The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies

Ethnic studies includes units of study, courses, or programs that are centered on the knowledge and perspectives of an ethnic or racial group, reflecting narratives and points of view rooted in that group's lived experiences and intellectual scholarship. Ethnic studies arose as a counter to the traditional mainstream curriculum. Numerous content analyses of textbooks have found an ongoing marginalization of scholarship by and about African Americans, Latino/as, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. In acknowledgement of the dominance of Euro-American perspectives in mainstream curricula, such curricula can be viewed as ‘Euro-American ethnic studies.’ As students of color proceed through the school system, research finds that the overwhelming dominance of Euro-American perspectives leads many such students to disengage from academic learning. Ethnic studies curricula exist in part because students of color have demanded an education that is relevant, meaningful, and affirming of their identities. This report analyzes published studies and reviews of research that systematically document the impact of ethnic studies curricula, Pre-K through higher education, on students, academically as well as socially.

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Social Sciences Department. Social Science is the field of study concerned with society. “Social Science” is commonly used as an umbrella term to refer to a plurality of fields outside of the natural sciences, usually excluding the administrative or managerial sciences. These include: anthropology, archaeology, criminology, economics, government, linguistics, international relations, political science, sociology, geography, history, law, and psychology. Select your academic option below to view more details. Academic Options. Associates in Arts - DTA Anthropology. Ethnic studies courses provide new and different perspectives on American society, making them an appropriate and necessary addition to any course of study. Geography. Ethnic studies, in the United States, is the interdisciplinary study of difference—chiefly race, ethnicity, and nation, but also sexuality, gender, and other such markings—and power, as expressed by the state, by civil society, and by individuals. As opposed to International studies, who originally created to focus on the relations between the United States and Third World Countries, Ethnic studies was created to challenge the already existing curriculum and focus on the history of people of different Studies have shown that ethnic studies can result in higher test scores and greater self-esteem for students (Modern Language Association; Sleeter). Ethnic and cultural studies teach students of all races and ethnicities about their home cultures in the context of a more inclusive history. Students come to understand themselves in relation to other cultural groups, developing a cross-cultural understanding that encourages respect for other people. Attention to ethnic studies reflects the growing diversity of student populations in our schools. Sleeter, Christine E. The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review. National Education Association Research Department. Dir.