



## FAIR'S AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND CIVICS CURRICULUM

*FAIR's American Experience and Civics Curriculum (FAECC) is FAIR's "answer" to the Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Consortium's Course (LESMCC)*

### The LESMCC teaches a radical and politicized version of ethnic studies

- The United States is defined by "systems of oppression" ("white supremacy," "racism," patriarchy," "colonization," and "capitalism,").
- The United States government is framed as a colonial power and the United States itself as an occupied territory.

### The LESMCC pressures students to become activists for political causes

- Emphasizes "decolonization," which "is not a metaphor and ultimately relates to the sovereignty of the Indigenous nations of the land where a course takes place" (LESMCC Introduction, pg. 13).
- Celebrates Marxist/communist organizations including the Black Panther Party, The Young Lords, The Brown Berets, and I Wor Kuen while ignoring liberal civil rights organizations. Tells teachers "It is important to emphasize that the work [of these Marxist organizations] was truly amazing, but largely incomplete," and that "it is [the students'] own reimaginings, visions, and activism that are needed today" (LESMCC lesson on "Transformative Solidarity").

### The FAECC teaches a comprehensive perspective of the American Experience

- Provides students with an honest account of of unique challenges various ethnic groups have faced, the resources used to meet those challenges, the positive contributions each has made to the American Experience, and our collective progress toward the shared goal of equality for all.
- Examines America's founding ideals of equality and freedom and their significance to the history and progress of all ethnic groups in America.

### The FAECC promotes civic engagement to strengthen our constitutional democracy

- Empowers students to reflect on their own and others' humanity and "the conditions for promoting equality and thriving so that they will make constructive contributions to their communities and our country throughout their lives" (FAECC Introduction).
- Promotes knowledge of key civil rights figures and organizations while also exposing students to the ideas of their critics: "How did Martin Luther King, Jr.'s approach to achieving civil rights differ from Malcolm X's?" (FAECC Part 2, Unit 1).

## The LESMCC pressures students to become activists for political causes

- States that activism is “inseparable” from ethnic studies, defines an “activist” as “a person who campaigns, advocates, or takes action for some kind of progressive or positive social, economic, or political change...” (LESMCC lesson on “Transformative Solidarity”).
- A central theme of the LESMCC, and the subject of Unit 5, is building “solidarity.” “Solidarity” is “... characterized by shared political analysis and goals...” (LESMCC lesson on “Solidarity, Praxis, and Reimagination”).

## The FAECC promotes civic engagement to strengthen our constitutional democracy

- Equips students to understand historic and current challenges that various ethnic groups experienced and how they have relied on the foundational principles and laws of the United States to empower themselves socially, economically, and politically.
- Emphasizes agency and self-efficacy and requires students to consider: “As a unique, responsible, civically engaged individual, what might you aspire to do or become in life?” (FAECC Capstone Project Part 3).

## The LESMCC essentializes and villainizes people based on racialization or ethnic background

- Requires students to view themselves through the lens of their “racialized intersectional identity” and understand how this identity fits within “the positionality of their people in the social hierarchy of the United States” (LESMCC Introduction, pg. 18).
- States that only “white” people are capable of being racist, and that being “white” gives one “a clear path to social and economic power” (LESMCC Introduction, pg.3).
- Excludes “white” students from “solidarity building.” Students should come away from the course understanding “The transformative solidarity between my people and other communities of color in reimagining a better world” (LESMCC Introduction, pg. 19).
- Lessons include materials that promote hateful and essentialist ideas about “white” people, including that “white America practices” a “policy of racial purity” (Chapter 7 of Borderlands/La Frontera, found in LESMCC lesson on “Critical Reflexivity Journal”) and that “the white race is a race of devils” and are “wicked by nature” (“Black Power Mixtape” documentary, 1:16:00, found in LESMCC lesson on “Transformative Solidarity”).

## The FAECC recognizes how each student’s ethnic identity is just one piece of their unique individual identity

- Asks students “to consider and write about their own personal, cultural, ethnic, and American identities, as well as their goals and potential as unique human beings within the American story” (FAECC Capstone Project, Part 3).
- Recognizes that **all** people are capable of being racist. Stereotyping and discrimination are unfortunate parts of the human experience, but can be overcome by appreciating differences and exercising constitutionally guaranteed rights that can empower us.
- Celebrates the beauty of Americans’ diverse and shared traits and values. Exploring these commonalities enables students to relate concepts of American identity and human identity to civics, American history, economics, and government.
- Encourages students to explore their common humanity and the similar challenges that Americans of all ethnicities and backgrounds have faced as part of the American Experience, and the ways in which they have often worked together to surpass these challenges.

## The LESMCC lacks viewpoint diversity and implicitly discourages the expression of different viewpoints.

- Excludes all viewpoints that dispute the idea that the United States is fundamentally oppressive.
- “Ethnic Studies does not feign neutrality and it is often presented in the first person. Ethnic Studies preserves the right to do so as an explicit counter narrative to traditional western disciplines, and in these ways, distinguishes itself from the majority of other academic areas” (LESMCC Introduction, pg. 12).
- Suggests that views that differ from those promoted in the LESMCC are products of “Western epistemology,” which is “rooted in the colonizing logic of Eurocentrism” (LESMCC Introduction, pg. 13).

## The FAECC includes lesson materials from a variety of perspectives and encourages students to consider different viewpoints.

- Highlights “readings from a diversity of perspectives upon which our units and lessons are built” (FAECC Introduction).
- “Students will increase proficiency in debating alternative interpretations of historical events” (FAECC, Sample Lesson, Lesson Objectives).

---

For more information, please contact:



Monica Harris  
[monica@fairforall.org](mailto:monica@fairforall.org)  
[www.fairforall.org](http://www.fairforall.org)



FOUNDATION  
AGAINST  
INTOLERANCE  
& RACISM