

Teaching Cultural & Ethnic Studies

Many families and education advocates have worked to expand cultural and ethnic studies courses into K-12 education. Supporting a future where more students see themselves reflected in curricula, the Georgia Department of Education approved seven new social studies elective courses for the 2020-21 school year:

- Intro to African American Studies
- Intro to U.S. Latinx Studies
- Intro to Asian American Studies
- Intro to American Indian Studies
- Intro to U.S. Women's Studies
- Holocaust & Genocide Studies
- Civil Rights in the United States

These courses center the narratives and contributions of traditionally marginalized groups, i.e., Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, etc.

6 Tips for Teachers of Cultural and Ethnic Studies Courses

- 1 Remind others that these courses are designed to benefit all students.** Culturally-sustaining curriculum has a positive impact on students' academic and community engagement. Cultural and ethnic studies courses help students find value in their own cultural identity while appreciating differences in others'.
- 2 Use these courses to address racialized experiences** as real and unique, build greater understanding and communication across cultural and ethnic communities, and explore goals that can bring groups together.
- 3 Be well aware of how institutions and policies have shaped society** and the way collective groups continue responding to them. Cultural and ethnic studies teaching is grounded in the belief that education is a tool for social, economic, and political change and liberation. As such, teaching these courses requires a unique level of awareness.
- 4 Carefully and deliberately analyze your own personal identities, backgrounds, knowledge base and biases.** To constructively reach, teach, and unite students of varying identities and learning styles, you first reflect internally and with colleagues about the interconnected ways your identities impact your pedagogy.
- 5 Stay up to date with current scholarly research around cultural and ethnic studies instruction.** Building confidence through your engagement with theory and research strengthens your ability to distinguish between root causes and symptoms, dispel myth from fact, and address the importance of discussing and addressing lasting issues caused by systemic inequities.
- 6 Create a safe space for students and teachers** to be vulnerable with each other by engaging in problem-posing dialogue that encourages critical thinking and taking action. You can facilitate this process by incorporating local community history and students' lived experiences and material realities into the curriculum.

Learn more:
<https://idra.news/EthnicStudies>

