



Californians for Equal Rights Foundation  
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## CALIFORNIANS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION

March 9, 2022

[via email]

University of California Board of Regents  
Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Regents  
1111 Franklin St., 12th floor  
Oakland, CA 94607  
[regentsoffice@ucop.edu](mailto:regentsoffice@ucop.edu)

### **SUBJECT: OPPOSING ADDING AREA “H” TO A-G REQUIREMENTS**

Dear Board of Regents,

On behalf of Californians for Equal Rights Foundation, I am writing to express our strong opposition to a recent proposal by the UC Academic Senate to add Area “H” to the existing A-G requirements. Such a proposed change to create an A-G ethnic studies requirement for undergraduate admissions is married to a set of ideologically rooted guidelines, thereby providing top-down incentives for local school districts to pursue a radical version of ethnic studies.

When Governor Gavin Newsom [signed](#) Assembly Bill 101 into law in October 2021, he emphasized that “(ethnic studies) courses should not include portions of the initial draft curriculum that had been rejected by the Instructional Quality Commission due to concerns related to bias, bigotry, and discrimination.” The initial draft, however, has been revived through concerted efforts by a small but well-connected group called the Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Institute (LESMCI). The resulting curriculum, called Liberated Ethnic Studies, has been promoted via professional development and consulting contracts and personnel assignment, in several California school districts including Castro Valley Unified School District, Salinas Union High School District, San Diego Unified School District and Hayward Unified School District. All but one of the UC A-G Ethnic Studies Working Group committee members, who will be tasked to oversee the approval of courses meeting the Area “H” requirement, have publicly endorsed the state-rejected first draft.

To make matters worse, UC’s A-G Ethnic Studies Faculty Workgroup is also intricately affiliated with the LESMCI. One member of the UC Faculty Workgroup, Tricia Gallagher-Geurtsen, is also a [LESMCI Faculty](#) member. Andrew Jolivette, who is on the writing team for the UC group, supports LESMCI as an affiliated program for the UC San Diego Ethnic Studies Department. In



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spite of a recent [legal settlement](#) reached between my group and the California Department of Education to remove two religious affirmations from the state ethnic studies curriculum, the LESMCI group still promotes one of the removed chants as an important tool of teaching ethnic studies. How can UC ensure the kind of ethnic studies courses in accordance with UC's standards are free of bigotry, bias and discrimination if the standards are biased toward a critical or liberated version?

A closer examination of UC's A-G Ethnic Studies Course Criteria further validates our concern about its biases toward so-called critical pedagogy and liberated ethnic studies. Based on the new criteria, ethnic studies courses must "center anti-racism and anti-racist solidarity" and "examine racialization as a historical and ongoing structural/systemic process" in order to be approved for UC A-G admissions. In other words, politicized notions and ideological conjectures are listed as academic standards, regardless of insufficient empirical evidence proving neither generalizable efficacy of ethnic studies at a large scale nor the scientific validity of claims on anti-racism. This is contrary to the academic integrity and scrutiny applied to other A-G subject requirements.

Californians for Equal Rights Foundation (CFER) is a non-partisan and non-profit organization founded in the wake of California's resounding affirmation of its constitutional guarantee of equal treatment. We urge the Board of Regents to reject the proposal to add an ethnic studies A-G requirement so that UC fully observes current state law with important guardrails against the kind of ethnic studies promoted by a liberated model replete with race-based bias, inaccuracy and division.

Sincerely,

*Wenyuan Wu*

Wenyuan Wu,  
Executive Director, Californians for Equal Rights Foundation