

Curriculum Review - Culturally Relevant English 5 – 8

Frequently Asked Questions

	Question	Answer
1.	Are these classes required or are they electives?	Students are required to take a certain number of credits for graduation. In the case of the 4 required English credits for graduation, a student may choose to take one or more of these culturally relevant literature courses to fulfill their English credit requirement. In brief, the English credit is required; these courses are one way a student might choose to fulfill that requirement.
2.	Could Multicultural Literature, History & Government classes be considered? Why are other minorities left out of these courses?	Multicultural courses /strategies are also required in the Unitary Status Plan. The difference is that the culturally relevant courses had to meet a very specific deadline. These multicultural courses may be in any of the required subject areas and students will then have an opportunity to choose them to fulfill their credit requirements. In the Government and History courses you will find sections pertinent to other ethnic groups.
3.	What textbooks will be used to teach this curriculum?	The district has numerous already adopted textbooks and supplemental materials that can be used to meet the standards included in these courses. If new or additional materials are needed, the Governing Board, by law, will have to adopt them prior to classroom use.
4.	Why is it important that these classes be offered specifically for these separate ethnicities?	<p>Our Unitary Status Plan contains the following mandate (Section 6.a.ii)</p> <p><i>6. Engaging Latino and African American Students</i></p> <p><i>a. The District shall adopt the following strategies to increase academic achievement and engagement among African American and Latino students:</i></p> <p><i>ii. By the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, the District shall develop and implement culturally relevant courses of instruction designed to reflect the history, experiences, and culture of African American and Mexican American communities. Such courses of instruction for core English and Social Studies credit shall be developed and offered at all feasible grade levels in all high schools across the District, subject to the District's minimum enrollment guidelines. All courses shall be developed using the District's curricular review process and shall meet District and state standards for academic rigor. The core curriculum described in this section shall be offered commencing in the fall term of the 2013-2014 school year. The District shall pilot the expansion of courses designed to reflect the history, experiences, and culture of African American and Mexican American communities to sixth through eighth graders in the 2014-2015 school year, and shall explore similar expansions throughout the K-12 curriculum in the 2015-2016 school year.</i></p> <p>Therefore, in the interest of engaging our African American and Latino students to the greatest degree possible, and to be in full compliance with the Unitary Status Plan, the development of these courses has been a priority.</p>

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5.	Are the English/Language Arts Common Core Standards in Writing addressed sufficiently?	<p>The Arizona Department of Education has reviewed this curriculum for writing rigor. Their comments were implemented in the revision currently on-line. It's important to remember that these standards are also being used in our History & Government courses which will increase the non-fiction emphasis of the Common Core Standards.</p> <p>As this public review is being conducted, WestEd, a prominent educational research association is also reviewing the curriculum, specifically for academic rigor.</p>