

Assembly Bill No. 1460

CHAPTER 32

An act to add Section 89032 to the Education Code, relating to the California State University.

[Approved by Governor August 17, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State August 17, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1460, Weber. California State University: graduation requirement: ethnic studies.

Existing law establishes the California State University and its various campuses under the administration of the Board of Trustees of the California State University. Existing law requires the trustees to adopt rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of this state for the governance of the trustees, their appointees and employees, and the California State University. Existing regulations require students of the California State University to complete courses in American history and American government or pass comprehensive examinations in those fields in order to graduate, with specified requirements and exceptions.

This bill, commencing with the 2021–22 academic year, would require the California State University to provide for courses in ethnic studies at each of its campuses. The bill, commencing with students graduating in the 2024–25 academic year, would require the California State University to require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement, the completion of, at minimum, one 3-unit course in ethnic studies, as specified.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Ethnic studies programs have come about from students of color demanding them. On November 6, 1968, a coalition of student groups at San Francisco State University demanded that the university institute an ethnic studies program.

(b) Ethnic studies are an interdisciplinary and comparative study of race and ethnicity with special focus on four historically defined racialized core groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina and Latino Americans.

(c) Studies have found that both students of color and white students benefit academically as well as socially from taking ethnic studies courses. Ethnic studies courses play an important role in building an inclusive multicultural democracy.

(d) A report of the California State University Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies, commissioned by the Chancellor's office, recommended that ethnic studies become a general education requirement throughout the California State University system.

SEC. 2. Section 89032 is added to the Education Code, to read:

89032. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature that students of the California State University acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them comprehend the diversity and social justice history of the United States and of the society in which they live to enable them to contribute to that society as responsible and constructive citizens.

(b) Commencing with the 2021–22 academic year, the California State University shall provide for courses in ethnic studies at each of its campuses.

(c) The California State University shall collaborate with the California State University Council on Ethnic Studies and the Academic Senate of the California State University to develop core competencies to be achieved by students who complete an ethnic studies course pursuant to implementation of this section. The council and the academic senate shall approve the core competencies before commencement of the 2021–22 academic year.

(d) Commencing with students graduating in the 2024–25 academic year, the California State University shall require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement, the completion of, at minimum, one three-unit course in ethnic studies. The university shall not increase the number of units required to graduate from the university with a baccalaureate degree by the enforcement of this requirement. This graduation requirement shall not apply to a postbaccalaureate student who is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program at the university if the student has satisfied either of the following:

(1) The student has earned a baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency.

(2) The student has completed an ethnic studies course at a postsecondary educational institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency.