



**Thursday, May 26, 2011  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PT**



**Power, Community, and Identity:  
How to Create a Culturally Relevant Social Studies Curriculum  
that Engages Your Students**

**Presenters**

***SIATech Los Angeles Students***

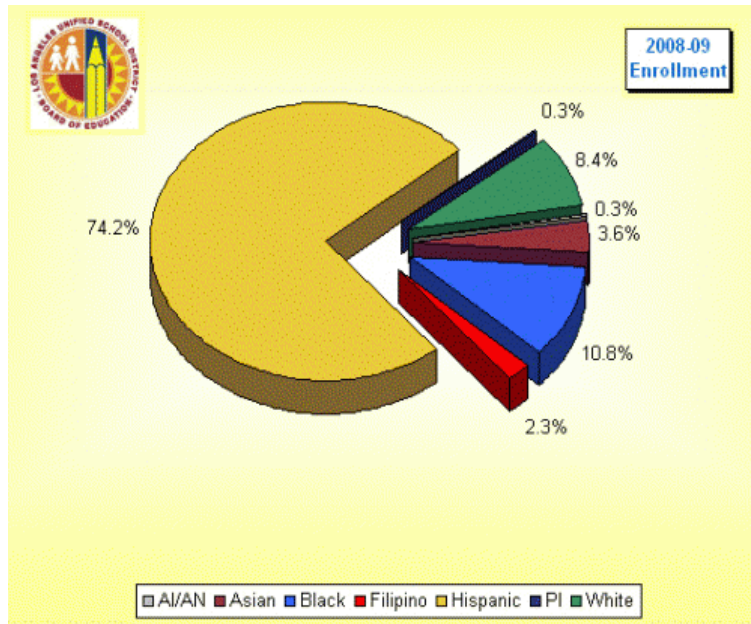
***Jake Gordon, SIATech Principal***

***Gino Franco, SIATech Social Studies Teacher***

*While you are waiting for us to begin, please type your answers in the “Chat Text Box”:*

- **Name of your school/organization & location**
- **Your role at that site**
- **A teaching strategy you have used to create culturally relevant Social Studies curriculum.**

# Demographics of Los Angeles Unified School District & SIATech Los Angeles Charter School



**SIATech Los Angeles:**  
 Hispanic / Latino: 64%  
 African-American: 24%  
 Asian / Pacific Islander: 5%  
 Other / Not Specified: 4%  
 Caucasian: 2%  
 Native American: 1%

**Closest Neighborhood School: Roosevelt High**

## LAUSD

Year	AI/Alsk		Asian		Filipino		Pac Isl		Black		Hispanic		White		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
2009-10	8	0.2	8	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.0	8	0.2	4302	99.1	13	0.3	4340
2008-09	4	0.1	12	0.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	10	0.2	4645	99.2	11	0.2	4683
2007-08	3	0.1	11	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	0.2	4562	99.2	11	0.2	4597
2006-07	3	0.1	12	0.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	13	0.3	4534	99.2	8	0.2	4571
2005-06	6	0.1	9	0.2	2	0.0	0	0.0	10	0.2	4790	99.2	13	0.3	4830

## Background to Why Culturally Relevant Curriculum is Needed

- Students don't feel a connection to school curriculum that is not engaging. The curriculum has no relevance and is not addressing their culture, ethnicity, or race.
- **Creates awareness of other cultures, which is particularly important in a diverse student body such as Los Angeles SIATech.**
- Social Studies becomes more meaningful to students' lives. They see themselves personally connected to the curriculum when their culture is acknowledged formally in their studies.



# Culturally Relevant Curriculum Increases Graduation Rates

**Tucson Unified School District**  
Department of Accountability and Research

March 8, 2011

**Re-Analysis of Graduation Outcomes for Mexican American Studies (MAS) Students  
Number and Percent of Seniors who Graduated**

Year Courses Taken	Group	Number of Seniors	Number of Graduates	% of Seniors Who Graduated
2005	Comparison Group	3843	3303	85.9%
2005	Mexican Am. Studies	34	31	91.2%
2006	Comparison Group	4003	3480	86.9%
2006	Mexican Am. Studies	45	42	93.3%
2007	Comparison Group	3908	3362	86.0%
2007	Mexican Am. Studies	77	74	96.1%
2008	Comparison Group	3795	3226	85.0%
2008	Mexican Am. Studies	74	68	91.9%
2009	Comparison Group	3682	3130	85.0%
2009	Mexican Am. Studies	105	96	91.4%
2010	Comparison Group	3744	3095	82.7%
2010	Mexican Am. Studies	173	162	93.6%

**Comparison Group:** The group is defined as Seniors taking zero or less than one credit of Latin American Literature, American History - Hispanic Studies or American Government - Hispanic/Ethnic Studies

**Mexican American Studies:** The group is defined as Seniors taking at least one full credit of Latin American Literature, American History - Hispanic Studies or American Government - Hispanic/Ethnic Studies

## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: The Research Seminar Class

### Research Seminar Class

- ✓ A two week course
- ✓ Purpose: **To provide students an opportunity to:**
  - access social science theory that is culturally relevant to their lives and problems in the community;
  - **apply social science theory to their lived experiences;**
  - design an introductory qualitative research study related to a problem in the community in order to improve lived conditions.

## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Research Seminar Class on Racial Formation



**Suhayla Aullybux**  
**CSULA**  
**Undergraduate**  
**Social Workers**

# Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Ethnic Studies Public Presentations



**Francisco Pulido  
&  
Mayra Salazar**

**UCLA Ethnic Studies  
Symposium**

## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Immigration Teach-In

- **Immigration Teach In:** Community groups and Gil Cedillo's office came out to the campus to discuss implications of Arizona's SB1070. The teach-in led to further discussion and action by students in the production of two films: "The Underground" and "Just Another Day in Arizona".
- **The Underground** examines the struggles of undocumented immigrants and what they encounter (both physically and psychologically) when they leave their home country for the United States. It has the audience examine what social responsibility do we have as human beings to help others that have a desire to improve their life even if they are undocumented.
- **Just Another Day in Arizona** was initially about police brutality from a Los Angeles perspective, but the students decided to utilize their knowledge and first hand experience of police harassment and brutality and apply it to Arizona's SB1070. The film examines the "what if" factor of SB1070 and imagines how the law would be utilized to harass non-White Arizona residents. It asks the audience what social responsibility do we have as human beings to ensure laws such as SB1070 treat people equally. And if not, what actions must be taken to rescind them.



## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Community Movie Viewing of The Garden

In alignment with Earth Day activities on campus, we hosted a community viewing of the “The Garden,” a documentary about the largest urban community garden in the country that was ultimately closed down. Students responded to the video through writing poetry, songs, and art and displayed them throughout the campus.



# Picture of the Former South Central Community Garden



## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Food Justice Presentation

Students learned about the ecological indigenous food ways of the original people of the America's, how colonization created an unhealthy diet for natives, and the current health implications for today's Latino & African American communities.



## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Guest Speakers from the Community



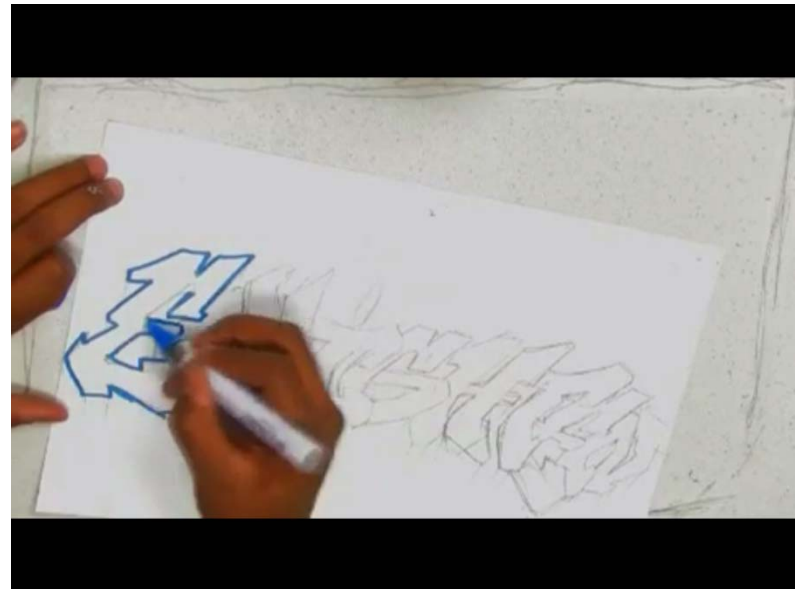
### Commemorating the East L.A. Walkouts of 1968

**Chicano activist Bobby Verdugo leads a discussion with students about the unequal schooling conditions that existed in Los Angeles in the 1960s and the similarities of the conditions that still exist in the community today. In preparation for the discussion students watched, “Walk-out” a film depicting the East L.A. student protests of 1968 where students from Lincoln H.S., Garfield H.S., and Roosevelt H.S. all walked out of their classes.**

## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Culturally Relevant Film: Graffiti Art - “The Path to Enlightenment”



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNT3bU\\_EwH4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNT3bU_EwH4)



## Examples of Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Culturally Relevant Film: The Underground



<http://vimeo.com/13784519>

# Questions about Today's Topic?



Jake Gordon

Principal

SIATech Charter High School

Los Angeles

[jake.gordon@siatech.org](mailto:jake.gordon@siatech.org)

Let's continue to talk about this at  
the RAPSA blog

<http://rapsapd.ning.com/events/>

For more RAPSA resources, visit [www.rapsa.org](http://www.rapsa.org)



*Questions about RAPSA?*

Eileen Holmes

RAPSA Director

[info@rapsa.org](mailto:info@rapsa.org)

858 775 3819