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Call for Proposals - Due September 4, 2026

**“Resisting Liberal Capture in Higher Education:
Genealogies of Responsibility in Ethnic Studies”**

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Issue Description:

This special issue calls for submissions that feature Ethnic Studies pedagogies in higher education, including community colleges and four-year institutions (e.g., comprehensive, research, liberal arts, private, Tribal colleges, Hispanic-serving, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions). The current historical moment is significant for this special issue because of the attacks on Ethnic Studies across the national landscape. Several sibling fields, including Critical Race Studies, Gender and Women’s Studies, and LGBT/Queer/Trans Studies, are also experiencing coordinated attacks by the right wing at local and national levels. Simultaneously, there are several gains for Ethnic Studies in higher education, specifically the Ethnic Studies graduation requirement in California, including the California State University system, per Assembly Bill 1460, and in the California Community Colleges, per their Board of Governors.

Simultaneously, the incorporation of Ethnic Studies in the beleaguered sites of higher education cannot be uncritically lauded, especially as colleges and universities have historically served the function of reproducing subjects and ideologies of liberal empire, even as historical flashpoints of right-wing rearticulation, akin to our current moment, reshape, though not entirely upend, what this reproduction looks like. As local, regional, state, and federal laws and policies clash in relation to Ethnic Studies, we observe the fact that so many universities and colleges have folded to such right-wing demands, highlighting how liberalism is not so inseparable from fascism and, in fact, paves a path toward it. This special issue takes this twinned unfolding of liberal and fascist logic at its starting point and is interested in submissions that analyze and critique the liberal incorporation of Ethnic Studies in sites of higher education historically and in the present: surface-level celebrations of representation and diversity divorced from the transformation of classed, raced, gendered, queered, anti-settler colonial, and anti-

imperial conditions that shape difference and its material struggles – struggles that we understand form the substantive project of Ethnic Studies. In addition to critical, analytical pieces, we also center Ethnic Studies collaborations and coalitions with struggles beyond higher education, and invite pieces that examine the role of community engagement in Ethnic Studies pedagogy, particularly those that examine how higher education spaces transform or are transformed (or fail to) by such community coalitions. The first part of the proposed title, “Resisting liberal capture in higher education,” is reflective of the ways that liberalism and neo-liberalism (as the marketization of the former) in higher education has defanged Ethnic Studies’ commitment to eradicating white supremacy and all forms of oppression. The consequence of liberal capture is that Ethnic Studies can get reduced to a surface-level celebration of diversity, reproduce a siloed analysis differentiated by ethnic group (i.e., “food groups”), and delegitimize the material struggles it is tasked to amplify. Furthermore, neo-liberalism has demarcated a fissure between “the university” and “the community,” upholding the myth that Ethnic Studies only became legitimate because it was institutionalized in higher education. This special issue attempts to return Ethnic Studies to its roots with coalitions across sites of struggle: factory floors, community spaces, student undergrounds, and Undercommons everywhere.

We invite authors to excavate “genealogies of responsibility in Ethnic Studies” to articulate an *ethics of responsibility*. A genealogy of responsibility collates the heterogeneous movements and struggles for Ethnic Studies in and beyond the site of higher education – solidarity in grassroots, transnational, and intergenerational relations across human and more-than-human kin – as a legitimate, rigorous site of knowledge and action. From these genealogies, we articulate an Ethnic Studies *ethics of responsibility*: one that gives name to and amplifies the imbrications between and actively challenges the reproduction of war, imperialism, capitalism, settler colonialism, chattel slavery, and its afterlives that shape U.S. empire and erupt in unexpected places.

We welcome submissions that map Ethnic Studies pedagogies in higher education classrooms, office hours, cultural centers, professional developments, collaborations with PK-12 schools, community organizations, and public spheres; and conditions that shape ethnic studies pedagogies. We acknowledge the value of PK-12 ethnic studies scholarship and invite authors to consider including relevant studies in their manuscripts. This issue is especially interested in submissions that speak to the issue theme via:

- Organizing and movement-building as pedagogy
- Political and popular education in and beyond the formal classroom
- Liberalism as fascism
- Ethnic Studies as incorporation and contradiction
- Higher education’s culpability in reproducing liberal empire via weapons research, imperial investments, developing surveillance and ai technology, Zionism, and settler colonial holdings

- Higher education's material relationship with policing, ICE, incarceration, gendered and sexual punishment, and other criminalizing institutions
- Higher education's relationship to capitalist crisis, contradiction, and its subsequent rearticulations
- Participatory action research projects and critiques of the idea of "research"
- Higher education collaborations with PK-12 and/or community based organizations
- Cultural expressions, including poetry, photography, and art
- Social movement histories in higher education
- Innovative curriculum, instructional materials, and pedagogical approaches
- Methodological pieces including pláticas, testimonios, talanoa, auto-ethnography, and kitchen table talk
- Decolonizing, anti-imperial, and anti-colonial responsibilities and methodologies
- The interdiscipline and anti-disciplinary approach in Ethnic Studies pedagogies

Submission Process:

Proposal due: September 4, 2026

Lead editors' Notification: October 2, 2026

Complete Manuscript (if accepted) due: January 8, 2027

We invite submissions from scholar-activists, educators, organizers, and students in the form of scholarly research, narratives, archival histories, oral histories, testimonios, photo essays, art, etc. All manuscripts should contribute to a living archive of Ethnic Studies pedagogies in all its forms, written from and for anti-racist, anti-imperial, decolonial, and rehumanizing movements both inside and outside higher education contexts.

Your submission should include a title, author name(s), author emails, and a brief 100–200-word biography for each author. The proposal should be ~500 words long, detailing how the proposed work aligns with the issue's theme, methodological approaches, and contributions to the vision of the *Ethnic Studies Pedagogies Journal*. Your proposal will be reviewed by the lead editors, and you will receive formative feedback, including clarifying questions. At that point, the lead editors will either invite or decline a full manuscript submission.

Please consult the submissions guidelines on our journal website for more detailed information: <http://ethnicstudiespedagogies.org/SUBMISSIONS/>

Email submissions in Word format to: José M. Aguilar-Hernández (jhernandez@cpp.edu) and Trung P. Nguyen (trung.p.nguyen@sjsu.edu)