



Teacher Educators and the Ethnic Studies Movement

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What is the teacher educator's role in the movement for ethnic studies?

- Landscape of the movement
- Describing the work of designing and implementing ES
- “Entry points” for teacher educators



Sketching the Landscape

Emergence of Ethnic Studies

- College and university campuses were at the center of intense social transformation.
- Protest strategies were inherited from earlier struggles for equality.
- “Third World” were inspired by revolutionary projects around the globe.
- Goals: fundamental changes to curriculum, hiring of women and ethnic minority faculty, and increased service to communities of color.

Ethnic Studies

- Ethnic studies is the interdisciplinary social and historical study of how different populations have experienced, survived, and critically engaged the United States nation-building project.
- Scholars analyze the social dynamics of race, racism, and various forms of institutionalized inequality and violence.
- The field engages the creative historical work of social movements, cultural and artistic productions, legal and public policy activism, indigenous and liberationist epistemologies, community and identity formation, and radical social and political thought.
- Ethnic Studies scholars examine how these different kinds of resistance, persistence, liberation struggle, and radical knowledge production both confront and transform oppressive conditions and create new possibilities for social change.

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Ethnic Studies Pedagogy

Tintiangco-Cubales, Kohli, Sacramento, Henning, Agarwal-Rangnath, & Sleeter (2014). Patterns in effective ES teachers' pedagogy:

- Decolonization
- Community responsive pedagogy
- Culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy
- Teacher identity development

Sleeter & Zavala (2020) Hallmarks of ES:

- Curriculum as counternarrative
- Criticality
- Reclaiming cultural identities
- Intersectionality and multiplicity
- Community engagement
- Pedagogy that is culturally responsive and mediated
- Students as intellectuals



Describing the Work of Designing and Implementing ES in PK-12

PK-12 ES: Tensions and Challenges

- . Higher education interdisciplinary field vs. PK-12 subject matter area
- . Few educators with ES background and experience with curriculum and instruction
- . Educators with high expertise in ES often have low authority
- . Curriculum standardization and fidelity vs. Classroom Tailorability
- . Teachers as curriculum interpreters vs. curriculum thinkers

The Work of Designing and Implementing ES

Five Interrelated work domains from the SDUSD ES initiatives:

1. Operationalizing
2. Advocating
3. Increasing Expertise
4. Institutionalizing
5. Learning for Transformation

1. Operationalizing

- The first domain is concerned with components of fidelity: defining ethnic studies and creating instruments, policies, and procedures to achieve program consistency across sites and stakeholders.
- Examples:
 - Creating a rubric to evaluate if courses are aligned with the district's definition of ES
 - Revising professional learning offerings to align with district-adopted program

2. Advocating

- This task area is concerned with protecting ethnic studies and making sure its historical origins and goals remain intact by informing stakeholders about the reforms and why they are necessary.
- Examples:
 - Responding to angry and misinformed emails from the public about ES
 - Maintaining a web presence about reforms to inform district community members and the public

3. Increasing Expertise

- Because ES is new in PK-12 spaces, resources rooted in expertise are few. This area of work involves cultivating material and human resources to increase expertise.
- Examples:
 - Developing course materials for a blended US History-ES course
 - Creating pathways for new and experienced teachers to become authorized to teach ES

4. Institutionalizing

- District and school programs and interventions focused on inequity often come and go or are watered down. This domain focuses on creating space in the system for ES in ways that are sustainable.
- Examples:
 - Writing job descriptions and holding interviews for permanent staff members who have expertise in ES
 - Establishing a budget dedicated to ES reforms
 - Navigating new administrative personnel and structures to continue reforms

Learning for Transformation

- This domain includes projects focused on learning from challenges and successes for improvement; it includes ideas and innovations related to new systems and practices.
- Examples:
 - Constructing an online survey for students to capture patterns in their ES experiences
 - Building partnership with local universities to enhance program evaluation practices



“Entry Points” for Teacher Educators

Entry Point 1: Pre-Credential Pathways

- The lack of BIPOC teachers is magnified by LEA and school efforts to design and implement new courses and requirements
- California Community Colleges and the CSU and UC systems requiring ethnic studies means those coming into the profession will be familiar with ethnic studies.
- How might ES enhance pathways to the profession for BIPOC students?

Assets of SDUSD ES Educators of Color

- Knowledge producers and cultural transmitters
- Humanizing agents
- Healers of generational trauma
- Community activists and institutional advocates
- Counter-storytellers
- Resisters of Eurocentrism and White supremacy

Entry Point 2: Teacher Preparations Programs

- CCTC has stated that holders of Single Subject Credentials in History-Social Science are prepared to teach ethnic studies. CCTE has issued a statement in disagreement with this position.
- There are an array of skill areas associated with ethnic studies content and pedagogy that TPEs and other prominent teacher preparation frameworks do not address.
- How might TPPs prepare credential students to implement ES pedagogy?

Community Responsive Pedagogy

- Teachers have not had opportunities to develop skills related to examining how local communities are racialized and developing curriculum and instruction from these understandings.
- The SDUSD evaluation needs assessment data revealed that though teachers consistently emphasized the community responsive pedagogy as a dimension of ES, there was a consistent absence of local places, peoples, and issues in how “community” was defined.
- More often than not, community was associated with categories of race.

Entry Point 3: Induction and Internships

- To date, no research has yet to be done on how the transition to the profession can build from or support effective ES pedagogy.
- Induction and internship programs can be important sites of support for ethnic studies.
- How might induction and internship programs and policies support ES?

Entry Point 4: Professional Learning

- Ongoing and high quality professional learning opportunities will be key to the success of ES.
- Developing partnerships with faculty in higher education is often challenging for school districts.
- What models and practices are emerging that are associated with learning opportunities for effective ES pedagogy?

Challenges and Possibilities

- Teacher educators can be positioned to be important allies in the movement for ethnic studies in PK-12.
- Examples of courses that are “ethnic studies in name only” will likely emerge in response to without intentional professional communities
- Ethnic Studies pushes the field of education and teacher education to conceptualize the role of teachers and the differently.