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Progress made in training ethnic studies teachers, yet challenges remain

A recent UCLA-Stanford survey found that 77% of teacher preparation programs offer training relevant to ethnic studies instruction, but might be insufficient to meet a new 2030 state graduation requirement

LOS ANGELES (Nov. 3, 2025)— Approximately 3 of 4 California colleges and universities teacher readiness programs surveyed in a UCLA/Stamford study offer ethnic studies preparation for their future K-12 educators.

Training future teachers is an evolving responsibility as higher education institutions are confronted with two challenges: (1) current ethnic studies instruction is not comparable across institutions and (2) no additional state funding exists for this work. These findings come from a recent survey led by [Veronica Terriquez](#), director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC), and [Albert Camarillo](#), professor of history, emeritus, at Stanford University.

Terriquez and Camarillo looked at education degree programs at 34 public and private universities, of which 77% affirmed they are offering some level of ethnic studies training or programming. These efforts partly respond to Assembly Bill 101, signed into law in 2021, which requires all California high school students to complete a one-semester ethnic studies course to graduate, starting with the class of 2030. Assembly Bill 101 was authored by then Assemblymember [Jose Medina](#), a retired educator and current Riverside County Board Supervisor.

“We wanted to understand whether colleges and universities are taking meaningful steps to prepare future teachers to engage students in a deeper examination of the histories and experiences that shape California and the nation. While we found institutions have taken steps in the right direction, often with limited resources, there is still much work to be done,” said Terriquez, a professor of Chicana/o and Central American Studies at UCLA. “These findings underscore a clear need for greater institutional support to ensure that future educators are fully equipped to teach about the rich tapestry of cultures that defines our country.”

The survey, conducted in late 2024 and early 2025, included 34 higher education institutions, including six University of California (UC) campuses, 11 California State University (CSU) schools, and 17 private institutions.

Survey findings noted that education schools are beginning to fill gaps by integrating ethnic studies content into courses, workshops, and co-curricular activities, or by encouraging teacher candidates to seek this training elsewhere on campus.

Other notable findings:

- 64% of surveyed institutions reported collaborating with K-12 districts or schools on ethnic studies curriculum development or professional development initiatives
- The training and coursework partially cover the four major groups: 62% include materials on Latina/o/x communities; 59% on African Americans/Blacks; 56% on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; and 56% on Native Americans
- Of the institutions surveyed, 31% make publicly available curriculum or other related resources.

Terriquez and Camarillo believe that expanding teacher training programs is necessary so that educators across California can properly implement quality ethnic studies curricula. One major challenge, they noted, is that teaching ethnic studies is an unfunded mandate.

“Equipping California high school students with skill sets to help them better understand and appreciate ethnic and racial diversity in American society is perhaps more important now than ever,” said Camarillo, a history professor often viewed as one of the founding scholars of the field of Mexican American history and Chicano Studies. “The survey findings point to an encouraging development in the training of the next generation of California teachers prepared to offer courses in ethnic studies.”

The report, *Advancing Ethnic Studies in California High Schools: A Survey of Teacher Preparation Programs*, was produced through a collaboration between Stanford University's [Institute for Advancing Just Societies](#); Stanford University's [Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity](#); UCLA's [Institute of American Cultures](#) ethnic studies research centers: [American Indian Studies Center](#), [Asian American Studies Center](#), [Chicano Studies Research Center](#), [Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies](#); and UCLA's [Center X](#) in the School of Education and Information Studies.

Download the report: www.chicano.ucla.edu

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