

# FAIR's Approach to Ethnic Studies

Prepared for Utah Commission  
November 10, 2022



FOUNDATION  
AGAINST  
INTOLERANCE  
& RACISM

# FAIR's Mission



The Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism (FAIR) is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing civil rights and liberties, and promoting a common culture based on fairness, understanding and humanity.

# FAIR Utah



# FAIR met with Utah Committee in February



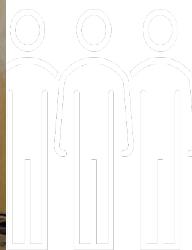
We help you make your community  
places to live, study, work,



**FAIR ice cream break**

**Bion Bartning (Founder), Angel Eduardo (Fellow), Adam Seagrave (Senior Fellow)**

# FAIR's Daryl Davis at Caleb Chapman's Soundhouse, Faith Matters Podcast, and local high school. FAIR at Utah Rural Schools Conference



# FAIR's Pro-Human Approach

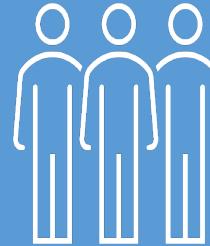
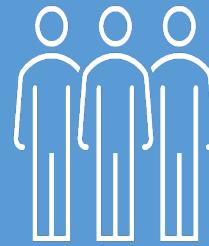


“Pro-human” means advocating for one human race, universal civil rights and liberties, and compassionate opposition to racism and intolerance rooted in dignity and our common humanity.

# How should Utah address Ethnic Studies?



Adopt an inclusive,  
honest, and pro-human  
approach

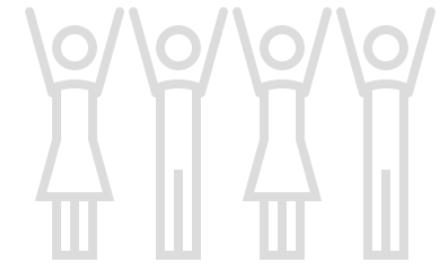


Avoid partisan, divisive, &  
controversial approaches  
(e.g., California)

# Pro-Human Approach to Ethnic Studies

We are all unique individuals,  
intrinsically valuable,  
and united by our common humanity.

# Inclusive Ethnic Studies teaches principles of American civics

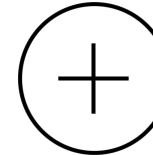


Understanding the foundational principles of our pluralistic society, including equality and fundamental human rights, will help students understand how America became America.\*

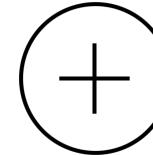
# An inclusive approach to Ethnic Studies: E Pluribus Unum

## Students should...

...understand that the foundational principles of human rights, denied to so many historically, are the same principles that allow us to work toward securing rights for all.



...learn honest history, including slavery, oppression, and immigration, as well as the immense progress we've made, and can continue to make.



...know the role of different ethnic groups in our American story, as reflected in our motto:

**E Pluribus Unum:  
out of many, one.**

# Ethnic Studies: Include Teacher Training

## Teachers should...

...encourage multiple perspectives, open inquiry, and constructive dialogue.

...provide principled neutrality, especially regarding emerging social issues.

...encourage the healthy habits of a free mind such as curiosity, courage, and compassion.

**Multiple Perspectives**



**Primary Sources**



**Honest and Comprehensive**



**Representation**



**Culturally Relevant Pedagogy**



**Critical Consciousness**



**“Action Civics”**



**Some ideas  
and  
definitions**

# Avoid divisive approaches and language that open the door to activism.

viewing history solely through lens of power, imperialism, colonialism

teaching “action civics,” “liberation” and dismantling “systems of power”

encouraging oppressor & victim mentality: collective shame and collective grievance

dehumanizing individuals based on group identity, assumptions, and stereotypes

preferring “other ways of knowing” over the use of empirical science, reason, questions, and logic



## Pitfalls:

# MN's new 5<sup>th</sup> strand to K-12 Social Studies Standards

The standards present a single narrative of power which gears students toward specific partisan ideology and activism.

Examples of how students encounter the world (according to MN standards)

- **Kindergartners** must “retell a story about an unfair experience that conveys a **power imbalance**.” (emphasis added)
- **First-graders** must “identify examples of ethnicity, equality, liberation and **systems of power**, and use those examples to construct meanings for those terms.” (emphasis added)
- **High schoolers** must “examine the construction of **racialized hierarchies** based on **colorism** and dominant European beauty standards and values.” (emphasis added)

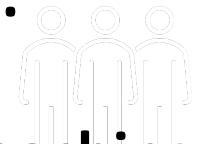


## Introduction to Ethnic Studies High School Course



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**FAIR's course exposes students to the histories, experiences, struggles, accomplishments, and contributions of Americans of diverse backgrounds.**



**Ours is a fact-based approach to teaching students about racism; it's honest about the failures and shortcomings of our American past and present while recognizing how the struggles and accomplishments of Americans continue to move us closer to our ideals.**



# FAIR's Course: Honest, Optimistic, and Customizable

## Part One: Ethnic Studies and Principles of American Governance

Unit 1 - Introduction to Ethnic Studies: E Pluribus Unum

Unit 2 - Principles of American Governance

## Part Two: Immigration and Ethnic Groups In America

Unit 1 - Immigration and the History of Ethnic Groups in America (Pre-Colonial to Present)

Unit 2 - African American Experiences

Unit 3 - Latino American Experiences

Unit 4 - Asian American Experiences

Unit 5 - Native American Experiences

## Part Three: Capstone Project

Authoring My Own Narrative



## Sample Lesson

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SAMPLE LESSON FROM PART ONE, UNIT TWO

# THE CONSTITUTION AND THE FUTURE OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA: WERE THE COMPROMISES JUSTIFIED?

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### Background

This lesson is meant to be taught near the end of the unit on the principles of American governance. The lesson explores the issue of how the early American government could both advocate so powerfully for human freedom while at the same time continuing to protect the institution of slavery.

### Lesson Objectives:

- Students will increase their understanding of the Constitution's compromises over slavery and how the nation's founders argued for or against them.
- Students will increase proficiency in debating alternative interpretations of historical events.

Recommended Pacing: 90-120 minutes

## FAIR Standards and Objectives

- **HM.9-12.2:** I can explain how moral and ethical truths exist across otherwise different cultures, and I recognize those truths within my own culture.
- **DV.9-12.10:** I can explain with specific examples the contributions to the American story by people of different ethnicities, skin colors, religions, and cultural groups.
- **US.9-12.11:** I prepare for the kinds of arguments I might face tomorrow by understanding all sides of American historical debates.
- **US.9-12.12:** I can clearly express the arguments of those with whom I disagree and provide persuasive counterarguments to them.
- **US.9-12.13:** I respect others' rights to express their opinions without believing that all opinions are equally true.
- **FR.9-12.20:** I promote justice and civil discourse to vitalize our individual and collective productive powers of character.

## Materials

- [Background Essay: Slavery and The Constitution's Compromises](#)
- [Primary Sources for "Point of View" Assignment](#)
- [Student Worksheet Assignment](#)
- [Point of View Paragraphs](#)
- [Extension Activity](#)

# **Utah has the opportunity ...**

**To bridge perceived differences by reinforcing that Utahns are all unique individuals, intrinsically valuable regardless of group identity, and united by our common humanity**

**To learn from controversies in states such as California, Washington & Minnesota, in which communities are divided by partisan approaches**

**To bring an inclusive, constructive, pro-human approach to Ethnic Studies**

# Utah, America: Who are we?

**"If we ... expand the definition of "we," if we continue to emphasize how complicated personal and national identities are, if we emphasize overlapping and inclusive identities, then we have a shot at making something special out of all this diversity."**

– David Brooks, NYTimes, 10/13/2022

*That is what inclusive ethnic studies can accomplish.*

# Pro-Human, Pro-Utah

*Thank you for considering  
FAIR's pro-human approach.*

[fairforall.org](http://fairforall.org)

[fairstory.org](http://fairstory.org)

# Resources and Research

- Viewpoint diversity is associated with gains in [learning](#) (Pascarella, 2001) and [cognitive development](#) (Hu & Kuh, 2003).
- [Educators should practice principled neutrality](#). Austin, J.P.N. (2022). Persuasion.
- Center for Civic Education. [The constitutional convention as a model of civil discourse](#).
- Support for viewpoint diversity goes hand in hand with support for non-white students. [Viewpoint Diversity is about Much More than Politics](#) by Musa al Gharbi
- Habits of a Free Mind: Psychology for Democracy, Pamela Paresky. See [Medium](#)
- When a student's viewpoint is “censored” or not welcomed in the classroom, “group think” develops - there is only one way to see the world, no room for multiple perspectives. Opinions are accepted as “fact.” Snyder, B. (2021). *Undoctrinate: How Politicized Classrooms Harm Kids and Ruin Our Schools - and What We Can Do About It*. Blackstone Publishing.
- Educators are teaching not only academic curriculum but also modeling how to behave when interacting with others, including active listening skills, adaptability, how to appropriately respond when beliefs are challenged, how to consider a new perspective. Metcalf, L. (2008). *Counseling toward solutions: A practical solution-focused program for working with students, teachers and parents*. New York, NY: Jossey-Bass, and Shapiro, J. P. (2015). *Child and adolescent therapy: science and art*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons
- Top concerns in schools are (1) student and staff mental health, (2) student discipline, and (3) political polarization about critical race theory. 2022 Rand Corporation study, [Districts Continue to Struggle with Staffing, Political Polarization, and Unfinished Instruction](#).

# Resources and Research

- Discussion of political issues that include diverse viewpoints support students' commitment to democratic values such as tolerance and equality, increase their comfort with conflict, and teach them how to break down divides and forge social bonds with diverse others. Hess, D. (2009). *Controversy in the Classroom*. New York: Routledge.
- Engaging with conflicting views through civil discourse increases political tolerance and a greater willingness to extend civil liberties to ideological opponents. Mutz, D. C. (2006). *Hearing the other side; Deliberative versus participatory democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Talking across difference through structured deliberation builds knowledge. Fishkin, J., & Farrar, C. (2005) Deliberative polling. In J. Gastile, & P. Levine (Eds.), *The deliberative democracy handbook* (pp. 68-79). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- In classrooms where teachers support students' discussion of contentious political issues and ideological differences, students begin to see conflict as an ordinary feature of democracy. Hess, D., & Ganzler, L. (2007) Patriotism and ideological diversity in the classroom. In J. Westheimer (Ed.) *Pledging Allegiance: The politics of patriotism in America's schools* (pp. 131 – 138). New York: Teachers College Press.

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