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LBUSD ETHNIC STUDIES REPORT

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Abstract

Ethnic Studies has been offered to LBUSD students for three academic years, beginning in Fall 2015. Students primarily enrolled in the foundational course: 215, US Diversity and the Ethnic Experience, accounting for 90% of all Ethnic Studies enrollment (n=1063) and performed well with 70% earning As or Bs. Generally, students who have taken Ethnic Studies perform at higher levels than students who did not choose to enroll in Ethnic Studies with significant differences observed for GPA, SBAC, On-track status for Graduation and A-G, number of AP courses taken and Social-Emotional Learning measures. Ethnic Studies students (n=295) completed course surveys and 50-60% of students reported the course to be of the same level of difficulty as other courses. However, students did report the course readings to be difficult and had the lowest agreement ratings for “being prepared for each class session.” Students with lower GPAs have enrolled in the courses and performed well, and over one-quarter of students in the most recent academic year report post-high school plans of 2-year college or non-college plans, indicating that these courses are reaching a diverse group of students. Student feedback revealed an appreciation of many aspects of the course including learning about other students’ background, the types of student interaction the course afforded, and the opportunity to earn college credits.

The Development and History of Ethnic Studies Program at LBUSD

The Long Beach Ethnic Studies program launched in the Fall Semester of 2015 and offers LBUSD High School students the unique opportunity to take free college credit Ethnic Studies classes at LBUSD High Schools. The district is proud to collaborate with Cal State Long Beach in offering free dual enrollment Ethnic Studies Courses to Long Beach Unified students in grades 11-12 in the fall and grades 10-12 in the spring. Students who successfully complete courses earn both Long Beach Unified and CSULB credit toward graduation.

The Superintendent made a \$1.2 million commitment to offer 12 classes per semester for 5 years. Between May and September, four ethnic studies departments in the College of Liberal Arts became involved. Launched through the CSULB campus’ college of Continuing and Professional Education, courses take place on Saturday mornings at six comprehensive high schools: Cabrillo, Jordan, Lakewood, Millikan, Poly and Wilson. For the start of the program, close to 2000 parents and students attended an orientation resulting in 420 enrollments. There were 750 registered interested and 300 students went onto a waiting list. Subsequently, there was increased funding for up to 16 classes per semester.

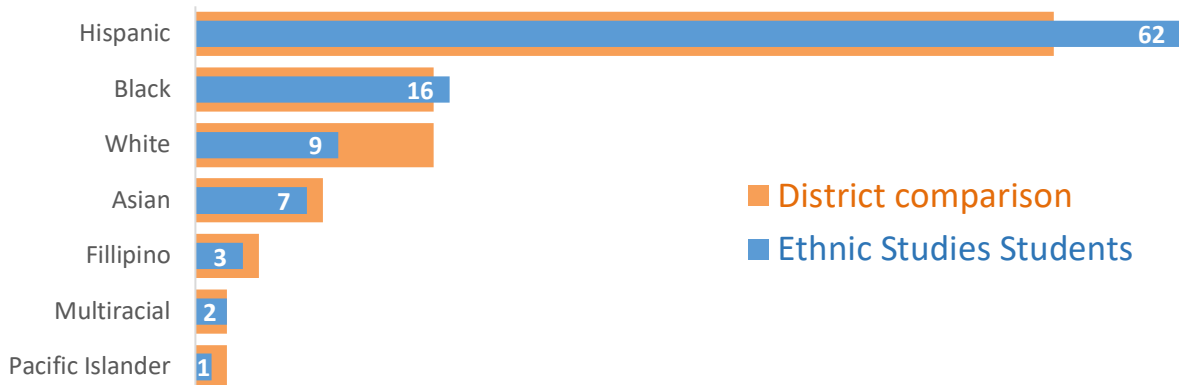
The foundation/cornerstone course is US Diversity and the Ethnic Experience providing a uniform syllabus and reader and an overview of four ethnic groups. This primary course is a survey of four major ethnic groups (Native American, African American, Chicano/Latino American and Asian American) from the earliest periods of Native American history, through migrations to the Americas, into the present conditions of U.S. society. Special attention is given to the formation and transformation of each ethnic group and their individual and collective roles in the development of the United States. Additional classes are available for

students that complete the primary course and wish to gain deeper knowledge in the specified content areas.

Ethnic Studies Course Enrollment

LBUSD students have been enrolling in CSULB Ethnic Studies courses since in Fall 2015. In this report, presented is an analysis of data from 950 students who had enrolled in one Ethnic Studies course and 52 have enrolled in two or more Ethnic Studies courses, with a comparison group of other high school students districtwide. The majority of Ethnic Studies students were not GATE identified (81%) and were low SES (72%). However, few special education students enrolled in the course, just 3% (32) of students were RSP. Enrollment in the course by Ethnicity was similar to general district enrollment in our file for analysis. We analyzed the ethnicities of students enrolled in high school in LBUSD as compared with students enrolling in the Ethnic Studies course. As shown in Figure 1, the enrollment in Ethnic Studies courses exceeded district enrollment for Hispanic students (62% vs 54%) and slightly exceeded for African American/Black students (16% vs 15%). White students enrolled in Ethnic Studies at a rate less than overall district enrollment (9% vs 15%). The remaining ethnicities enrolled in Ethnic Studies courses at or below their rate of enrollment overall in the district.

Figure 1. Ethnicity of Ethnic Studies students compared overall district enrollment rates



Course Enrollment

The foundation course providing an introduction is US Diversity and the Ethnic Experience and accounts for 93% of the Ethnic Studies enrollment in this analysis. The 200-level course is the introductory survey course, while the 100-level courses are the secondary courses each focusing on one ethnicity.

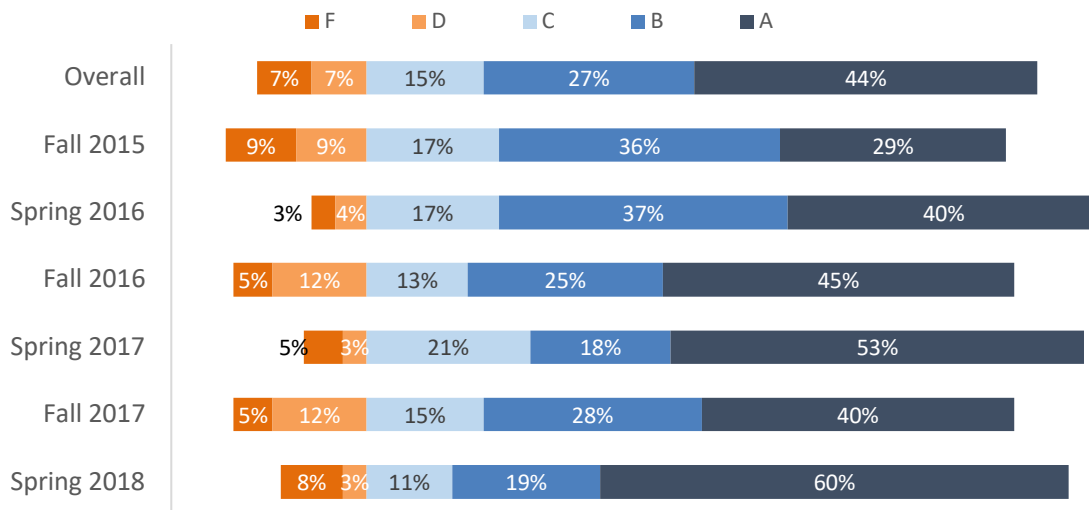
Figure 2. Total enrollment by course for academic years 2015-16 to 2017-18

| Course | N |
|--|------|
| 215: US Diversity & the Ethnic Experience | 993 |
| 100: Intro to Chicano/Latino Studies | 5 |
| 121: African American History 1865 - Present | 28 |
| 120: Asian American History | 21 |
| 101: Intro to Native American People | 16 |
| Total Enrollment | 1063 |

Overview course

Students have performed well overall in the Ethnic Studies 215: US Diversity and the Ethnic Experience course with 71% overall earning As (44%) or Bs (27%). Performance did vary across semesters, with between 29% to 60% of students earning As. The most Ds and Fs occurred in first semester, Fall 2015. Students earned Ds and Fs at approximately double the rate during the Fall semesters as compared with Spring semesters.

Figure 3. Course grades overall and by semester



Students may have had a permitted withdrawal occurring in the first two weeks of the course (W) or had an unauthorized withdrawal (WU). A WU indicates that a student enrolled in a course but did not officially withdraw from the course and failed to complete the course requirements. A "WU" grade is equivalent to an "F" for GPA and other calculations. The following table presents the rates of Withdrawals and Unexcused Withdrawals. The second semester course that was offered had the highest rates of Withdrawal and Unexcused Withdrawal. The rate of Withdrawals and Unexcused Withdrawal generally was lower after a fair number of students withdrew in the second semester the course was offered in Spring 2016. The rate of early Withdrawals did increase in the most recent Spring semester of 2018.

Figure 4. Rate of withdrawals by semester

| | Enrollment | Withdraw (does not impact GPA) | | Unexcused Withdrawal (counts as F) | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|
| | | N | % | N | % |
| Fall 2015 | 265 | 22 | 8 | 13 | 5 |
| Spring 2016 | 121 | 23 | 19 | 15 | 12 |
| Fall 2016 | 164 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| Spring 2017 | 102 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2017 | 116 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Spring 2018 | 225 | 21 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| Overall | 993 | 84 | 8 | 45 | 5 |

Many fewer students enrolled in the specialty courses that focus on gaining deeper knowledge of a specified ethnicity. Enrollment in specialized courses accounted for 70 of 1063 enrollments. Students performed well in these courses as well with between 63-80% of students in each course earning As or Bs. Early and late Withdrawals were generally low for the specialty courses.

Figure 5. Student achievement and withdrawals by course

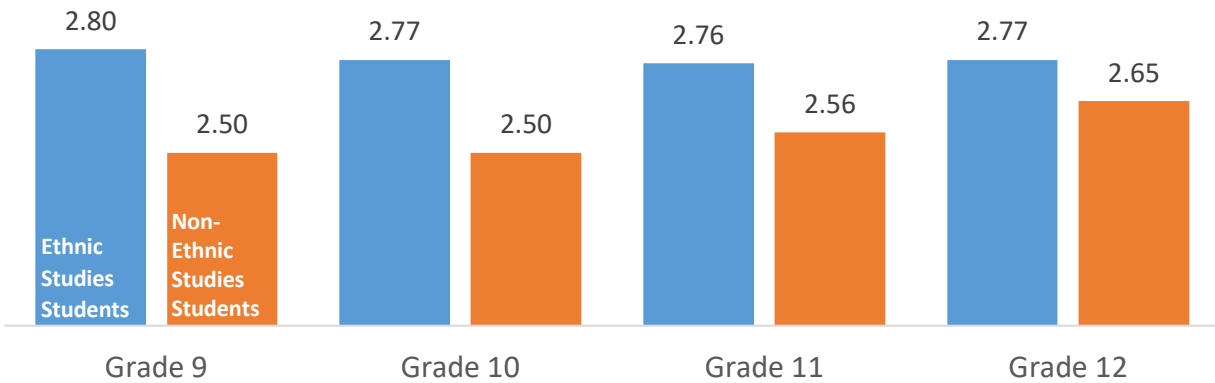
| Course | N | % As & Bs | W (# of original enrollment) | WU (# of original enrollment) |
|--|-----|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 215: US Diversity & Ethnic Experience | 993 | 71% | 84 | 45 |
| 100: Intro to Chicano/Latino Studies | 5 | 80% | 0 | 0 |
| 121: African American History 1865 - Present | 28 | 63% | 1 | 0 |
| 120: Asian American History | 21 | 76% | 0 | 0 |
| 101: Intro to Native American People | 16 | 69% | - | - |

Most commonly, students would either enroll in the 215: US Diversity & Ethnic Experience course only or take it first prior to a second focused course. Of the 10 students who only took one course that was not the overview course, nine took 120: Asian American Study and one took 121: African American History.

Ethnic Studies Students’ Achievement Comparison

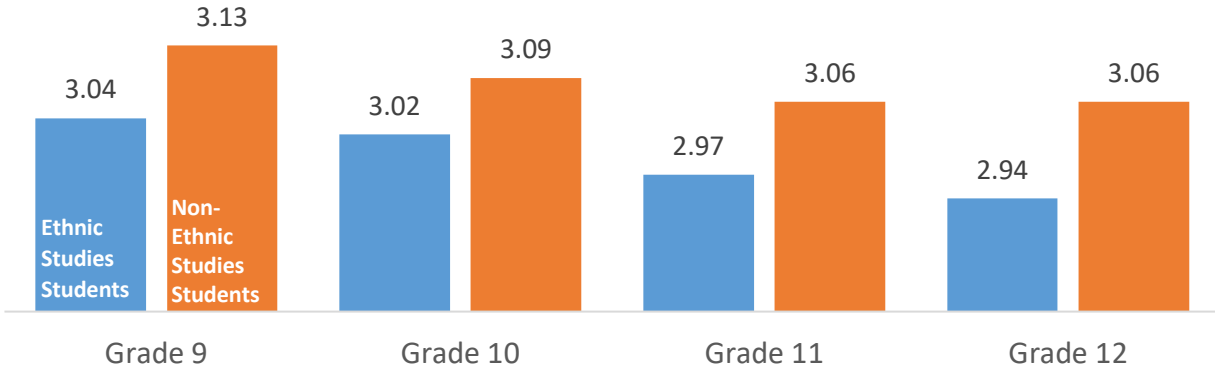
When Ethnic Studies students are compared with other high school students who did not take Ethnic Studies courses, we see that Ethnic Studies students’ GPAs, on average, are significantly higher as shown in Figure 6. This could indicate that students interested in taking a college course while in high school on a Saturday are generally higher performing students. Specifically we compared Ethnic Studies students to non-Ethnic Studies students’ Academic GPAs at Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12; Ethnic Studies students’ GPAs were significantly higher at all grade levels (p<.001).

Figure 6. Ethnic studies vs non-Ethnic studies student GPAs by grade level



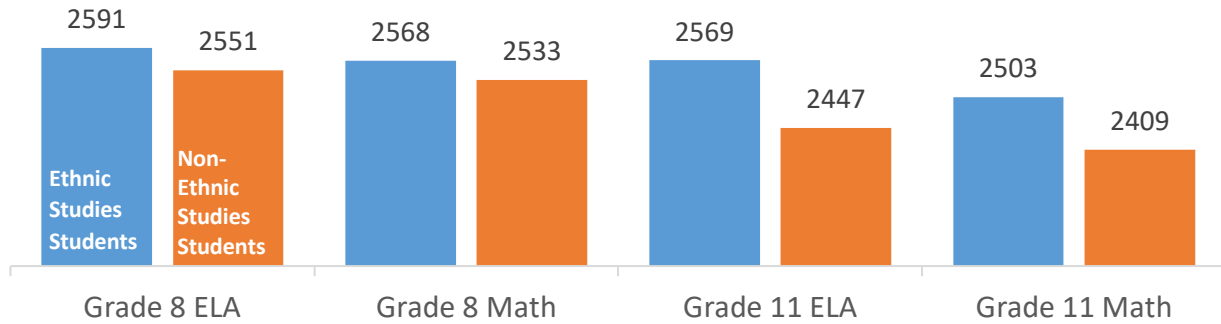
However, if we compare a more selective/homogenous group of students, those who have taken at least 1 AP course, the students who have not enrolled in an Ethnic Studies course have slightly higher GPAs (for all grade levels, $p < .001$). This may indicate that the Ethnic Studies courses were marketed or were appealing to students with a broader range of academic performance.

Figure 7. Ethnic studies vs non-Ethnic studies student GPAs for students that have taken one or more AP course by grade level



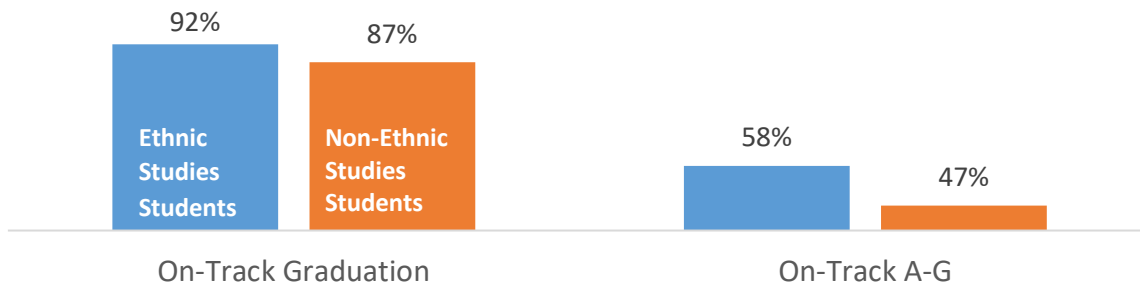
We also compared student performance in Grade 8 and Grade 11 on SBAC ELA and Math assessments (average scaled scores). Students who enrolled in Ethnic Studies scored significantly higher on SBAC ELA and Math in both Grades 8 and 11 ($p < .001$).

Figure 8. Ethnic studies vs non-Ethnic studies student SBAC performance



The rate of students' status as being On Track for Graduation and On Track for A-G was compared for students who have taken Ethnic Studies courses and those who have not taken any. Ethnic Studies students had higher rates of On-Track status for both measures ($p < .001$ for both measures).

Figure 9. Ethnic studies vs non-Ethnic studies student on-track status for graduation and A-G



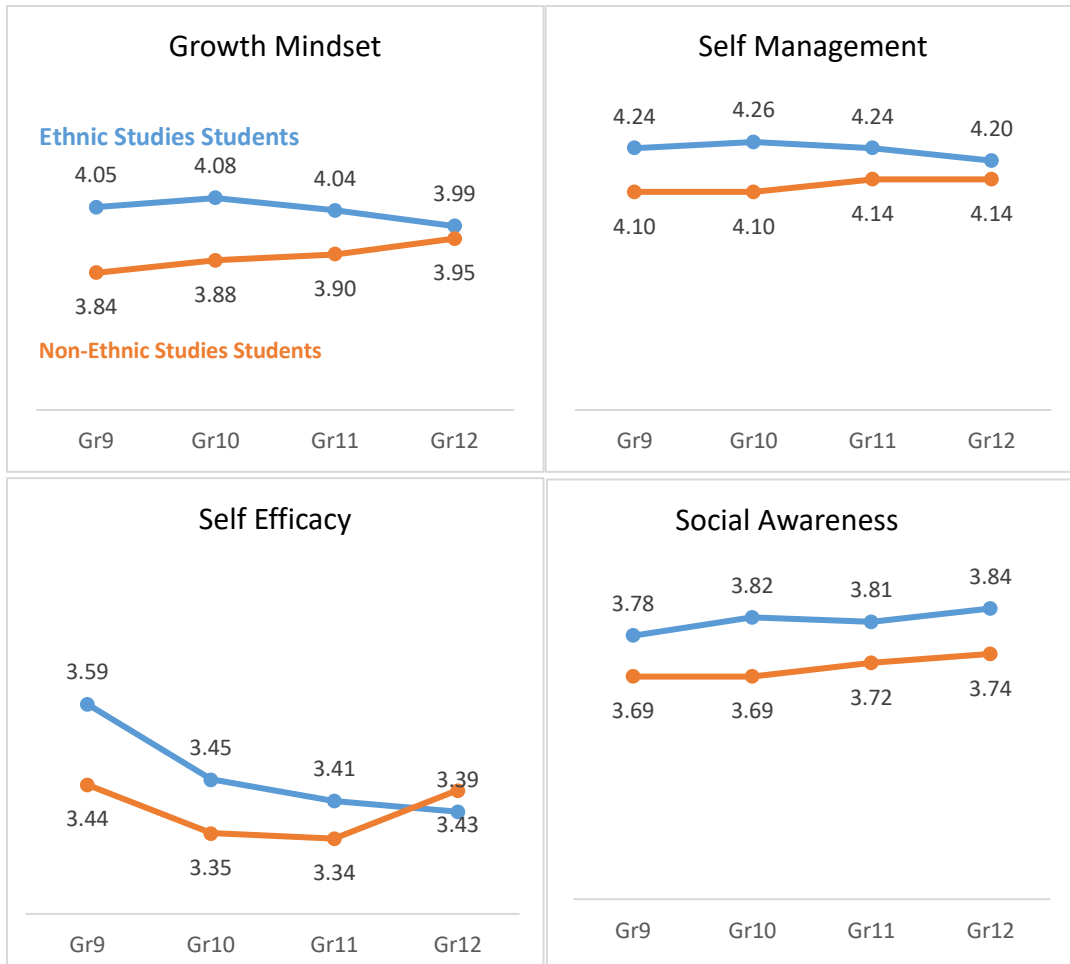
On average, Ethnic Studies students, including 10th, 11th and 12th grade students, had enrolled in more AP courses (2.6 AP Courses), as compared to 1.7 courses for non-Ethnic Studies students ($p < .001$). Overall, students who enrolled in the Ethnic Studies course were more likely to have taken at least 1 AP Course (72%) than students who had not enrolled in Ethnic Studies (47%). However, when you only examine data for students who took at least 1 AP course, Ethnic Studies students did not significantly differ from other students in the average number of AP courses taken, number of AP exams taken or number of AP exams passed.

Figure 10. AP Course experience for Ethnic studies and non-Ethnic Studies students

| | Students who have taken 1 or more AP Course | | p-value |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------|
| | Ethnic Studies (n=720) | Non-Ethnic Studies (n=13,641) | |
| AP Courses taken | 3.66 | 3.67 | 0.92 |
| AP Exams taken | 3.15 | 3.06 | 0.40 |
| AP Exams passed | 1.21 | 1.31 | 0.17 |

In exploring Social Emotional Learning (SEL) measures, generally Ethnic Studies students had higher ratings across measures of Growth Mindset, Self Efficacy, Self Management, and Social Awareness than students who did not enroll in Ethnic Studies courses.

Figure 11. Social Emotional Learning scores of Ethnic Studies and non-Ethnic Studies students



Independent-samples t-tests compared mean scores of students enrolled in Ethnic Studies to those of non-Ethnic Studies students for each grade level. For Growth Mindset, Ethnic Studies students had significantly higher scores in their Grades 9, 10 and 11; scores did not differ in Grade 12. Student scores did not vary across the four grade levels for Self-Management; Ethnic Studies students' scores were higher for each of the four grade levels. Self-Management scores were the highest ratings of the four SEL areas. Ethnic Studies students had higher ratings of Self Efficacy in Grades 9 and 10, but scores did not differ in Grades 11 and 12. Social Awareness scores were significantly higher for Ethnic Studies students than for non-Ethnic Studies students in all four years.

Ethnic Studies students with lower GPAs

We examined how students with Academic GPAs of less than 2.5 enrolled in and performed in Ethnic Studies courses. Taking a college course while in high school could afford students, especially those who have not had consistently high grades, an opportunity to boost confidence that they could succeed in college courses. Students with lower GPAs earned as many Bs as students overall, but they had nearly double the rates of withdrawals and unexcused Withdrawals, and Ds and Fs in the course. Considering their 12th grade academic GPAs were

between a B and a C at the highest, overall students were successful in taking a course with 60% earning an A or B. There were 13 students with lower GPAs that enrolled two Ethnic Studies courses. Instructors or LBUSD counselors may want to consider supporting students with lower GPAs to reduce Withdrawals, especially Unexcused (late) Withdrawals.

Figure 12. Ethnic Studies course achievement by lower GPA students

| Grade | Average Performance for all students | Lower GPA students (<2.5) |
|-------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A | 43% | 24% |
| B | 27% | 26% |
| C | 15% | 23% |
| D | 6% | 11% |
| F | 8% | 15% |
| W | 8% | 13% |
| WU | 5% | 10% |

Ethnic Studies Students enrolling in multiple courses

Students who enrolled in multiple Ethnic Studies courses over time did not have any late withdrawals from the courses. Of the 52 students enrolling in multiple courses, only three students withdrew from a course in the first two weeks; one student withdrew from the second course (resulting in actually only taking one course), and two students withdrew from their second course and replaced it with another that same semester. Students’ grades varied, so it is not the case the only well-performing students took multiple courses. Twelve of the 52 students taking multiple courses did not take the US Diversity and Ethnic Experience overview course.

Course survey

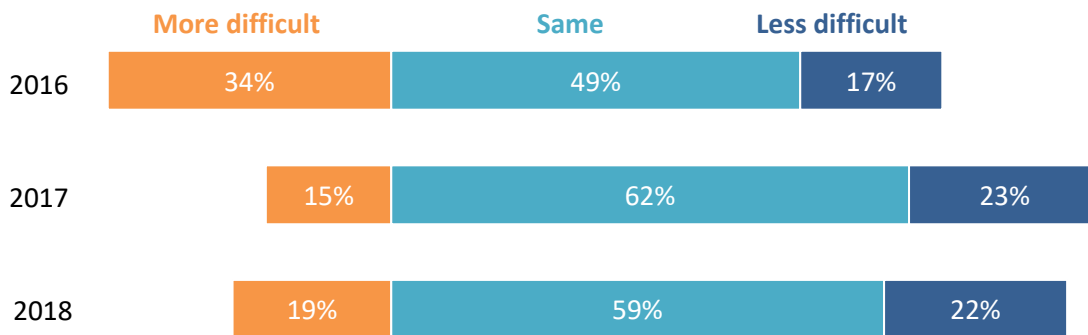
From the Fall 2016, Spring 2017 and Spring 2018 semesters, 295 students completed a course survey; 80% were enrolled in the 215 Overview course (US Diversity and Ethnic Experience) and 20% were enrolled in the introduction to one of four specific ethnicities. Most of the survey respondents were taking their first Ethnic Studies course (86%) while 9% were taking their second, 4% taking their third and 1% their fourth. The majority (62%) were planning to enroll in another Ethnic Studies course, with 97% reporting they would recommend the course to a friend. These percentages did not differ significantly when analyzing semesters separately. Despite the positive response (62%) of students indicating that they would enroll in another Ethnic Students course, only 5% of the students actually enrolled in an additional course.

Students most commonly plan to attend a four-year university following high school (79%), while 12% are planning to attend a two-year college. The remaining 8% were split between plans for trade or technical programs, military, work, and other. Three-quarters of respondents said the course were somewhat or significantly influenced their plans for after high school.

Course Ratings & Future plans

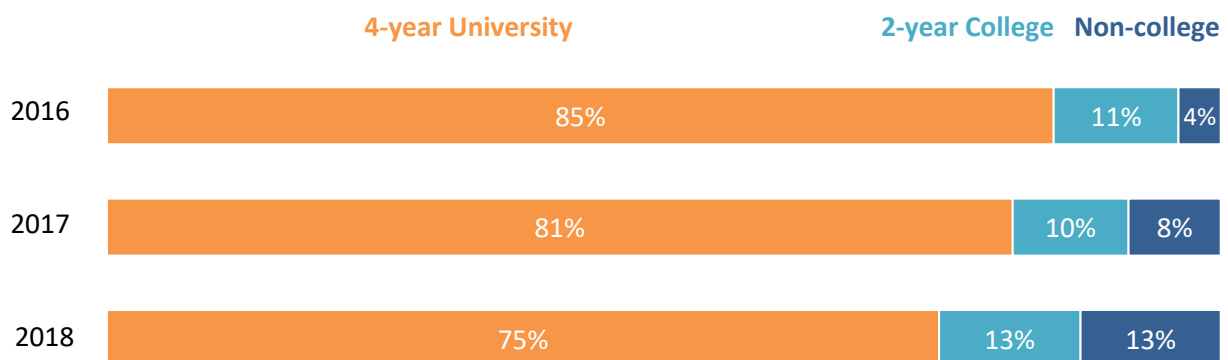
Across the three years, the majority of students (55%) rated the difficulty of the course as the “Same” as their other high school courses, with a higher percentage of students rating the course as “More difficult” during the 2016 survey year. In rating the quality of the instruction for this course, student ratings were similar across the three years of the course, with 71% of the students rating the instruction “Very Good” and 22% of the students rating the instruction “Good” overall.

Figure 13. Difficulty ratings of Ethnic Studies by year



Between 21 to 34 students had taken courses from a college or university previously across the three years Ethnic Studies has been offered. Students reported the course significantly (25%) or somewhat (49%) impacted their plans after high school. Nearly all of the students enrolled in Ethnic Studies planned to attend 2- or 4-year college or university. Across the three years reported plans, increasing percentages of students reported non-college plans, including plans to attend a trade, technical or business program, enter military service, obtain a job and/or “other.” This may indicate that the course is reaching students with increasingly diverse plans after high school.

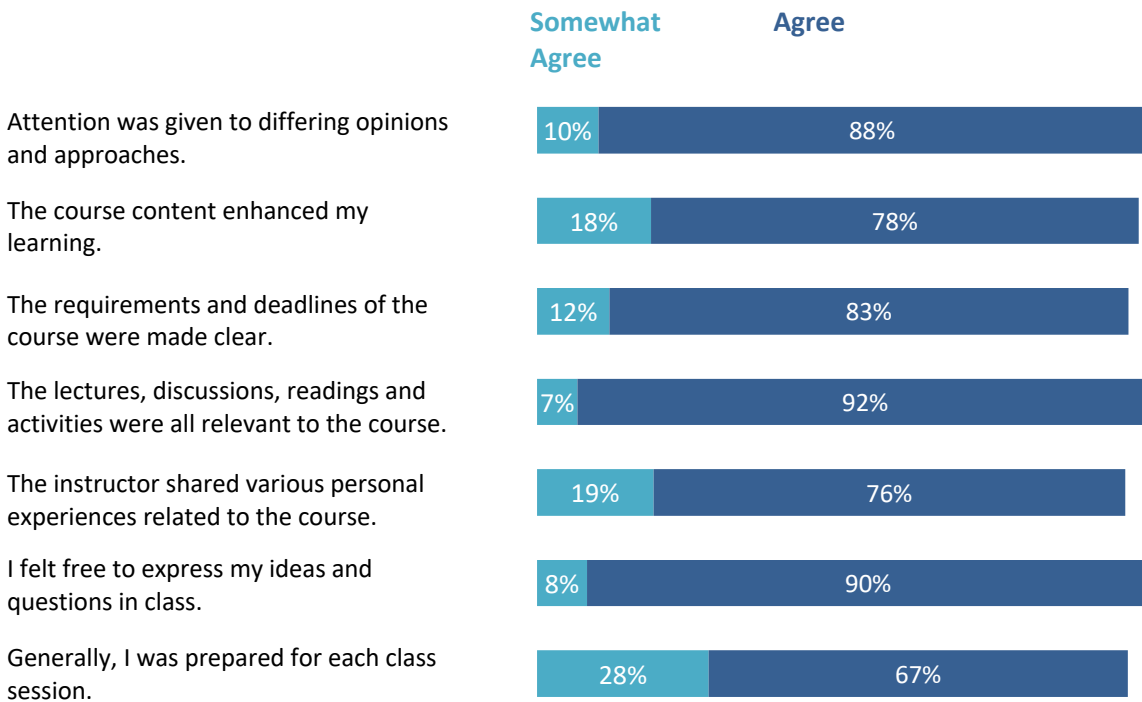
Figure 14. Ethnic studies student post high school plans



Aspects of the Course

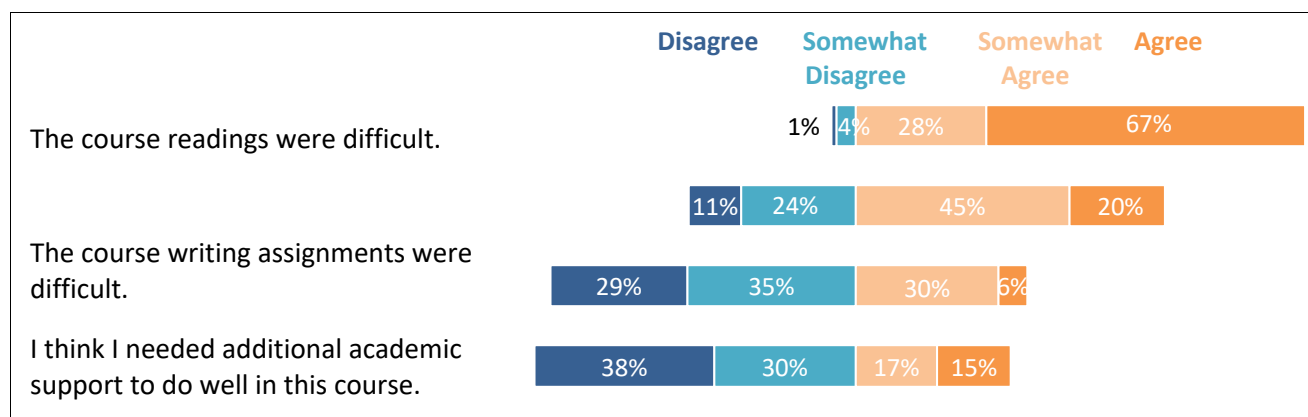
Students rated their agreement with aspects of the course and nearly all students agreed or somewhat agreed indicating their positive experience with the course across a variety of dimensions. Students were the least likely to fully agree that they were prepared for each class.

Figure 15. General course ratings



Students rated three additional aspects related to the difficulty of the course. Sixty-five percent of students reported that the course readings were difficult.

Figure 16. Difficulty ratings



The majority of students reported “themselves” as the main motivation (72%) for taking the course while parents (20%) were the second highest motivator for students. Understanding how this course applies to their college careers, “somewhat well” was most common response (55%) with nearly all of the remaining students reporting an understanding of “very well.” 37% of students reported that their Ethnic Studies course was different from the regular coursework they had taken at their high school.

Students commented on the reasons they would recommend the course. Students believed the course was eye-opening to learn about the various ethnicities and their experiences in the U.S. as well as provided an opportunity to experience a college course. Below are some representative quotes:

- *I would recommend this course to other students because we are taught things that we do not learn in a regular history class. Also by learning these new views and histories, I can see that world differently. Not only that but being able to be in a classroom where you can express your story and listen to other people’s stories shows you that you are not alone.*
- *I would recommend this course because it is a great experience and it is a great opportunity to get college credits and experience college before you are actually enrolled in college.*
- *When I first joined this class I expected it to be hard and not fun, but this wasn't the case. I had a good time and as I had fun I also learned a lot. It was a good way experience something new and get out my comfort zone.*
- *It's a very interesting course as you learn about everyone's background and history, and the more people are aware of all these things, the more people can advocate for what's right.*
- *This course has really opened up my views and values especially in my future career choices. For instance, through the into ethnic studies course I really want to pursue a career in Anthropology or anything related to how people react towards each other. Also I had my own ideologies about the 4 different ethnic groups before taking the course but now I am more educated in the ethnic groups and I can relate or find a connection with someone that has been through the same struggles as I have. Therefore I would totally recommend and have already recommended the course to many of my friends.*
- *This course helps individuals understand history in a different perspective rather than the European perspective. It shows deeper struggles and how much they have been through to be what they are today. Ethnic studies helps people be grateful for what they have and that we all have a voice to stand up for what we believe in.*

Students commented on the most valuable aspects of the course as well as on what would have made the course more valuable. Student comments focused on the interactions between themselves and the material as well as with other students.

- *Its very eye opening honestly, you get to learn stuff that's not taught in a regular, honors, or AP history class you're taught actual history that's not spoken about enough in the world.*
- *The openness and respect we all had towards everyone's personal opinions and ideas.*

- *I personally found the interaction between each student and how we applied our own personal experiences and problems as and within our ethnic group and trying to relate to one another.*
- *getting to learn many others people's opinions and see how they see the world*
- *College credit!*

To make the course more valuable, students commented on wanting more time in class and to meet more than once per week. Below are additional suggestions:

- *The course would have been more valuable to me if it was at an actual college campus rather than a high school campus because when Instructors keep saying that this is a college course it sounds meaningless because you're just at another high school so the whole feeling is just "whatever".*
- *There were more field trips related to the current ethnicity we were studying so we'd have a more in-depth experience of what they had to go through and the things they used and prepared early in history.*

Summary of Findings and Future Considerations

Enrollment & Course Experience

The ethnicities of students who enrolled in Ethnic Studies mirrored the district comparison, with the exception that enrollment in the courses exceeded district enrollment for Hispanic students (62% vs 54%), while white students enrolled in Ethnic Studies at a rate less than overall district enrollment (9% vs 15%). The foundation course of US Diversity and the Ethnic Experience accounted for 93% of the Ethnic Studies enrollment. Students performed well with 70% earning As or Bs, although performance did vary across the six semesters. Eight percent of students did withdraw from the course in the first weeks.

Future considerations: Follow up formally with students who struggled in the course earning a D or F or who had a late withdrawal to determine which supports might have positively impacted their performance. Follow up with students who withdrew in early weeks to determine causes and ways of reducing future withdrawals. Consider surveying all students regarding interest in taking an Ethnic Studies course. Follow up communication to enroll students who expressed interest in taking additional Ethnic Studies courses.

Measures of Student Achievement and Social Emotional Learning

Students who enrolled in Ethnic Studies perform at higher levels than the comparison group of students who did not choose to enroll in Ethnic Studies. Significant differences were observed for GPA, Math and ELA SBAC scores, On-track status for Graduation and for A-G, and the number of AP courses taken. However, when comparing Ethnic Studies students who have taken AP courses with only those who have also taken one or more AP courses, there are not significant differences. Social-Emotional Learning measures were generally higher for Ethnic Studies students, especially for Social Awareness. Students with GPAs of less than 2.5 generally

performed well in the course with 60% of students earning As or Bs, however they had rates of early and late withdrawals of nearly double the average.

Future considerations: More closely follow student progress and performance through high school and beyond to explore changes or improvements following enrollment in one or more Ethnic Studies courses. Provide support for students with less than 2.5 GPA who enroll in Ethnic Studies to improve their chances for a positive and successful experience which could increase their interest and confidence in taking additional college courses and other advanced courses while in high school as well as impact their post-high school plans. Consider supporting students with lower GPAs to reduce Withdrawals, especially Unexcused (late) Withdrawals.

Measures of Student Attitudes

Ethnic Studies students completed course surveys with just over half of students reporting the course to be of the same level of difficulty as their other courses. Students did report course readings to be difficult and had lesser agreement that they were “being prepared for each class session.” Over one-quarter of students in the most recent academic year report post-high school plans of 2-year college or non-college plans, indicating that these courses are reaching a diverse group of students and not only students with plans for 2- or 4-year college. Student feedback revealed an appreciation of many aspects of the course including learning about other students’ background, the types of student interaction the course afforded, and the opportunity to earn college credits.

Future considerations: Consider including in the course survey student reflections on the impact the course has had on them, possibly employing a retrospective pre/post survey where students are asked to rate themselves in knowledge or attitudes prior to the course and as they are now. These ratings would provide additional options for measuring impact on students.

Future Considerations for Further Study and for Student Support

Developing specific goals for the course would help focus the any additional data collected in the future through surveys or other methods. Delineating specific goals can help target future efforts to support student outreach in enrollment, student success in the course, and future follow-up with students. Consider formal data collection with Ethnic Studies professors in the form of interviews or focus group to learn about successes and challenges in the courses. Further analysis of the student comments on the surveys could help target support efforts and lead to additional areas of interest for future research.