



Los Angeles Unified School District Course Guideline

Course Title: Chicana/o Studies		
Semester Course: Grades 9-12	Prerequisite: None	Course Number: 370741
Course Designation: Elective "G" course	Text: Occupied America: A History of Chicanos by Rodolfo F. Acuña	
LAUSD Definition of Ethnic Studies		
<p>Ethnic Studies is an interdisciplinary and comparative study of the social, cultural, artistic, political, historical, and economic expression and experience of race and ethnicity that primarily centers the studies of American Indians/Native Americans, Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, Black/African Americans, and Chicana/Latinx.</p> <p>Ethnic Studies centers holistic humanization and critical consciousness, providing every student the opportunity to enter the content from their own space, positionality, and perspective. Ethnic Studies affirms the student identity, experience, and the building of empathy for others. This includes the self-determination of those who have ancestral roots and knowledge who have resisted and survived settler colonialism, racism, white supremacy, cultural erasure, as well as other patterns, structures, and systems of marginalization and oppression. The discipline uses culturally and community - responsive pedagogical practices to empower students to become anti - racist leaders. Ethnic studies reconstructs and transforms the traditional narrative and curriculum by highlighting the contributions people of color have made in shaping US culture and society.</p>		
Chicana/o Studies		
<p>Chicana/o Studies is focused on communities and individuals in the United States whose ancestors can be traced to the Indigenous communities that preceded, as well as survived, the legacies of Spanish colonization of the U.S. southwest, Caribbean, Central and South America. This diverse group shares a history shaped by Spanish colonization, colonial mestizaje, racialization, marginalization, and dispossession under U.S. imperialism. These factors exist differently across regions, but this shared history creates a foundation for a distinct Chicana/o experience, even with regional variations.</p> <p>Chicana/o Studies focuses on communities shaped by the cultural hybridity, resistance, and tensions arising from Spanish colonization of Indigenous peoples and the subsequent imposition of borders by European colonists and the U.S. nation-state. These communities face a complex situation. History, discourse, and ever-shifting politics can position them as a multiracial ethnic group, yet simultaneously erase those distinctions by casting Chicana/o people into a single racial category based on culture and language, regardless of their individual background. This results in an experience marked by the legacy of colonization and ongoing struggles within a white-supremacist U.S. context.</p>		

Chicana/o identity is multifaceted, and as you teach Chicana/o Studies, it is crucial to keep this in mind. These communities are not simply residents of Latin America. They are diverse, transborder groups with Indigenous roots across the Americas. Since the U.S. annexation of Mexican territories, they've grappled with a sense of belonging – neither fully accepted by the Anglo-dominated U.S. nor by their ancestral Latin American nations. This is captured by the phrase "ni de aqui, ni de alla," meaning "neither from here nor there."

A note regarding the suggestion to use "x" and "Latina/o" in the title of this course as Chicanax and Latinx Studies. The terms Chicana and Chicano (more recently spelled Xicana/o by some), emerged in the 1960s during the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. These terms were adopted by activists to assert their cultural identity and political resistance due to its connection to the original name of the Aztecs (Mexica). The use of "o" and "a" endings as well as the term Latina/o reflects the context and gender binary of the Spanish language, which itself has problematic aspects due to its connections to a legacy of European colonization and history of racial hierarchies. In addition, there are many who feel the use of the term Latino is consistent with such Eurocentric perceptions of a racialized social order that have sought to deny Indigenous history and identity.

In addition, although originally associated with the Mexican American community, over time, the term Chicana/o has been embraced by some "Latinos" traditionally outside this demographic (Mexican Americans remain the vast majority of this group in the U.S.). Despite regional and national differences, many Latinos in the United States face similar challenges related to immigration, assimilation, discrimination, and fighting for cultural representation. Chicana/o, with its roots in indigeneity, activism and resistance, can resonate with Latinos who identify with the struggle for social justice. Significantly, with its reference to Indigenous history, Chicana/o aligns with the Mesoamerican ancestry of most Latino groups. Embracing Chicana/o can be a way to connect with this shared Indigenous past and celebrate a broader cultural identity. It is important, however, to note that not all Latinos embrace the term Chicana/o. Some may prefer to identify with their specific national origin (e.g., Puerto Rican, Cuban) or a broader term like Latino/a. Ultimately, self-identification is a personal choice, which this course seeks to inform so as to provide context as a counter to the Eurocentric homogenization which students experience throughout society.

The term Chicanax is a more recent development, aiming to be more inclusive of non-binary gender identities. However, its usage is not yet universally adopted within Chicana/o Studies. Some scholars argue that Chicana/o already encompasses a broad spectrum of identities. Additionally, some may feel a stronger connection to the historical term Chicana/o, due to its role and imprint in social justice movements, its foundation of self-determination, its connection to Indigenous identity, its impact in challenging hegemonic patterns and systems of oppression, and to its resilience despite generational attempts to exclude it from serious consideration as a course of study. The choice of terminology reflects a complex conversation about identity, representation, and honoring the history of the Chicano Movement. Indeed, a Chicana/o Studies course can address issues of gender identity and inclusivity while acknowledging the historical significance of the terms Chicana and Chicano.

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the Chicana/o experience within the broader context of Ethnic Studies. Through interdisciplinary approaches, students will explore the historical, cultural, artistic, political, social, and economic dimensions of the Chicana/o community. The course will emphasize the importance of critical consciousness, counter-narratives, self-determination, and holistic humanization, encouraging students to connect their own experiences with the material and to build empathy and understanding for others.

The course also examines the ways that race and racism, white supremacy, colonialism, settler colonialism, and intersectional marginalization have been, and continue to be, profoundly powerful social and cultural forces that have impacted the experiences of the Chicana/o people. It will further explore how the cultural, educational, economic, artistic, and sociopolitical issues that have affected the Chicana/o experience in the U.S, with a focus on the Southwest. It applies an interdisciplinary perspective to racial and social justice issues related to the intersectional colonial Chicana/o experience and seeks to empower students with a lens to support an awareness as well as historical context for self and community advocacy. It will also provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills to achieve these goals for themselves and within the Chicana/o community.

Objectives

Students will:

- Use an inquiry and evidence based approach, support and challenge ideas that impact marginalized communities.
- Promote self and collective empowerment in ways that provide students with a voice to articulate the disenfranchisement felt by their respective communities.
- Encourage cultural understanding of the ways different disenfranchised groups have struggled, worked together, and expressed concepts such as equality, justice, race, and ethnicity.
- Be sensitive to the needs of all by listening and speaking with an open mind and an aim for growth.
- Create writing and revise their work through both individual and collaborative honing of personal style and voice which supports the goals of the course.
- Research historical context and biographical information of key leaders in the Chicana/o community in order to understand the ways that their contributions impacted historical and life circumstances, counter-narratives, as well issues involving forms of systemic oppression.
- Work toward greater inclusivity by cultivating empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, which centers the experiences of Chicanas/os as well as Latina/o communities.
- Celebrate stories and counter-narratives, especially from the Chicana/o community, to reach for further understanding of community and self by recognizing intersectionality, promoting self-empowerment, and developing stronger interpersonal communication through literacy.

Recommended Focus Standards	
Historical Analysis	Chronological and Spatial Thinking: 1,2,3,4 and 5 Research, Evidence and Point of View: 1, 2, 3 Historical Interpretation: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Common Core State Standards>English Language Arts > History/Social Science	CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.1; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.2; CCSS .ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.3; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.4; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.5; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.6; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.7; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.8 ; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 - 10.9; CCSS.ELA - LITERACY.RH.9 10.10
Common Core	RH 1-10
Common Core Writing	WHST 1-10

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critically analyze and engage in a self-examination of how Indigeneity, colonialism, race and racism impacts the intersectional experiences that class, gender, sexuality, religion/spirituality, immigrant status, language varieties, as well as national origin continues to shape Chicana/o communities.
2. Examine and apply the theory and knowledge produced in the Chicana/o Studies community and apply/describe cultural and ancestral knowledge, historical and intellectual traditions, artistic contributions, lived-experiences and social struggles with a particular emphasis on empathy, agency and group-affirmation.
3. Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the dynamic, ever changing nature of Chicana/o artistic expression found in culture, arts, music, film, oral traditions, and literature and the impact this has on Chicana/o cultural consciousness.
4. Critique and pose questions about relevant concepts such as race and racism, racialization, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, genocide, settler colonialism, and anti racism as analyzed in Chicana/o Studies.
5. Examine and explain how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced and enacted by Chicana/o contribute to the transformation of structural inequality in communal, national, international, and transnational politics and in areas like immigration, reparations, settler colonialism, language policies and education.
6. Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movement in the Chicana/o community in order to build a more just and equitable society.

Student Skill Development (Practice)

1. Practice and apply competence in critical thinking/reasoning, speaking and writing skills.
2. Engage in a variety of reading and writing activities to construct powerful counter narratives by and about significant Chicana/o figures and communities and learning to:
 - Use investigative and analytical thinking skills to examine substantive issues, explore complex questions and solve challenging problems.
 - Synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions.
 - Evaluate the logic and validity of arguments, and the relevance of data and information.

- Recognize and avoid common logical and rhetorical fallacies.
 - Distinguish between cause and effect, sequence and correlation of historical and contemporary issues, incidents and stories.
 - Apply principles and practices of historical research.
 - Combine ideas, concepts and information on Chicana/o Studies to craft, claim and draw conclusions.
3. Apply the principles of Chicana/o Studies and engage in historical research in a selected topic from one of the four disciplines, in order to:
 - Ask historical questions about a given situation or key historical figure.
 - Identify an author's/historical figure's purpose in engaging in a given action or constructing a historical document.
 - Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
 - Evaluate the evidence and reasoning of those engaged in historical actions.
 - Construct a research paper.
 4. Undertake a community responsive project that will place them in a community of practice, where they will learn to appreciate the cultural, ancestral and intellectual knowledge of the community and engage in a process for eradicating an inequality selected by the students.
 5. Undertake a research project so that students learn fundamental elements of historical practice, namely: formulating a question they wish to answer, identifying primary and secondary historical sources, analyzing those sources, and using them to create a narrative and an analytical argument for improving the social and political conditions of BIPOC communities.

Course Syllabus

Unit 1: Introduction to Chicana/o Studies-Historical Foundations and Cultural Roots (Mesoamerican Societies to Early 1800s)

The introduction unit in this course introduces students to foundational concepts and frameworks of Ethnic Studies Race, Ethnicity, and Gender, and how these concepts and frameworks will be used to analyze historical and current events. Students will learn to apply a sociological lens in researching and discussing issues, which include race and racism, classism, gender and sexism, colonization, oppression, and resistance. Students will develop skills in decoding meanings produced by experiences based on race, ethnicity, and gender in social contexts, as well as the construction of race, ethnicity, and gender identity through everyday life.

This unit also delves into the profound influence of Mesoamerican civilizations on Chicana/o identity and cultural practices. Students will explore the rich history and legacy of these ancient societies, analyzing their political structures, social organization, cultural achievements, and enduring impact on the present-day Chicana/o experience. Through research, discussion, and creative activities, students will gain a deeper understanding of the complex tapestry of Chicana/o heritage and its connection to the vibrant pre-Columbian past.

Topics:

- **Ethnicity:** How Chicana/o identity is shaped by shared ancestry, traditions, and a connection to pre-colonial Mesoamerica.
- **Indigeneity:** The ongoing connection of Chicanas/os to the Indigenous peoples of their ancestral lands.

- **Civilization:** The achievements of complex Mesoamerican societies in social organization, art, science, and architecture. Additionally, analyze migration patterns of pre-colonial, indigenous, maize-based groups and the impact of migration in the transference and preservation of language.
- **Mesoamerica:** The geographical and cultural context that nurtured the development of influential Indigenous civilizations. In addition, analyze the worldviews, values, cultures, and contributions of pre-colonial, Indigenous, maize-based groups in Mesoamerica.
- **Aztecs (Mexica):** The political structure, cultural achievements, and misconceptions surrounding the powerful Aztec civilization.
- **Maya:** The remarkable intellectual contributions of the Maya civilization, including their writing system, calendar, and architectural achievements.
- **Toltecs:** The artistic, intellectual, and cultural influence of the Toltec civilization on later Mesoamerican societies.
- **Teotihuacan:** The urban planning, massive pyramids and other architectural and engineering achievements, and widespread influence of this major Mesoamerican city-state.
- **Colonization:** The process by which Europeans seized control of the Americas, disrupting Indigenous societies.
- **Imperialism:** How Spanish imperialism imposed European dominance over Mesoamerica, suppressing and exploiting Indigenous cultures.
- **Casta System:** Describe and critique the social and political structures of New Spain, including its White supremacist racial construction, segregation, hierarchy, and stratification.
- **Exploitation:** The forced labor and resource extraction endured by Indigenous and Black populations under Spanish rule.
- **Mercantilism:** The economic system that fueled colonization, prioritizing European wealth accumulation through the exploitation of Indigenous resources and communities.
- **Master Narrative:** The limitations of the dominant historical perspective that overlooks the experiences of marginalized communities.
- **Conquest:** The military defeat of the Aztec Empire by Spanish conquistadors and its lasting impact on the region which includes the imposition of a racial hierarchy that marginalized Indigenous and Black communities. In addition, analyze major goals of, and factors, in the Spanish conquest, including colonization, psychological factors, technology, disease, geography, military strategy, and mythology.

Enduring Understandings:

- Mesoamerican civilizations laid a deep foundation for the cultural practices and traditions that continue to shape Chicana/o identity today.
- Examining pre-Columbian history is crucial for a nuanced understanding of the complexities of the Chicana/o experience and identity in the United States.
- The concept of mestizaje, while offering a framework for understanding Chicana/o heritage, also presents complexities and limitations.
- Contact with Europeans led to seismic changes in the growth and development of Indigenous societies and saw the development of racist social hierarchies which have persisted today.

Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to be Chicana/o?
- What is Ethnic Studies? How does Chicana/o Studies fit within this framework?
- How do the legacies of Mesoamerican civilizations influence Chicana/o identity as well as the

world today?

- To what extent can Chicanas/os connect with specific Mesoamerican cultures?
- What is the role of pre-Columbian history in understanding the complexities of the Chicana/o experience in the United States?
- How does the concept of mestizaje both enrich and challenge understandings of Chicana/o heritage?
- In what ways might recognizing and identifying one's indigenous ancestry be an example of resistance against Eurocentric racial hierarchies that continue today?
- In what ways has indigenous history shaped the identity of Chicanas/os?

Sample Assignments:

- Mesoamerican Civilization Research Paper: Choose one Mesoamerican civilization and research its political and social structures, cultural achievements, and impact on future cultures. The paper should include a bibliography and visuals. Students will respond to the following prompt in a 2-3 page paper: After selecting a Mesoamerican civilization and researching its political and social structures, cultural achievements, and impact on future cultures, why do you believe this group is significant in the history of Chicanas/os?
- Mural Mosaics: Assess individual artwork on artistic messaging and contribution to the overall mural.
- Mestizaje and Identity Exploration Project: Grade student work based on depth of research, critical reflection, and understanding of the complexities of mestizaje.
- Primary Source CSI Worksheet: Evaluate student responses to questions about the primary source, considering their ability to analyze information, draw connections, and explain historical context.
- Modern-Day Mesoamerican Connections Project: Find a contemporary Chicana/o artist, musician, writer, or activist who incorporates Mesoamerican themes into their work. Analyze how they use pre-Columbian history to shape their artistic expression or cultural identity. This can be presented as a multimedia presentation, a written analysis, or a creative response (poem, song).

Extension Activities:

- Debate: Did Mesoamerican Civilizations Collapse or Transform? Divide the class into two sides, researching arguments for each perspective. Encourage students to use historical evidence to support their claims.
- Digital Storytelling Project: Students create a digital story (using images, audio, and text) that explores a specific aspect of Mesoamerican and/or Indigenous cultures or their connection to Chicana/o identity.
- Field Trip: Visit a local museum with a Mesoamerican and/or Indigenous collection to view artifacts and learn from museum educators.

Unit 2: The Impacts of War, Arrogation, and Imperialism on Chicana/o Communities (Early 1800s to Early 1900s)

This unit examines how war, the arrogance that underlies Manifest Destiny, and U.S. imperialism shaped the lives of Chicanas/os living in the Southwest during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Among the key events we will explore include the Mexican-American War, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, forced assimilation policies, and the complex and challenging experiences of Chicanas/os

during World Wars I and II.

Topics:

- **Mexican-American War (1846-1848):** Analyze the causes and consequences of the war, focusing on its impact on Mexican territory and the lives of Chicanas/os.
- **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848):** Examine the treaty's promises and broken guarantees, particularly land loss and disenfranchisement for Chicanas/os.
- **Manifest Destiny and United States Imperialism** (White supremacist-driven patterns and policies that resulted in massive transfers of wealth and land ownership from Chicanas/os and other communities of color to Whites, Europeans, and U.S. corporations (Connections to similar practices in Puerto Rico, Central America, etc.)
- **Settler Colonialism & Indigeneity:** Examine how the forced removal of Chicanas/os and Native Americans from their land shaped the Southwest and was driven by colonization, racism, and arrogation (the act of taking or claiming something for oneself without justification).
- **Systemic Exploitation of the Chicana/o Community:** How the U.S. government and economic forces disadvantaged Chicanas/os before and after the Mexican-American War.
- **Puerto Rico:** How the island became a laboratory for neoliberal policies that led to maquiladoras and increased exploitation of the community.
- **Central America, Cuba, and the Caribbean:** How patterns and examples of marginalization and exploitation can be seen in communities in various areas of the Indigenous diaspora of the Americas.
- **Mexican Revolution:** How the Mexican Revolution impacted immigration (migration) and shaped concepts of resistance and self-determination among Chicanas/os.
- **World War I and the Depression**
 - LULAC
 - Jovita Idar
- **Mexican "Repatriation" (1920s-1930s):** Investigate the forced deportation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans during the Great Depression.
- **World War II**
 - American GI Forum
 - Pachucos & Zoot Suit Riots
- **Racialization of the Chicana/o:** How Chicanas/os were marginalized by race (as exemplified by the Hernandez vs. Texas case).
- **Bracero Program:** How this policy was an example of Convergence Theory as well as how Chicanas/os have been impacted by policies that seek to exploit them as a source of cheap labor.
- **Americanization and Forced Assimilation:** Analyze policies and social pressures designed to erase Chicana/o culture and language.

Enduring Understandings

- Wars, imperialism, and policies of assimilation have had a profound and lasting impact on Chicana/o communities.
- Chicanas/os have a long history of resilience and resistance in the face of adversity.
- Understanding these historical events is crucial for examining contemporary issues facing Chicanas/os.

Essential Questions:

- How did war, arrogation, and imperialism dispossess Chicanas/os of their land, rights, and cultural identity?
- How did the dispossession of the Chicana/o community's land holdings result in the accumulation of U.S. wealth, power, and influence?
- What strategies were used to take land away from Chicana/o landowners and what were the short and long term consequences?
- How was U.S. Imperialism, White supremacy, and Manifest Destiny used to justify the expansion of U.S. territory at the expense of Mexico, its people, and other communities of color?
- What has been the role of violence, oppression, deception, and persecution towards Chicanas/os in the West (e.g., lynching, Texas Rangers, Bear Flag Revolt, El Plan de San Diego)?
- In what ways did Chicanas/os resist forced assimilation and maintain their cultural heritage?
- In what ways has Chicana/o identity served as a challenge to Eurocentric hegemony?
- In what way are programs such as the Bracero Program examples of Convergence Theory?
- How can we learn from history to promote social justice and equity for Chicana/o communities today?

Sample Assignments:

- Comparative Timeline: Create a timeline that compares and contrasts key events related to war, imperialism, and their impact on Chicanas/os. The timeline should have at least 10 key events with factual descriptions drawn from reputable academic sources.
- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Analysis: Analyze the treaty's text and its long-term consequences for Chicana/o land rights and citizenship.
- Oral History Project: Interview a family member or community elder who lived through this period and document their experiences.

Extension Activities:

- Debate Simulation: Simulate a debate between historical figures representing different perspectives on the Mexican-American War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
- Historical Fiction Writing: Write a short story from the perspective of a Chicana/o experiencing the events of this period, such as the Mexican-American War or forced repatriation.
- Film Analysis: Watch and analyze a film like "Walkout" or "Zoot Suit" that explores themes of social justice and Chicana/o identity in the context of war and assimilation attempts.
- Community History Project: Research local Chicana/o history and create a presentation or exhibit for the school or community center. This could involve historical sites, community figures, or cultural traditions.

Unit 3: Chicana/o Resistance and Movements for Social Justice (Early 1900s-1970s and Beyond)

This unit dives deep into the powerful legacy of Chicana/o resistance movements from the early 20th century to the 1970s. We will explore landmark events like the East LA High School Walkouts, analyze critical concepts like "internal colonialism," and celebrate the diverse voices of activists, artists, and Chicana feminists who fought for justice.

Topics:

- **The Chicano Movement:** Explore the origins, key figures (Alurista, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales), and the fight for self-determination.
- **Origins of Chicana/o Studies:** Early works and scholarship and their significance to the origins of Chicana/o Studies as a discipline (i.e., Sanchez, Galarza, Quiñonez, Paredes, McWilliams, Acuña, Barrera, etc.).
- **Lemon Grove Incident:** A landmark case highlighting segregation faced by Mexican students in California which led to the first successful school desegregation court decision in the history of the United States.
- **East LA High School Walkouts/Blowouts:** Examine how Chicana/o students protested substandard education and discrimination in the 1960s.
- **Third World Liberation Strike (SFSU):** Explore and understand how the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), organized the longest strike in U.S. History and demanded equal access to public higher education, more senior faculty of color and a new curriculum that would embrace the history, counter-narratives, and culture of marginalized communities of color.
- **El Plan de Santa Bárbara:** Students will learn how El Plan de Santa Barbara outlined Chicana/o self-determination as well as political and educational needs.
- **The Four I's of Oppression:** A framework used to understand the interconnected forms of oppression faced by Chicanas/os (Ideological, Institutional, Interpersonal, and Internalized).
- **The Chicana/o Moratorium:** Investigate the anti-war protests highlighting the disproportionate impact on Chicana/o communities.
- **The Brown Berets, Black Berets, & the Young Lords:** How activist groups fought for Chicana/o rights through community organizing, cultural expression, and political action.
- **La Mujer and the response to marginalization in the movement:** Examine the experiences of Chicana activists who challenged sexism within the larger Chicano movement.
- **Education:** MEChA, Aztlan (El Plan De Santa Barbara), MAYA, Denver Youth Conference
- **Internal colonialism (Munoz, Barrera, etc) and the Chicano Nation:** Explore the pervasiveness of colonialism and its potential to become internalized in the Chicana/o community.
- **Struggles for Land Rights:** Investigate figures like Joaquin Murieta and Reies Lopez Tijerina who fought for land ownership and justice.
- **Chavez Ravine:** The forced removal of 300 Chicana/o families from their homes in Chavez Ravine (1950s).
- **Political Representation:** Analyze the rise of the Raza Unida Party and its efforts to gain political power.

Enduring Understandings

- Chicana/o communities have a rich history of collective action that serves as a powerful inspiration for contemporary social justice movements.
- The Chicano Movement employed diverse tactics, ranging from education activism to cultural expression and political participation.
- The Chicano movement addressed a broad spectrum of issues, including educational equity, segregation, poverty, labor rights, civil rights, and the Vietnam War.
- The legacy of the movement continues to shape Chicana/o identity and activism in the 21st century.

Essential Questions:

- How did the Chicano Movement define social justice and what methods did they utilize to achieve it?
- How have young people shaped the history of Chicanas/os in the U.S?
- What are the contributions made by the originators of Chicana/o Studies?
- What were the key challenges faced by Chicana/o activists throughout the 20th century?
- How did social movements involving Chicanas/os address the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality?
- How can we use the lessons learned from the Chicano Movement to inform ongoing struggles for social justice today?
- In what ways did the Chicano Movement challenge hegemony, Eurocentric arrogance, and systems of power and oppression?

Sample Assignments:

- **Research Project:** Choose a specific movement or figure and research its history, goals, successes, and challenges. Create a multimedia presentation or exhibit showcasing your findings.
- **Comparative Analysis Essay:** Analyze two different Chicana/o movement groups or events. Compare and contrast their strategies, ideologies, and historical context in a well-structured essay.
- **Creative Expression Project:** Through art, poetry, spoken word, or music, express your understanding of a specific aspect of Chicana/o resistance. Consider the challenges faced and the triumphs achieved.
- Students will interview a Chicana/o professor or teacher and write testimonios using an insider/outsider, borderlands, or pedagogies of the home's lens.

Extension Activities:

- **Guest Speaker Invitation:** Invite a local activist or scholar to share their insights on Chicana/o movements and their ongoing relevance in contemporary social justice struggles.
- **Community Service Learning Project:** Partner with a local organization working on social justice issues that connect to the Chicana/o Movement.
- **Film Analysis:** Watch and analyze a film like "Walkout" or "Zoot Suit" that depicts a Chicana/o movement event. Discuss its historical accuracy and social commentary in a class presentation.
- **Oral History Project:** Interview a family member or community elder who lived through the era of the Chicano Movement and document their experiences. Capture their stories and perspectives to preserve this important history.

Unit 4: Chicana/o Identity, Cultural Expressions, and Artistic Contributions

This unit delves into the rich tapestry of Chicana/o identity, exploring its historical roots, cultural expressions, and vibrant artistic contributions. Through critical analysis, you will gain a deeper understanding of the struggles and triumphs of the Chicana/o experience in the United States.

Topics:

- **Critical Consciousness:** Cultivating the ability to critically analyze social and political structures, systems, and patterns of oppression, to understand their impact on Chicana/o communities and to empower individuals to take action for meaningful change.
- **La Raza:** Exploring the concept of a unified Chicano/a people and its significance.

- **Aztlán as Historical and Conceptual Homeland:** Investigating the historical territory of Aztlán and its historical, political, and symbolic meaning for Chicanos/as well as how this concept challenges narratives of Chicana/os as foreigners in the U.S.
- **Indigeneity in Chicana/o Art:** Examining how artists incorporate Indigenous traditions and symbols into their work.
- **Community Cultural Wealth:** Understanding the various forms of knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources that marginalized communities, particularly communities of color, possess and utilize to survive and thrive, despite systemic inequalities. It challenges the deficit-based view that these communities lack valuable cultural capital and instead highlights the strengths and assets they bring.
- **Chicano Manifesto:** Analyzing the 1967 manifesto that outlined key demands of the Chicano Movement.
- **Corky Gonzalez' I am Joaquin:** Delving into this iconic poem that celebrates Chicano/a history and identity.
- **Cultural Nationalism and the Chicana/o Movement (Alurista):** Exploring Alurista's ideas on cultural identity and its role in the movement.
- **Armando Rendon:** Studying the significance of this artist's work in the Chicano art movement.
- **Pachuco Culture:** Investigating the unique style, language, and identity of Pachuco culture.
- **Women in the Movement (through poetry and spoken word):** Giving voice to the contributions of Chicanas in the movement through poetry and spoken word.
- **Chicana Feminist Authors/Academics:** Examining the work of prominent Chicana scholars who challenged gender inequalities both within and outside their community.
- **La Chicana and Gender Stratification:** Understanding the specific challenges faced by Chicanas within the movement and society.
- **Challenging Machismo and Marianaismo:** Critically analyzing traditional gender roles within Chicana/o communities.
- **Music (e.g. Lalo Guerrero, Richie Valens, Tex Mex, Selena, Doo wop, Santana, Ozomatli, Quetzal, Las Cafeteras, Aztlan Underground, Rage Against the Machine):** Tracing the evolution of music influenced by, as well as an expression of, Chicana/o identity and activism.
- **Chicana/o Theatre:** El Teatro Campesino, Zoot Suit, Culture Clash, CASA 0101.
- **Chicana/o Art:** Exploring various mediums within Chicana/o art and their connection to social and cultural issues.
- **Lowriders:** Investigating the cultural significance of lowrider cars and their role in Chicana/o communities.
- **Murals as Resistance, Education, Storytelling, and Cultural Affirmation:** Analyzing the power of murals in public spaces and their role in highlighting resistance to oppression and marginalization.
- **Literature:** Reading and discussing works such as Borderlands by Gloria Anzaldua that explore the depth and complexities of Chicana/o identity.

Enduring Understandings

- Chicana/o identity is multifaceted and shaped by history, culture, and ongoing struggles for social justice.
- Artistic expressions are powerful tools for reclaiming cultural narratives, challenging oppression, and fostering self-determination.
- Chicana/o contributions have enriched American society in literature, art, music, and social

movements.

Essential Questions:

- How do past experiences inform Chicana/o identity in the present?
- In what ways do Chicana/o artists challenge dominant narratives?
- How can understanding Chicana/o history and culture contribute to a more just society?

Sample Assignments:

- Analyze a mural in your community and explain its significance to the history of the Chicana/o community.
- Create a spoken word piece reflecting on a Chicana/o experience.
- Research and compare and contrast the representation of Chicanos/as in two different media forms (e.g., music and film).

Extension Activities:

- Visit a local museum or gallery showcasing Chicana/o art.
- Organize a film screening and discussion on a Chicana/o themed documentary.
- Participate in a community event celebrating Chicana/o culture.
- Research and present on a prominent Chicana/o figure. Students will research and write a historical counternarrative, adopting the persona of a significant figure from a specific era. They will design a photo or art exhibit showcasing their chosen individual. For their presentation, they will tell the person's story or recite a personally constructed spoken word poem from the first-person perspective.

Unit 5: Social, Educational, Legal, Political, and Economic Challenges to the Chicana/o Community

This unit delves into the historical and ongoing social, educational, legal, political, and economic oppression faced by Chicana/o communities in the United States. We will examine historical cases like Mendez v. Westminster that set precedents for equal education access, and analyze how segregation and discrimination manifest across these various aspects of Chicana/o life.

Topics:

- **History of segregation in Chicana/o education:** Pre- and post-Mendez v. Westminster
- **Educational inequities for Chicana/o students:** Funding disparities, tracking, IQ testing, language barriers, and suppression.
- **Legal challenges faced by Chicanas/os:** Chicanas/os have historically faced numerous legal challenges, particularly in areas like immigration, labor, police brutality, and voting rights. These issues have deeply impacted the community, and organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and National Council of La Raza (now UnidosUS) have played a significant role in advocating for their rights.
- **Economic disparities and labor exploitation in Chicana/o communities:** How economic challenges and socioeconomic status in the Chicana/o community has been both a result of, and target of opportunism, from powerful economic and political interests.
- **Chicana/o health and well-being:** The impact of policies and patterns on the short and long term mental, emotional, and physical health of the Chicana/o community.
- **Electoral Politics and representation:** How groups such as MAPA and NALÉO have

sought to challenge political disenfranchisement of the Chicana/o community.

- **California Propositions:** How California Propositions and referenda have played a significant role in enforcing anti-immigrant and exclusionary political measures targeting Chicana/o cultural identity and educational participation, as seen with Prop 63 in 1986, Prop 187 in 1994, and Prop 227 in 1998 and how this community has responded through examples of organization and resistance.

Enduring Understandings:

- Chicana/o communities have a long history of facing and overcoming historical and ongoing systemic barriers related to social, educational, legal, and economic opportunities.
- Systemic racism, historical injustices, and ongoing policies have contributed to inequalities, which are shaped by factors such as racism, discrimination, and a lack of representation.
- Chicanas/os demonstrate resilience and agency by advocating for positive change.
- Education plays a critical and potentially transformative role in empowering Chicana/o communities.
- Building a more just and equitable society requires addressing and challenging systemic racism, patterns of oppression, and colonization that persist in various forms today.

Essential Questions:

- How have historical events and policies shaped the social, educational, and economic realities of Chicana/o communities?
- What are the root causes of educational disparities and economic hardships faced by Chicanas/os?
- How do immigration policies and challenges impact Chicana/o families and communities?
- How are Chicana/o communities mobilizing to overcome challenges such as immigration policies that serve to target them?
- What can be done to create a more equitable society for all using lessons learned from the Chicano Movement?
- How have Chicana/o communities used the legal system to challenge unjust and corrupt systems of power and oppression?

Sample Assignments:

- **Research Project:** Students choose a specific social, educational, or economic challenge faced by Chicanas/os and research its historical roots, current impact, and potential solutions.
- **Policy Analysis:** Students analyze a specific policy (e.g., education, immigration reform, affirmative action) and its potential impact on Chicana/o communities.
- **Community Advocacy Project:** Students research a community organization working to address a specific challenge. They can then create a public awareness campaign or write a letter to a local representative advocating for change.

Extension Activities:

- **Guest Speaker:** Invite a representative from a local community organization working on social justice issues to speak to the class.
- **Film Screening and Discussion:** Watch a documentary film that explores social, educational, or economic challenges faced by Chicanas/os.
- **Field Trip:** Visit a local cultural center or museum that showcases Chicana/o history and contributions.
- **Community Service:** Students volunteer with an organization that supports Chicana/o

communities.

- Creative Project: Students create an artistic expression (e.g., poem, song, artwork) that reflects their understanding of a specific challenge and a call for action.

Unit 6: Chicana/o Intersectionality, Solidarity, and Undoing Systems and Patterns of Oppression

This unit explores the concept of intersectionality within the Chicana/o experience. By examining the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality, students will gain a deeper understanding of how Chicana/os have navigated systems of oppression and built alliances with other marginalized communities. Students will also critically analyze the ongoing fight for social justice and educational equity.

Topics:

- **Mutualistas:** Investigate the role of mutual aid societies in supporting Chicana/o communities.
- **Influence of the Black Panther Party, Young Lords, The Black Power Movement, and Other Communities of Color:** Analyze the connections and collaborations between Chicana/o activists and other social justice movements.
- **United Farm Workers (Chicana/o and Filipino Farmworkers):** Study the history and impact of the UFW grape boycott and the fight for farmworker rights through the lens of solidarity.
- **Immigrant Rights Movement:** Explore the role of Chicana/os in advocating for immigrant rights and challenging deportation policies.
- **Labor Movement:** Analyze the historical and ongoing contributions of Chicana/o workers to the labor movement.
- **Joteria Culture (LGBTQ+ identity):** Investigate the expression of LGBTQ+ identity within Chicana/o communities.
- **Gentrification in Chicana/o Communities:** Critically analyze the impact of gentrification and displacement on Chicana/o neighborhoods and community identity.
- **Ethnic Studies Movement:** Study the history and continued impact of Ethnic Studies programs in education.
- **Challenges to Chicana/o Studies and Ethnic Studies in K-12 Schools and Higher Education:** Analyze the ongoing challenges faced by Ethnic Studies programs and the fight for educational equity.
- **Puerto Rican (Boricua) Studies and Latinx Studies:** Explore the connections and distinctions between Chicana/o Studies, Puerto Rican Studies, and broader Latinx Studies.
- **The Challenges of Teaching Chicana/o Identity and Critical Consciousness (Connections to Plato's Allegory of the Cave):** Utilize examples such as Plato's allegory to understand the challenges and importance of teaching critical consciousness.
- **Chicana/o Studies as a Counter Space to Modern Apathy, Cultural Erasure, and Eurocentric Homogenization of Youth:** Analyze how Chicana/o Studies combats apathy, internal colonization, and promotes self esteem, cultural understanding, and a reimagining of self.

Enduring Understandings

- Students have the capacity to name, discuss and analyze possibilities of hope for

constructing an equitable educational system.

- Chicana/o identity is shaped by various social locations and the complex interplay of factors that include history, race, class, gender, and sexuality.
- Solidarity with other marginalized communities is crucial for achieving social justice.
- Chicana/o Studies plays a vital role in challenging oppressive systems and promoting critical thinking.

Essential Questions:

- How do patterns and systems of oppression impact Chicana/o communities in different ways?
- Why is building alliances with other communities of color important for social change?
- How can Chicana/o Studies empower youth to critically analyze the world around them through the development of an Ethnic Studies lens?
- In what ways has Chicana/o identity served as a challenge to Eurocentric hegemony?
- How have Chicana/o leaders been influenced by leaders and social movements of other communities of color?

Sample Assignments:

- Research an activist or scholar who exemplifies the concept of intersectionality within the Chicana/o experience.
- Create a presentation on the impact of gentrification on a specific Chicana/o community.
- Write a persuasive essay arguing for the importance of Ethnic Studies programs in K-12 schools.

Extension Activities:

- Interview a community leader involved in social justice work.
- Organize a panel discussion on the importance of solidarity across different identity groups.
- Volunteer with an organization that supports Chicana/o or immigrant communities.
- Students will develop and design a civic engagement project that incorporates key questions: How does the community's cultural, linguistic, ancestral, familial, and historical knowledge sustain its sense of hope and spirit? How do the community's self-perceptions differ from the views held by outsiders? What do liberation, solidarity, and action look like within the community? What does the future hold for the community?
- Utilize a YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research) approach to address and present a case study of a successful challenge to an educational equity issue.

Text and Materials

- Approved textbook: **Occupied America: A History of Chicanos** by Rodolfo F. Acuña
- Possible supplemental texts:
 - An Indigenous People's History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbaer-Ortiz
 - A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn
 - From Indians to Chicanos: The Dynamics of Mexican-American Culture-2nd Edition by James Diego Vigil
 - Harvest of Empire by Juan Gonzalez
 - Open Veins of Latin America by Eduardo Galeano
 - Rethinking Ethnic Studies (Rethinking Schools, 2019)