

# **Ethnic Studies Comprehensive Review**

## **Section 1: Program Information**

### **Catalog Description**

Ethnic studies is an interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity in the United States. Courses in ethnic studies critically examine the experiences and perspectives of underrepresented populations within social, cultural and political dynamics such as racism, class, gender, sexuality, education, legal status, migration and globalization. Courses in ethnic studies satisfy general education requirements for the associate degree, the associate degree for transfer in Social Justice Studies, and an associate degree in social sciences with an emphasis in ethnic studies.

### **Full-time Faculty:**

\*José López

\*Peter Rodriguez (temporary full-time)

### **Part-time faculty:**

Laura Gomez Gonzalez

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(Pending-processing to onboard to teach future classes)

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### **Administrative Assistant:**

Gayle Allen

## **Section 2: Mission Statement**

*Citrus College provides students with quality educational experiences and support services that lead to the successful completion of degrees, transfer, certificates, career/technical education and basic skills proficiency. The college fosters academic and career success through the development of critical thinking, effective communication, creativity, and cultural awareness in a safe, accessible and affordable learning environment. In meeting the needs of our demographically diverse student population, we embrace equity and accountability through measurable learning outcomes, ethical data-driven decisions and student achievement.*

### **How does this program support the mission of the college?**

The Ethnic Studies program at Citrus College is firmly aligned with the college's mission of providing quality educational experiences that lead to student success in degree completion and transfer. Through a curriculum centered on the interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity in the

United States, the program fosters the development of critical thinking, effective communication, creativity, and cultural awareness among students. By examining the historical and cultural contributions and experiences of underrepresented populations, the program creates a safe and inclusive learning environment that serves the needs of Citrus College's demographically diverse student body. In keeping with the college's commitment to equity and accountability, the Ethnic Studies program embraces data-informed practices and measurable learning outcomes to promote equitable student achievement.

### **Educational Purposes of the program**

The educational purpose of the Ethnic Studies program is to enrich students' academic journey while contributing directly to their progress toward skill proficiency, certificate and degree attainment, transfer preparation, and career readiness. Ethnic Studies courses such as *ETHN 101: Introduction to Ethnic Studies* and *ETHN 116: Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies* provide students with critical analytical skills, cultural competency, and a broad understanding of social justice issues. These courses satisfy general education requirements and are incorporated into multiple degree pathways, including the Associate Degree for Transfer in Social Justice Studies and the Associate of Arts in Social Sciences with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies. By fulfilling the new CSU General Education Area F (Ethnic Studies) requirement, the program ensures that students are well-prepared for successful transfer to four-year universities, supporting the approximately 1,200 Citrus College students who transfer each year (primarily to CSU and UC campuses). The program's emphasis on critical inquiry and cultural awareness equips students with valuable skills for employment in an increasingly diverse society, enhancing their readiness for careers in education, public service, business, and other fields where cultural competence is highly valued.

A core mission of the Ethnic Studies program is to promote equity and cultural awareness across the campus community. The curriculum centers on the histories and perspectives of marginalized communities, fostering empathy, respect for diversity, and a commitment to social justice among students of all backgrounds. This focus on equity is especially impactful given Citrus College's diverse student population, which is majority Hispanic/Latino and includes many first-generation college students. Ethnic Studies courses validate the experiences of these students and promote a sense of belonging, which supports their academic success and has contributed to steady retention rates even through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ethnic Studies program advances Citrus College's mission by cultivating culturally aware graduates who are prepared to contribute thoughtfully to their communities and an increasingly globalized world.

## **Section 3: Course Curriculum**

### **Curriculum Table – Review the COR for the program**

#### **Currency of Courses:**

Each COR has been reviewed by the curriculum committee within the past six years and each course's prerequisites been reviewed to determine if they prepare students adequately enough for students entering the course?

#### **Alignment with California General Education Transfer Curriculum (CalGETC) if associated:**

Each class is aligned with CalGETC.

#### **Format:**

Formats (ETHN 101- in person, asynchronous-online, hybrid, 8 week, 16 week,); (ETHN 116- in person, asynchronous-online, 8 week, 16 week,)

Most of the ETHN classes are offered online in a combination of “asynchronous” or “hybrid” format.

Classes that meet in person are mostly have morning times with two classes in Spring '25 that begin at 1:05 p.m. which is the latest start time for an ETHN class the past year.

As a way to offer students additional options, we are offering two classes in the Fall '25 that begin at 3:40 p.m. and ends at 6:50 p.m. The goal is for students who require a start time later in the day can take an ETHN class that better fits their schedule. This has been a challenge for the school and students since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are not any limitations preventing timely progress toward educational goal attainment.

## **Section 4: Student Success Data**

### **Student Success and Retention: Program vs. College-Wide**

#### **High Retention Rates:**

Student retention in Ethnic Studies courses has improved dramatically and now outperforms the overall college. The course retention rate rose from 69% in Fall 2020 to 93% in Spring 2024. This Spring 2024 retention rate in Ethnic Studies exceeds the campus-wide average of 91% for that term. In other words, Ethnic Studies retention has progressed from below the college average to slightly above it in just a few years. This positive trend indicates that students are increasingly staying enrolled and engaged in Ethnic Studies classes at higher rates than the general student body.

### **Strong Success Rates:**

Student success rates in Ethnic Studies have likewise climbed and are now on par with or slightly above college-wide performance. In Spring 2024, the Ethnic Studies success rate reached 75%, which is marginally higher than the overall campus average of 74% for that term. This suggests that students in Ethnic Studies courses are succeeding at a rate comparable to, if not better than, students in other programs. The improvement in success is especially noteworthy given the program's rapid expansion; it reflects that academic quality and support were maintained even as more students enrolled.

### **Degrees, Certificates, and Transfer Comparison**

#### **Lack of Program-Specific Awards:**

A notable difference between the Ethnic Studies program and many other academic programs at the college is the absence of program-specific degrees or certificates. Currently, Citrus College does not offer a dedicated degree or certificate in Ethnic Studies. This means that while students may complete Ethnic Studies courses, they cannot yet earn an A.A. degree or certificate solely in Ethnic Studies. By extension, no students are recorded as completing a degree or certificate "in Ethnic Studies". This is an area of growth: the absence of a degree pathway represents a gap in program completion data but also an opportunity to develop formal credentials in the future.

#### **Transfer Preparation:**

In terms of transfer, the Ethnic Studies program contributes to student transfer success indirectly, even without a dedicated degree. Ethnic Studies courses fulfill important general education and diversity requirements for transfer to four-year universities. For example, California's recent requirements for Ethnic Studies in CSU general education have made these courses highly relevant for transfer-bound students. The dramatic enrollment growth in Ethnic Studies is partly attributable to students seeking to meet the CSU Ethnic Studies graduation requirement. Ethnic Studies courses support transfer preparation by enabling students to complete required coursework for university admission and graduation. While the college does not yet track Ethnic Studies majors transferring, many students enrolled in these classes do transfer in other majors after benefiting from the Ethnic Studies curriculum. The program's strong retention and success rates mean that students are successfully earning the credits they need for transfer at slightly higher rates than the general student population.

#### **Comparison with College Averages:**

College-wide, Citrus College has a broad array of degree and certificate completions and a steady transfer rate to four-year institutions. The Ethnic Studies program, being relatively new, currently has no direct analog in degrees awarded and therefore lags in that specific comparison. However, in the broader context of transfer and student progression, Ethnic Studies is contributing to student success by helping students reach

transfer goals. As the program matures, there is potential to establish an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) in Ethnic Studies or a related field. Developing a formal Ethnic Studies degree pathway would allow the program's excellent course-level success to translate into program-level completions and further bolster transfer rates.

## **Enrollment Growth and Student Demographics**

### **Dramatic Enrollment Increases:**

The Ethnic Studies program has experienced rapid and substantial enrollment growth each year, far outpacing typical program growth rates. In Spring 2021, Ethnic Studies courses enrolled 101 students; by Spring 2022, enrollment nearly doubled to 195; in Spring 2023, it doubled again to 394; and by Spring 2024, enrollment reached 669 students. This represents a total growth of over 560% in three years, an extraordinary increase. The number of course sections offered expanded accordingly; the department had to nearly double the number of class sections within a single academic year to accommodate student demand. This surge can be attributed to heightened interest and need for Ethnic Studies, bolstered by the course's value in transfer requirements and its relevance to students' lives and identities. The college's support in adding sections and resources demonstrates an institutional commitment to the program's expansion.

### **Comparison to College Averages:**

Compared to college-wide demographics, the Ethnic Studies program enrolls a slightly higher concentration of Latinx and first-generation students. Gender-wise, Citrus College's overall enrollment is about 57% female (Citrus College Institutional Research Fact Book Spring 2023), so the Ethnic Studies program's majority-female composition is in line with, or a bit above, the college norm. The age range 19–30 indicates that Ethnic Studies is serving mostly traditional-aged students and some young adults; this is consistent with general enrollment patterns, though the program may also attract returning adult learners interested in culturally relevant content. The program's enrollment boom and its student makeup show that Ethnic Studies is meeting a clear student interest and need, particularly among students from the college's dominant equity populations. This alignment provides a strong foundation for continued success, as these students are achieving outcomes in Ethnic Studies that meet or exceed college averages.

## **Equity Gaps and Performance Highlights**

### **Performance Across Demographic Groups:**

Given the demographic profile noted above, the Ethnic Studies program is largely serving students who have been identified in institutional equity plans as disproportionately impacted (Latinx, first-generation, and young adult learners). The encouraging news is that no significant equity gaps are evident in the aggregate performance data for the program. In fact, the improved retention and success rates suggest that these students are doing as well as or better than their peers college-wide. This implies that Ethnic Studies

courses may be providing an environment in which Latinx and other minoritized students thrive, potentially helping to close achievement gaps in those courses.

## **Obstacles and Barriers to Student Success**

### **Challenges Faced by Students:**

Students in the Ethnic Studies program, like many community college students, face several obstacles that can impact their academic success. A significant portion of Ethnic Studies students are first-generation college students, which means they may have limited family guidance on navigating college processes. These students often juggle work or family responsibilities alongside their studies, and they may be less aware of campus resources. Such factors can pose barriers to retention and success, notwithstanding the program's supportive environment. The Ethnic Studies student population is predominantly from historically marginalized communities; these students might experience external challenges such as financial hardship, housing or food insecurity, or the lingering effects of the digital divide, especially if any course content is online. These socio-economic barriers can hinder their ability to focus on and complete their coursework.

### **Limited Course Offerings:**

The limited scope of the curriculum currently available; with only two courses regularly offered, *Introduction to Ethnic Studies* and *Introduction to Chicana Studies*, students interested in Ethnic Studies have a narrow pathway. The lack of diverse course options means that some students may not see their own identities fully reflected in the curriculum. This could affect their engagement or decision to enroll.

### **No Degree or Certificate Pathway:**

The absence of a degree or certificate in Ethnic Studies is also a barrier from a student's perspective. Without a formal program of study to complete, students who develop an interest or career goal in Ethnic Studies cannot earn a credential in this field while at Citrus. This might discourage some students from taking additional Ethnic Studies courses beyond the minimum required for transfer or general education, as there is no clear academic pathway to follow. It may also limit the sense of academic community or identity among Ethnic Studies students, since they are not classified as a cohort in a major.

### **Resource and Support Barriers:**

As the Ethnic Studies program expanded rapidly, ensuring adequate resources has been an ongoing challenge. A potential barrier here is maintaining consistency and quality with a quickly assembled instructional team. Students might encounter variability in instruction if the program is taught by multiple new adjuncts without a full-time faculty

coordinator or established standard within the department. Scheduling can be a barrier; limited courses are offered and fill up fast due to high demand, some students may struggle to enroll or attend regularly.

## **Opportunities for Improvement and Growth**

Despite the challenges identified, the Ethnic Studies program is uniquely positioned to turn these issues into avenues for growth and enhanced student success.

- **Expanding Curriculum and Course Offerings:** The most immediate opportunity is to broaden the range of Ethnic Studies courses. By developing and introducing new courses , for example, African American Studies, Indigenous Studies, Asian American/Pacific Islander Studies, LGBTQ+ Studies, and Women of Color in the U.S., the program can better reflect the diversity of its student population. Citrus College has recognized this need in its planning documents, calling for an expansion of Ethnic Studies and multicultural course offerings (Citrus College Student Equity and Achievement Program Executive Summary 2022-2025 Student Equity Plan). New courses would not only attract a wider array of students but also allow current students to continue their Ethnic Studies education beyond the introductory level. This expansion aligns with the college’s equity goals and its mission as an HSI to celebrate and serve its diverse student body. It is an opportunity to institutionalize the success the program has already seen by embedding it in a more comprehensive curriculum.
- **Developing Degree and Certificate Pathways:** Establishing a formal Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) in Ethnic Studies is a prime opportunity. A degree or certificate program would give students a clear pathway to follow, which can improve retention and completion. It would also validate Ethnic Studies as a core academic discipline at the college. With a transfer degree in place, students interested in careers or further education in fields like Ethnic Studies, sociology, education, or public service could pursue a structured program, culminating in a credential that facilitates transfer to CSU or UC programs. Creating this pathway would address the current gap in degrees and likely increase the number of students who stay at Citrus to complete an award, thereby boosting overall college completion metrics. A degree program can foster a sense of community, through cohort-based activities or a capstone course, that supports student persistence.
- **Targeted Student Support and Engagement:** The Ethnic Studies Department can collaborate with student services to provide targeted support for its predominantly first-generation and historically underrepresented students. Embedded tutoring or mentoring could be offered in Ethnic Studies classes to help students with academic skills. Workshops on study strategies, time management, or navigating transfer requirements could be tailored to Ethnic Studies students, perhaps in coordination with programs like EOPS. There is also an opportunity to create co-curricular or extracurricular engagement:

forming an Ethnic Studies student club would allow students to build peer support networks and engage more deeply with the material through events, guest speakers, or community projects. Such involvement can improve students' sense of belonging and boost success. Partnering with existing cultural affinity programs (Black Scholars Program or Latinx student organizations) can ensure that students in Ethnic Studies are aware of and utilizing resources designed for their success. Each of these efforts would mitigate personal barriers and reinforce the message that the college is invested in Ethnic Studies students' achievements.

- **Professional Development and Instructional Support:** Another opportunity lies in continued professional development for faculty teaching Ethnic Studies. Ensuring that instructors are well-versed in culturally responsive pedagogy and inclusive curriculum design will sustain the high retention and success rates. Citrus College can support Ethnic Studies faculty (full-time and adjunct) through training and communities of practice focused on equity-minded teaching. As noted in the college's equity initiatives, sharing models of exemplary pedagogy and strategies like Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can help faculty address diverse learning needs (Citrus College Student Equity and Achievement Program Executive Summary 2022-2025 Student Equity Plan). Supporting instructors with resources and training is an investment that directly benefits students by enhancing the quality of instruction. As the program grows, the college has an opportunity to hire full-time Ethnic Studies faculty. More full-time faculty member dedicated to the program could provide leadership in curriculum development, mentorship for part-time instructors, and advocacy for students. This would address the resource barrier and ensure consistency as the program expands.
- **Leveraging Institutional Status and Grants:** Citrus College's status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution opens up opportunities for federal and state grants aimed at improving outcomes for minority students. The Ethnic Studies program is a natural fit for such grant projects, which could fund new course development, learning communities, or academic support specific to the program. By seeking external funding or reallocating equity funds, the college could support initiatives like supplemental instruction for Ethnic Studies courses or community outreach to prospective students (for example, working with local high schools, like Azusa High, to promote Ethnic Studies enrollment and awareness). This not only addresses student barriers through additional resources but also positions the program as a leader in inclusive excellence on campus.

The Ethnic Studies Department's student success data shows that the program has already made considerable strides in retention and success, aligning with or exceeding college-wide outcomes. The challenges identified, from equity gaps to structural limitations, are being actively transformed into opportunities for growth. By expanding the curriculum, establishing degree pathways, and supporting student and faculty support-services, the Ethnic Studies program can build on its early successes. These efforts will not only improve student achievement and close

any lingering equity gaps, but also contribute to Citrus College's broader goals of educational excellence, diversity, and equity. The program's rapid growth and success thus far serve as a foundation for continued institutional development in support of student success.

## **Section 5: Program-Level Student Learning Outcome Assessment**

### **Review of Current SLOs and Status**

The Citrus College Ethnic Studies program currently offers two courses, ETHN 101: Introduction to Ethnic Studies and ETHN 116: Introduction to Chicano Studies, both of which fulfill general education requirements (CSU and UC transfer). The focus on course-level SLOs and their contribution to overall program outcomes is significant. Each course has a well-defined set of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) emphasizing critical inquiry and cultural understanding in line with the program's mission of exploring the social, cultural, and political forces that have shaped the histories of ethnic minority communities in U.S. society.

- **ETHN 101 SLOs:** Upon completion of ETHN 101, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of issues facing minority groups in American society today, critically examine and evaluate course materials (texts, lectures, media), practice cultural relativity when analyzing different perspectives, and analyze the historical and cultural experiences of the four major ethnic groups in the U.S. (Native American, African American, Latino/Chicano, and Asian American). These outcomes highlight both content knowledge (historical and contemporary issues of diverse communities) and essential skills (critical thinking and cultural relativism).
- **ETHN 116 SLOs:** ETHN 116's outcomes include defining *Chicano/a Studies* and understanding how the field developed through the experiences of Chicano people, critical analysis of written and media content, application of cultural relativism in examining discussions and materials, and analyzing the social, cultural, and racial experiences of Chicana/o (Latino) communities in the United States. ETHN 116 places special emphasis on competencies like effective communication and community/global awareness, for example, students demonstrate learning through written essays, oral presentations, and exams, thereby showcasing skills in communication and critical thinking alongside content mastery. These assessment methods reflect alignment with broader institutional learning competencies (such as communication, critical analysis, and global consciousness) and ensure that students not only learn facts but can articulate and apply concepts in diverse formats.

**Current Status:** The SLOs for both ETHN 101 and ETHN 116 are **established and active**, having been implemented with the launch of these courses. There have been no formal revisions to the SLO statements since their introduction, indicating that they require an update to remain relevant and appropriate. Faculty in the program continuously monitor and reflect on these

outcomes through the SLO assessment cycle. Any minor gaps observed (for instance, if students struggle with applying theoretical concepts in writing) are addressed through pedagogical adjustments rather than immediate SLO changes. However, the Ethnic Studies faculty remains attentive to the evolving nature of the discipline and is open to revisiting SLOs to keep them aligned with best practices and institutional priorities.

### **Alignment of Course SLOs with Program-Level Outcomes**

The program-level learning outcomes for Ethnic Studies are essentially embodied by the combined SLOs of its courses and the overall program description. Overall alignment is strong: The course SLOs collectively reflect the broader goals of the Ethnic Studies program, ensuring that students develop both the knowledge and skills envisioned by the discipline. The program's central aim is to foster critical understanding of the experiences and contributions of underrepresented ethnic communities within U.S. social, cultural, and political contexts. Each course contributes to this aim in complementary ways:

- **Breadth and Depth:** ETHN 101 provides a broad, comparative foundation across multiple ethnic groups and historical periods, while ETHN 116 offers depth in a specific cultural context (Chicano/Latino experiences). Together, their SLOs ensure students grasp both the wide spectrum of multicultural American narratives and a focused case study, aligning with the program's interdisciplinary scope. This coherence means that the program succeeds in meeting its outcome of analyzing ethnic minorities' histories and social conditions through multiple lenses.
- **Core Skills and Themes:** The recurring themes in the SLOs: critical thinking, cultural relativism, and analysis of sociopolitical contexts, serve as core program-level competencies. Students in Ethnic Studies are expected to think critically about race and identity, evaluate diverse sources of information, and appreciate cultural perspectives other than their own. Both course outlines explicitly require critical evaluation of texts/media and practicing cultural relativism, directly supporting the program's learning outcome of producing culturally aware critical thinkers. The historical and sociopolitical awareness emphasized in both sets of SLOs aligns perfectly with program expectations that students understand the context of marginalization and resistance in U.S. history. The course SLOs act as building blocks that collectively fulfill the overarching outcome: students will be able to analyze and articulate the experiences of ethnic minority groups and the structural forces (like racism, discrimination, and policy) affecting those communities.
- **Instructor-Developed Outcomes vs. Program Outcomes:** Faculty have also identified broader learning objectives that extend beyond the specific wording of the official SLOs. These include the ability to articulate key Ethnic Studies concepts (such as racism, decolonization, sovereignty, and anti-racism), apply theories from various ethnic studies traditions (for instance, theoretical frameworks from African American Studies, Native

American Studies, etc.), examine intersections of race with gender, sexuality, class and other aspects of identity (i.e. intersectionality), and engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial movements and ideas. These instructor-developed outcomes effectively describe the program-level student learning outcomes that the Ethnic Studies curriculum aims to instill. There is a high degree of alignment here: the current course SLOs support many of these broad goals implicitly. For example, when students analyze historical and cultural experiences or practice cultural relativism, they are inherently touching on concepts of race, identity, and power. Understanding issues facing minority groups today involves grappling with racism and inequality, and analyzing Chicano history involves themes of colonialism and self-determination. The intended program outcomes are being addressed by the courses, albeit sometimes implicitly.

### **Recommendations for SLO Refinement and Formalization**

The Ethnic Studies faculty and program leadership should continue to ensure that SLOs remain aligned with both the evolving scope of the discipline and Citrus College's institutional equity goals. Based on the review above, the following recommendations are offered to refine or clarify the SLO framework:

- **Maintain and Strengthen Alignment:** The existing course SLOs already promote critical thinking, cultural awareness, and analytical skills, which are fundamental to Ethnic Studies. Any future SLO revisions should preserve these core elements. This would codify the alignment that currently exists informally.
- **Update and Refine SLO Language:** Consider refining the wording of current SLOs to explicitly include key concepts and contemporary terminology. Terms like racism, colonialism, intersectionality, anti-racism, and social justice could be woven into the SLOs to clearly reflect the content that students are learning. This provides clarity and stronger alignment with Ethnic Studies disciplinary language, as well as with California's Ethnic Studies core competencies for transfer curricula. ETHN 116's SLO could explicitly mention analyzing Chicana/o/x identities in intersection with gender and class, mirroring the course's actual emphasis.
- **Ensure Inclusive and Consistent Terminology:** As the field evolves to be more inclusive, the program should ensure SLO terminology reflects current standards. In ETHN 116, for instance, using inclusive identifiers (Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x) in outcomes and course materials consistently will better align with how the discipline acknowledges diverse gender identities within ethnic groups. While this is a minor editorial point, it demonstrates the program's commitment to inclusivity.
- **Formalize Broad Program Outcomes:** Given that instructor-developed outcomes already encompass advanced competencies (theoretical application, intersectional analysis, engagement with antiracism), the program might formalize these as program-level SLOs or overarching outcomes in curriculum documentation. This could take the

form of a published list of Ethnic Studies program learning outcomes (even without a degree) in the catalog or program review, which would clarify what a student completing Ethnic Studies courses should know and be able to do. Formalizing them aids in assessment and communicates the program's value. Having such an outcome documented would directly support Citrus College's equity and diversity mission, making the program's role in promoting anti-racist education transparent.

- **Align with Institutional Equity Initiatives:** The college's strategic focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion provides an important context for Ethnic Studies. The program should continue to align its SLOs with these institutional goals by emphasizing outcomes related to social justice engagement and global citizenship. This might involve adding or highlighting an outcome about students' ability to engage constructively with *anti-racist* or *anti-colonial movements* or to demonstrate *civic/community awareness*. Since ETHN 116 already integrates community/global consciousness in its outcomes, spreading this emphasis across all Ethnic Studies offerings will show that the program is actively supporting the college's commitment to fostering informed, socially conscious graduates.

## Section 6: Assessment and Planning

### Strengths

- **Rapid Growth and Student Demand:** The Ethnic Studies program has experienced increased enrollment over the past three years, reflecting strong student interest and need. This expansion corresponds with the new CSU General Education Area F Ethnic Studies requirement introduced in 2024. Citrus College increased the number of sections offered for ETHN 101 (Introduction to Ethnic Studies) and ETHN 116 (Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies), and these classes have consistently filled to capacity. The high demand for these courses indicates that the program is effectively engaging students and fulfilling a critical academic requirement for transfer. Both ETHN 101 and 116 satisfy general education requirements for CSU and UC, helping students progress toward degree completion and transfer goals.
- **Alignment with Student Population and Success:** Ethnic Studies at Citrus College serves a student population that is majority Latinx, predominantly first-generation college students, and largely within the 19–30 age range. This aligns closely with Citrus College's status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), where over 60% of the student body is Latinx. The program's curriculum reflects with these students by validating their cultural identities and experiences. Students see their own communities and histories reflected in course content, which fosters a strong sense of belonging and engagement in their education. Such relevance to students' lives supports their academic success and personal growth. By offering culturally relevant coursework, the Ethnic Studies program contributes positively to student learning outcomes and overall success, particularly for

minoritized and first-generation students who benefit from inclusive and empowering educational experiences.

- **Equity-Centered Curriculum and Pedagogy:** The content of the Ethnic Studies courses is a strength, emphasizing core equity concepts, critical anti-racist frameworks, and the histories and contributions of marginalized groups. ETHN 101 provides a broad survey of the experiences of Native American, African American, Asian American, and Latinx communities, while ETHN 116 offers an in-depth exploration of Chicanx/Latinx perspectives. This curriculum promotes cultural awareness and critical thinking about race, ethnicity, gender, and social justice. Classroom instruction is rooted in culturally relevant pedagogy; faculty intentionally incorporate diverse perspectives, encourage critical analysis of social structures, and create an inclusive learning environment. In practice, instructors engage students through interactive discussions, community-oriented projects, and materials that reflect a range of identities. They emphasize intersectionality and empower students to connect course theories with real-world issues. These teaching approaches not only enrich students' academic experience but also develop their analytical skills and civic awareness. The program's equity-focused curriculum and teaching methods have a clear, positive impact on student learning.
- **Recent Developments and Recognition:** In its initial years of growth, the Ethnic Studies program has gained visibility and support within the college. Administrative leadership has recognized the importance of Ethnic Studies in advancing the college's diversity and equity goals. Additional sections have been added in Summer and Fall terms to meet demand, and the college's Social and Behavioral Sciences division has actively supported the program's expansion.

## **Weaknesses**

- **Limited Curriculum:** A weakness of the Ethnic Studies program is the very small number of course offerings. Currently, only two courses (ETHN 101 and ETHN 116) are offered, which limits the scope of the curriculum. Important subject areas within Ethnic Studies are not yet represented in the course lineup, for instance, there are no dedicated courses in African American/Black Studies, Indigenous/Native American Studies, Asian American or Pacific Islander Studies, or courses focusing on intersectional themes such as Queer Studies or Women of Color. This curricular gap means students do not have the opportunity to study a wider range of ethnic groups and social identities in dedicated courses. It also constrains the program's ability to offer a comprehensive Ethnic Studies education. Students interested in deeper exploration of topics like Black history or Native sovereignty, for example, currently have no Ethnic Studies course option at Citrus College. The narrow curriculum may therefore limit the program's appeal and impact, and it does not fully meet the breadth of student interest or the depth of the field of Ethnic Studies.

- **No Degree/Certificate Pathway:** The program lacks any dedicated degree or certificate in Ethnic Studies, which is a structural weakness in terms of academic pathways. Students cannot presently earn an A.A. degree, A.A.-Transfer degree, or certificate in Ethnic Studies at Citrus College; the courses only fulfill general education requirements. This absence of a formal award or program of study may discourage students who might otherwise pursue Ethnic Studies as a major or concentration, and it makes it harder to market the program as a cohesive field of study.

### **Support for DEIA+ and Sense of Belonging**

*The Ethnic Studies program is inherently aligned with Citrus College's commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIA+). Diversity and Inclusion: By design, the curriculum centers the histories, cultures, and voices of marginalized communities. In ETHN 101, students study the experiences of Native American, African American, Asian American, and Latinx communities in the U.S., and in ETHN 116 they delve into Chicana/Latina identities and history. This content exposes all students to a diversity of perspectives and lived experiences, fostering a more inclusive understanding of American society. For students of color (who make up the majority in these classes), seeing their own heritage reflected in the curriculum sends a powerful message of inclusion, their stories matter in academia. For all students, the courses cultivate empathy and cross-cultural understanding by highlighting diversity. The program thereby contributes to a campus climate that celebrates multiculturalism and validates the identity of each student.*

**Equity and Accessibility:** Ethnic Studies by its nature examines equity issues, such as systemic racism, social justice movements, and institutional barriers, giving students a framework to understand and challenge inequities. In the classroom, faculty promote equity by employing teaching practices that give all students a voice. Course assignments often allow students to choose topics connected to their own community or experience, an approach that gives equal opportunity for each student to engage meaningfully.

**Fostering Sense of Belonging:** The classroom environment is intentionally welcoming and affirming. Faculty set ground rules for mutual respect and encourage students to bring in their own perspectives and cultural knowledge.

### **Recommendations and Goals (Next 3 Years)**

1. **Broaden the Curriculum with New Courses:** Develop and introduce additional Ethnic Studies courses to fill current curricular gaps and meet student interest. Priority areas include African American/Black Studies, Native American/Indigenous Studies, Asian American & Pacific Islander Studies, and other emerging fields such as Ethnic Studies perspectives on gender and sexuality (e.g. a Queer Studies or Women of Color course). By expanding the range of courses, the program will provide a more comprehensive and well-rounded Ethnic Studies education. New courses should be developed in alignment

with transfer requirements and C-ID descriptors where available, to ensure they articulate with CSU/UC Ethnic Studies or related departments.

1. The goal is to roll out at least 2–3 new courses over the next three years, pending curriculum approval. This expansion will allow students to delve deeper into specific cultural experiences and social justice issues, thereby enriching their learning and better serving our diverse student population.
2. **Establish an Ethnic Studies Degree/Certificate Pathway:** Create a formal academic pathway in Ethnic Studies by designing either an Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) in Social Justice/Ethnic Studies or a local Associate of Arts degree/certificate in Ethnic Studies. Currently, students interested in this field have no option to earn a credential, so this goal addresses that need. In collaboration with the curriculum committee and relevant faculty, the program will work on developing a degree pattern that includes core Ethnic Studies courses (existing and newly developed) and interdisciplinary electives. An AA-T in Ethnic Studies (aligned with the CSU Ethnic Studies transfer model curriculum) would enable students to transfer as Ethnic Studies majors seamlessly, while a local certificate could recognize students who complete a concentration of Ethnic Studies coursework.
  1. The target is to draft the degree/certificate requirements and submit them for approval within the next 1–2 years. Having a degree pathway will elevate the program’s profile, attract more students, and formally acknowledge those who concentrate in this important field.
3. **Enhance Student Support and Engagement:** Implement additional support structures and co-curricular activities to improve student success and engagement in Ethnic Studies. One objective is to partner with existing student support services (such as the tutoring center, writing center, or learning center) to train tutors or supplemental instruction leaders in Ethnic Studies content. This would ensure that students have access to knowledgeable help for course assignments and research projects; boosting their academic performance. Another objective is to integrate mental health and wellness support given the sensitive nature of course topics. For instance, the program can coordinate with the Student Wellness Center or counseling staff to provide classroom presentations on self-care and resilience, or facilitate support circles for students if needed during particularly challenging discussions. On the co-curricular side, the program will encourage and support the formation of a student Ethnic Studies club or honor society.
  1. The goal is to create a more holistic support network around Ethnic Studies students over the next three years.

## **Budget Planning**

- **Full-Time Ethnic Studies Faculty Position:** The highest priority resource is the hiring of another full-time faculty member in Ethnic Studies. This dedicated professor would work collaboratively with the existing full-time Ethnic Studies professor to provide leadership for the program, teach the expanded curriculum, coordinate program growth, and offer consistent mentorship to students.
- **Adjunct Faculty and Expertise:** Alongside a full-time hire, the program will continue to utilize adjunct faculty, especially those with specialized expertise for new courses (e.g., an adjunct with background in African American Studies to teach a new ETHN course in that area). The budget should account for the increased adjunct faculty hours as new sections are added. This includes funding for recruiting and onboarding qualified part-time instructors from diverse backgrounds who can contribute unique perspectives. Adequate adjunct staffing will ensure the program can offer a variety of courses without over-reliance on a single instructor.
- **Professional Development Funds:** To support the goal of continuous improvement and the creation of new curriculum, the program requests funding for professional development. This would cover expenses such as conference attendance, travel and registration for Ethnic Studies-related workshops, and in-house training opportunities. These experiences will help instructors remain current in the discipline and bring innovative teaching practices back to the classroom. Professional development funds would also support training in online course development if the program decides to offer hybrid/online Ethnic Studies courses to increase accessibility.
- **Curriculum Development and Materials:** As the program expands its curriculum, it will need resources for developing and implementing new courses. The budget should include curriculum development stipends or release time for faculty who create new course outlines (for instance, writing the curriculum for a new ETHN course in Native American Studies and shepherding it through the approval process). Once new courses are approved, the program will require updated instructional materials. This may involve acquiring textbooks, readers, or access to scholarly articles/archives pertinent to those new subjects. The library will need a modest budget increase to enrich its collection of Ethnic Studies resources, for example, purchasing books, ebooks, and databases focusing on African American, Indigenous, Asian American, and Latinx studies to support research assignments in the new courses. The program also anticipates needing instructional materials and equipment such as multimedia resources (documentaries, films, online software) that facilitate engaging learning experiences. For instance, if an oral history project is assigned in a new course, the program might invest in a few digital voice recorders or transcription software for student use.