

CSDE in collaboration with SERC



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<https://ctserc.org/pa1912>

African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies (CT PA 19-12 and CT PA 21-2)

RESC Alliance Curriculum Council
January 12, 2022



History of Legislation

- CT Public Act 19-12 passed June 2019 (course)
- SERC written into legislation to coordinate curriculum development
- Elective, full-year course at HS level (206+ high schools)
- First, integrated, model, statewide curriculum (206 districts)
- Schools may offer in 2021-2022; Must offer in 2022-2023
- SBOE Course Approval December 2, 2020
- CSDE/SERC release July 1, 2021 as legislated
- CT Public ACT 21-2 passed June 2021 (two requirements - program of instruction and course)
- SERC written into legislation to coordinate professional learning



Curriculum Development Process

- 150 Member Advisory Group (cyclical and critical feedback)
- Organized into 9 Committees:
 - Research and Analysis
 - Focus Groups
 - Infrastructure Supports
 - Course Syllabus
 - Content Development (x2)
 - Integration and Assessment
 - Publications and Dissemination
 - Professional Learning Plan
- Expert Review Panel



Opportunities for Involvement and Input

- *HS Curriculum Survey (Fall 2019)* = **217/350** respondents were **teachers** from a variety of districts and school sizes; **62%** of total respondents indicated readiness to teach and requested comprehensive curriculum development and professional learning be provided; course artifacts were warehoused from **17** districts with African American or Latino Studies course currently in place
- *Focus Group Survey (Winter 2020)* = **31/96** respondents were **students** expressing the following desires for course of studies:
 - deeper study of inequalities and understanding of racism as social construct,
 - better understanding of varied backgrounds and cultures of intra-racial communities,
 - teaching of “real” history...beyond stereotypes...including state and local contexts,
 - emphasis on difference as strength not weakness, and
 - relating learning activities to pop culture.



Continued...

5 out of 12 Focus Groups held in-person or virtually were specifically for **students** making up **22%** (36/162) of total participants identifying the following cross-cutting themes:

- continuity challenges,
- history of racism and importance of multiple perspectives,
- teacher knowledge of history,
- safe and brave class climate, and
- culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy practiced to center student voice and interests.

Focus Group responses from remaining participants (**educators, parents, and community members**) illuminated the following priorities:

- supporting students' racial identity development,
- importance of portrayal of positive accomplishments and multiple perspectives,
- consideration of operational challenges for various school settings, and
- need for comprehensive professional learning.



Continued...

Overarching feedback from **10** member *Expert Review Panel* of national and local **historians, scholars, and administrators**:

- Huge undertaking, maximum respect, volume of rich content that will need to consider for single course, if desire to be explicit with counter narrative.
- If not taught in tandem, will need to pay attention to continuity and congruence of content across units and semesters, including cross-cultural influences.
- Focus on inventors and innovators, including women, who brought on optimism of communities despite struggles is needed.
- Materials, investigative learning activities, and teacher resources suggested to maximize relevance and engagement.
- Appreciate oral history assignments that could be strengthened with examination of intersectionality and understanding of its fluidity.
- Teacher prep will be essential to ensure diversity of thought, bi-directional learning (student:teacher, home:school), and unity in community.



What Course Is and Is Not

- Is a full-year, history course
- Is 11 units of study over 170 days
- Is cross-cultural, inquiry-based, and student-centered
- Is two-pronged focus: content knowledge and identity development
- Not course in Critical Race Theory
- Not separate history
- Not simply a collection of teaching materials
- Not a panacea



Implementation Considerations

- **Establishing Buy-In**
 - Ensure Part of School Improvement Planning
 - Create Access for All/Pathways for Learning
 - Align with Vision/Portrait of a Graduate
 - Provide Orientation for Families and Community
- **Scheduling**
 - Must Run as Full-Year Course
 - Recommend as Junior or Senior Elective
 - Consider Number of Sections Needed/Options
- **Staffing**
 - Social Studies Teacher
 - “Best Fit”
 - Shared Responsibility
 - Role of School Counselors
 - Protocols for Support
- **Budget and Materials**
 - Book Bundle
 - CSDE/SERC Training Series and Other PD
 - Additional Planning Time
- **Common Experience Across Schools and Districts**
 - Assure Accuracy and Integrity of Content
 - Contribute to Evolution of Curriculum
 - Consider Options for Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning
- **Class Composition**
 - Create Safe and Brave Space
 - Consider Diversity of Perspectives
 - Opportunity for Inter-district Collaboration
- **Climate and Culture**
 - Staff Readiness (not a stand alone course)
 - Affinity Spaces
 - Permissions
 - Family/Community Partnerships



Training, Coaching, and Supports for Initial Implementers 2021-2022

- Leadership Launch (90 minutes)
- Summer Institute (5 days)
- Quarterly Training – September, December, February, March (2 days each)
- Coaching (4, 60-90 minute sessions)
- Speakers Bureau
- Regional Networking Meetings
- OER Platform (Units, Materials/Resources, Lesson Repository, Discussion Board)
- Family/Community Supports (1/2 day per school)
- Field Study (external evaluator pending)
- June Showcase



Course Description for Program of Studies

- **SCED Course Code: 04901**
- **Title: AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK AND PUERTO RICAN/LATINO STUDIES**
- **Recommended Prerequisites: US History and Modern World History**
- **Humanities Elective Grades: 11-12 Credit: 1.0 CCP level Full Year**
- The course is an opportunity for students to explore accomplishments, struggles, intersections, perspectives, and collaborations of African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino people in the U.S. Students will examine how historical movements, legislation, and wars affected the citizenship rights of these groups and how they, both separately and together, worked to build U.S. cultural and economic wealth and create more just societies in local, national, and international contexts. Coursework will provide students with tools to identify historic and contemporary tensions around race and difference; map economic and racial disparities over time; strengthen their own identity development; and address bias in their communities.
- **Transcript Abbreviation: AA/Black and PR/Latino Studies**



Course Outline

Semester 1 – African Am./Black

Unit 1: African Origins and Contributions of Ancient African Empires

Unit 2: Slavery and Freedom Stories of Resistance and Agency

Unit 3: Black Literacy, Organizations, and Liberation

Unit 4: Long, Long History for Equality

Unit 5: Black Movement for Equity

Unit 6: Protest, Politics, and Power

Semester 2 – Puerto Rican/Latino

Unit 1: Who are we? Early Beginnings

Unit 2: Blood and Beauty

Unit 3: Sweat

Unit 4: Resistance

Unit 5: Where are we now? Contributions in CT

*Learning Objectives, and Scope and Sequence available on website at <https://ctserc.org/pa1912>

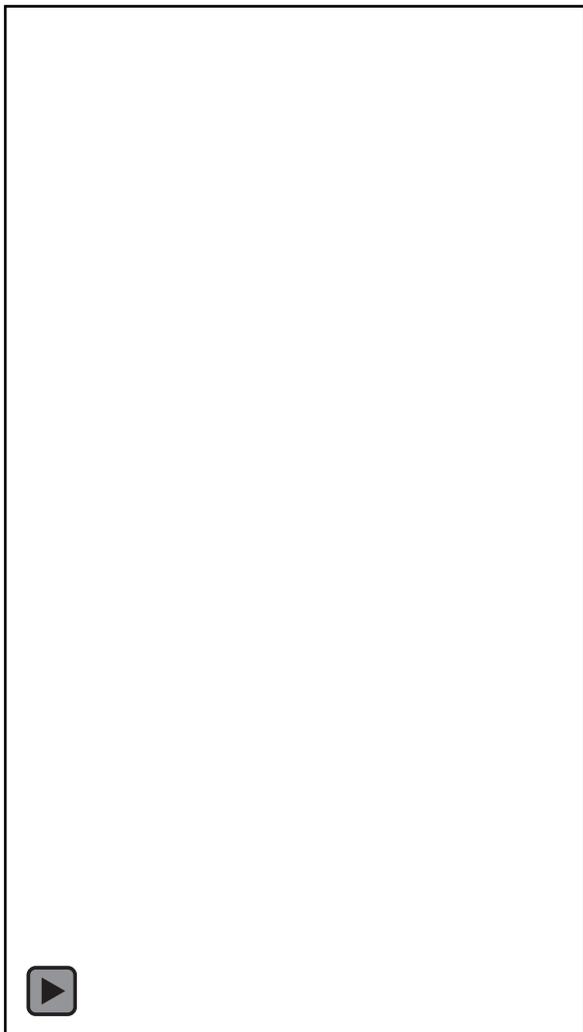


“Sneak Peak” of Sample Unit and Lesson

- Aligned with CT Social Studies Frameworks (ELA and CELP, too)
- Expanded UBD process used by most districts for curriculum writing
- Developed by experts and educators of Content Development Committees with UDL principles in mind
- Home Links, Interdisciplinary Connections, Extensions (built into units)
- Reviewed by Advisory Group, Expert Review Panel, SBOE Committee, Integration and Assessment Committee



Example of Implementation



Semester 1 Unit 3 Lesson 3.4 The Road to Freedom (1861-1865)

Project-Based Learning Regarding Descendants of CT 29th Regiment in Pomfret/Killingly Region

Historical Re-enactment of William Webb by Kevin Johnson, CT State Library



Milestones July-December 2021

- Published curriculum July 1st as legislated
- Initiated training series for cohort of 58 schools, including:
 - Leadership Launch
 - Summer Institute
 - September and December Quarterly Trainings
- Published October 1st revision of full document based on review and feedback from Initial Implementers and other stakeholders (Semester 1 Units 1-6)
- Created Feedback Form and identified OfficeHourse on website for public comments and questions
- Been responsive to questions from field, including attendance at CAS and RESC Curriculum Council Meetings to ensure consistency of messaging
- Posted units on OER platform (goopenct.org)
- Launched Coaching support (Dec/Jan)



Implementation Successes

- Tremendous excitement about course as evidenced by high level of participation and inquiry in full days of virtual training
- Districts implementing in a variety of ways (e.g., grades 9-12, after U.S. History, requirement in grade 9, co-taught)
- Some high schools with up to five sections of course based on student interest
- High level of student engagement being reported
- Heightened focus on access for SWDs and MLs
- Conversations in community and at BOE meetings evidencing school and teacher commitment to implementation



Implementation Challenges

- Misinformation about model curriculum - *clarification regarding two legislative requirements being provided*
- Pacing of units based on different school schedules (e.g., daily 45 minute period vs. 80-90 minute block 2-3 days per week) - *customized scope and sequence initial focus of coaching*
- Students varied background knowledge given first statewide course and effects of pandemic - *teachers doing amazing job of supplementing accordingly (e.g. more geography needed in Unit 1)*



Voices From the Field

- Teachers appreciate hearing from Content Experts who contributed to curriculum development, experiencing spotlight activities, and networking with other teachers to create lessons have been reported as highlights of training. Sample evaluation responses included:
 - *“I am so impressed with this curriculum document in its depth, breadth, and specificity. The creators clearly created a student-centered curriculum that is engaging and reflects best practices. It's really impressive and exciting!”*
 - *“Today's presentation made me reflect a lot about why I became an educator...It also made me reflect on the importance on SEEING our students for who they are and celebrate what they bring into our classroom by making their experiences and culture part of our curriculum.”*



Curriculum in the Spotlight

Adrian Solis, Teacher at Abbott Tech High School in Danbury, received CALAS's 2021 Exceptional Teacher Award and spoke to impact of his experience with curriculum development and pilot implementation of Semester 2

https://share.icloud.com/photos/0Uewu5rT8KmHlcU9_jTS8WZFG



Questions?



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