CSUCO responded via feedback that colleges must make this connection more explicit and definitive.

The CSUCO is bound by the COR as the official document for the course. The key to successful approval of ethnic studies courses for the CSU Area F requirement is the Course Outline of Record. Even for courses that may have been previously or historically approved, community colleges must review and revise the COR to include the CSU ethnic studies core competencies (three of the five) and demonstrate alignment to those core competencies across the COR's content.

Community Colleges should make the necessary changes to CORs before submitting them for CSU review and approval during the next regular review cycle this December. The CSUCO has agreed to provide an additional re-review in late spring 2022 for courses not approved during the fall 2021 cycle. For courses approved through this late spring 2022 re-review, the approval will be backdated to a fall 2021 approval status.

Please also review CSU memorandum "Implementation Guidance for CSU General Education Policy and Transfer" disseminated by Dr. Alison Wrynn (CSU Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs, Innovations and Faculty) and Dr. Suzanne Phillips (CSU Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management) which discusses the implications of the Area F Ethnic Studies requirement on catalog rights for California Community Colleges.

## **California Community Colleges Ethnic Studies Graduation Requirement Implementation**

In June 2020, the Chancellor's Office released the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Call to Action which called for, among other things, campuses to audit classroom climate and create action plans to create inclusive classrooms and anti-racism curriculum. Historically, ethnic studies is the interdisciplinary and comparative study of race and ethnicity with special focus on four historically defined racialized groups—Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, and Latina/o Americans. As such, instituting ethnic studies as a graduation requirement for the Associate degree is an important step in diversifying curriculum and one important tool for creating anti-racism curriculum.

## **Ethnic Studies Implementation**

October 6, 2021

Also in 2020, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) adopted [resolution 9.03](#) calling for an ethnic studies graduation requirement. The Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) similarly adopted [resolution S21.01.05](#) also advocating for an ethnic studies graduation requirement. Additionally, the California Community Colleges [Ethnic Studies Faculty Council](#), consisting of 200 ethnic studies faculty from across the CCC system, hosted two CCC Ethnic Studies Summits advocating for this (and other) ethnic studies reform. There was a clear call from both faculty and students to implement an ethnic studies graduation requirement.

The Chancellor's Office and the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C) responded to that call and developed revisions to title 5 regulations to implement an ethnic studies graduation requirement. At the July 2021 Board of Governors meeting the Board unanimously approved revisions to title 5, §55063, Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree, adding an ethnic studies graduation requirement. In collaboration with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) and the California Community Colleges Ethnic Studies Faculty Council, a short-term (2021-2022) Ethnic Studies Taskforce has been established to support the implementation of the CCC ethnic studies graduation requirement.

The goals of the Ethnic Studies Taskforce are as follows:

- To determine an implementation date for the new requirement
- To determine if and how to establish a unified definition of ethnic studies and/or core competencies for the California Community Colleges
- To help coordinate professional development and technical assistance for CCCs to ensure ethnic studies is implemented with fidelity to the discipline
- To coordinate with CSU for intersegmental alignment

The Ethnic Studies Taskforce will begin meeting as soon as possible this term. We look forward to sharing further details about the work and results of this taskforce.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact Dean Dr. Candice Brooks (cbrooks@CCCCO.edu).

Attachments:

- CCC Memorandum ESS 21-300-001, Impact of AB 1460: Ethnic Studies Transfer Alignment (2/22/2021)
- CSU memorandum, Implementation Guidance for CSU General Education Policy and Transfer (8/31/2021)
- CCC Ethnic Studies Taskforce Charter

cc:

Dr. Daisy Gonzales, Acting Chancellor  
Marty Alvarado, Executive Vice Chancellor

**Ethnic Studies Implementation**

October 6, 2021

Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy, Vice Chancellor, ESS  
CCCCO Staff