This pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study reflects the urgent demand for an overdue institutional presence that effectively addresses historical and contemporary patterns of antiblackness.

The present demand for a Department of Black Study galvanized during the 2020 mass protests against antiblackness in the United States and elsewhere following that year’s police murders of Ahmaud Arbery (February 23), Breonna Taylor (March 13), George Floyd (May 25), as well as many other less known violent deaths, including those of Black trans people Nina Pop (May 3), Tony McDade (May 27), Brayla Stone (June 25), Merci Mack (June 30), Shaki Peters (July 1), and Bree Black (July 3).

Riverside Sheriff's Department, Riverside Police Department, and the University of California Police Department are deeply implicated. The 1998 police murder of Tyisha Miller, and the 2012 use of police force against UCR students suggest historical and contemporary reliance on ubiquitous and antiblack state violence. More recently, in 2019, UCPD had an encounter with a Black scholar that turned physical and ended up with this person arrested; in 2020, sheriff deputies attacked protestors with rubber bullets and pepper balls. Riverside police continue to arrest, seriously injure, and kill Black people at disproportionately higher rates.
Similar to the late 1960s, when Black and multiracial mass social movements led to the formation of the first Black Studies departments in the U.S., the current protests demand the recognition of institutional, systemic, and ubiquitous antiblackness -- that includes but far exceeds state and police violence -- as well as concrete action. As a land-granting institution built on stolen indigenous land, and in spite of (or perhaps precisely due to) its branding of diversity, UCR has been inhospitable to Black epistemologies and unsafe for Black people.

Aligned with these epochal, national, and international protests for Black lives, and in various public pronouncements and statements of support, the demand for institutional accountability and transformation comes from local community organizations, African Student Programs, The Black Graduate Student Union, Associated Students of UCR, Blackness Unbound; several departments and colleges, such as Christopher Lynch, Dean of the Bourns College of Engineering; and an ever-growing number of faculty, students, and staff. As importantly, support comes from UC-wide faculty and administrative units, such as Charles Hale, Dean of the College of Social Sciences at UC Santa Barbara; The Black Leadership Alliance Council; as well as national and international individuals and organizations, such as Criola and React or Die!, prominent Black activist organizations in Brazil.

As of March 30, 2021, this initiative has been endorsed by 2,020 people and organizations. In March the initiative drafted a petition to seek public support and the response has been remarkable. By midday on March 30, 2021, we had received 2,020 signatures (the full list of signatories by that time are included at the end of this document). Signatories include 275 undergraduate students at UCR, 281 UCR graduate students, 67 UCR staff members, and 139 members of the UCR faculty. The petition has also received overwhelming support from colleagues at other institutions of higher education, including colleagues from all of the other UC campuses, from multiple CSU and California community colleges, and from world-class universities in the U.S. (e.g., Arizona State University, Duke University, University of Massachusetts, Northwestern, NYU, Stanford) and abroad (e.g., Ateneo de Manila University, Leiden University, Oxford University, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro, Universidade de Brasilia, Universidade de São Paulo, University of Toronto). Importantly, community members here in the Inland Empire signed the petition on behalf of their organizations, including the NAACP Riverside County Branch, the UCR Black Alumni Chapter, and the Latino Voter Mobilization Project. As word spreads about the initiative at UCR, we expect that in the coming weeks and months even more people will join our call for the creation of a department of Black Study, and our petition will remain open to additional signatories.
The UCR difference, signaled by our title Black Study, emphasizes the verb “study” and stresses the engaged and embodied practice of this ever-morphing transformative project. The project name invokes Black Studies, UCR’s short-lived department, but is a departure from it as the singular, Black Study, signifies profound shifts. Black Study is the insurgent practice (that is inevitably a theory) of curriculum, teaching, and research that is simultaneously local, communal, planetary, historical, contemporary, and future-oriented, straddling various disciplines in the Social Sciences, Humanities, STEM, and the Arts.

Black Study is a transdisciplinary body of knowledge emerging from historical and contemporary African, African American, and diasporic Black experiences. It encompasses but significantly exceeds conventional curricular frameworks of Black Studies, African American Studies, Africana Studies, as well as traditional disciplines in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts. Black Study emphasizes insurgent African and Black diasporic queer, trans, and feminist transdisciplinary approaches to a global framing of Black experiences.

Black Study is an abolition project. Drawing on autonomous practices rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, and Transformative Justice, abolition is not an outcome or destination, but rather a collective experimental methodology of liberation. In rigorous research, analysis, creative practice, applied scholarship and close partnership with transformative grassroots organizations, Black Study critically addresses and seeks to overcome all forms of antiblackness while imagining and prefiguring an altogether new world. Black Study is deeply engaged in the long duration of Black people’s ways and theories of knowing -- Black epistemologies -- in the African continent and its diasporas. At the same time, introducing invention into existence, Black Study is future-oriented, and as such, informed by collective past experiences, it explores alternative genres of the Human and the Social.

Black Study is an epistemological living corpus that requires an overdue scholarly infrastructure in the public university. Such infrastructure addresses the long historical exclusion of theoretical, methodological, historiographic, artistic, and pedagogical practices engendered by peoples of Africa and its Black diasporas. We understand Black diasporas as including but exceeding those displaced in the Americas, as Black Brazilian feminist Lélia Gonzalez terms it. To put and keep UCR on the map as a world-class research university, a Department of Black Study must be established.
II. A HIS/THEIR/HERSTORY OF BLACK STUDIES AT UCR

To demand a Black Study department at UCR is to acknowledge a long and embattled his/their/herstory of Black people on campus. It is to recognize an institutional legacy and ongoing practice that has consistently disrespected, demobilized, defunded, and indeed disappeared Black Study as a relatively autonomous field. The absence of a Black Study department at UCR is evidence of the university’s disregard for Black peoples, their experiences, and epistemologies. A brief his/their/herstorical examination of Black Studies on campus makes the point compellingly.

In 1968, Charles Jenkins and a group of about 60 Black students founded the Black Student Union (BSU). Drawing on widespread Black national and international mass mobilizations, the BSU demanded a Black Studies Department. In 1969, a Department of Black Studies was created, but UCR Chancellor Ivan Hinderaker disbanded it in 1970 and recategorized it as an interdisciplinary major. Still, the BSU remained active and mobilized. It claimed the Black House as its headquarters, but the building mysteriously burned down. In 1972, as a consequence of student protests, and the foundational work of the BSU, the Black Student Programs was reconstituted; under the leadership of Kathryn Jones, it became formalized in 1979 as the African Student Programs (ASP), paying homage to an earlier incarnation of it in the 1960s.

On December 21, 2020, Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Executive Director of the University STEM Academy Dr. Carolyn Murray spoke at length with the Black Studies Initiative committee about her more than 40 year experience on campus. In 1980, Murray was hired at UCR as an assistant professor. At the time, the Black Studies program, chaired by Dr. Jacqueline Haywood, had only four faculty. Soon thereafter the program was reduced to two faculty members as one of them did not get tenure, and another joined the Reagan administration. In 1982, citing budget restraints, the CHASS dean announced the program was to be terminated. Dr. Haywood stepped down as chair, while the dean cautioned Dr. Murray that taking on the chair of the Black Studies program could jeopardize her ability to achieve tenure. Nevertheless, Dr. Murray obtained support from the Chancellor, Tomás Rivera, and in 1982 became chair of the program. With faculty Dr. Murray assembled from various departments -- most of the few Black faculty on campus formally became Cooperating Faculty of Black Studies -- the program lasted until 1985. During this time, Dr. Murray and her colleagues consolidated the major and the minor curriculums and increased the number of students majoring in Black Studies.

Several factors contributed to the program’s final dismantling. Chancellor Rivera passed away in 1984, in the midst of a fierce campus discussion about the fate of Black Studies, Chicano Studies, and Economics. This dispute culminated in 1985, when about
300 people -- student, faculty, staff, and community members -- protested the end of Black Studies at the campus Senate meeting. When it looked as though there was enough support from the faculty present at the meeting to maintain the Black Studies Program, a paper ballot was proposed. This decision allowed, in Dr. Murray’s words, for people to privately “vote their racism.” And so the Black Studies program was terminated.

Following the Black Studies program’s termination emerged the plan for a department of Ethnic Studies, which collapsed Chicano studies and Black studies. Over the next decade, Asian American and Native American studies were added. Dr. Maurice Jackson, who was the founding chair of the Black Studies department in 1969, came back to chair Ethnic Studies for two years; Dr. Jackson passed away in 1987.

Dr. Murray concluded her reconstitution of the long trajectory of Black Studies at UCR -- which was enriched by the supporting testimonies of Committee members John Epps, Jalani Bakari, and Professor Rickerby Hinds -- by reflecting on the African Student Programs (ASP). Dr. Murray stressed that, when she was the chair of the Black Studies program, ASP was an integral part of it, and the ASP director reported to her, not to UCR’s administration, as it does presently. Dr. Murray remarked that the separation of ASP from Black Studies is indicative of an administrative pattern that seeks to weaken and demobilize Black people and Black Studies on campus.

To establish a Department of Black Study is to recognize a gaping institutional absence at UCR; it is to come to terms with an embattled history as well as contemporary institutional patterns that have negated the type of relative administrative autonomy that only a departmental unit can engender, such as hiring, promotion, and tenure; and it is to attend to the present historical moment that demands effective conditions in which Black peoples and epistemologies are not only recognized and protected, but also have an opportunity to flourish.

III. RATIONALE AND IMPACT

Currently, in the UC system UCR has the largest number of students who identify as Black/African American; Black undergraduate enrollment is 1,265 students. And even though UCR boasts a relatively high graduation rate for Black students, it is evident that this rate is despite the many facets of historical and contemporary antiblackness on campus. Black students, staff, and faculty consistently report on a campus climate that is hostile and unwelcoming, one in which quotidian micro and macro aggressions are
widespread. Perhaps as a reflection of this negative campus climate, Black enrollment in CHASS, as we show below, has significantly decreased in the last decade.

The demand for and interest in a Department of Black Study are high. A multiplicity of community members, undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty, as well as several campus, local, national, and international individuals and organizations expressed their full support for the creation of the Department. Further evidence of support will be provided by focused discussions with community members, CHASS students, faculty, and staff, including forums organized by the African Student Programs (ASP). As well, a campus-wide survey on the need and expectations of a Black Study Department will be conducted with students, faculty, and staff; a modified version of that survey will be conducted with community members.

Regarding UCR’s long embattled history and continued practice of Black Studies, the Department of Black Study at UCR will (a) articulate ongoing and future collaboration between existing departments and programs, and (b) provide curriculum and programming that responds to demands and fills gaps.

Undergraduate students in the Department of Black Study will obtain a rigorous and valuable Liberal Arts degree that enhances their critical thinking, writing, speaking, and creativity. Trained to combine theory and practice, Black Study graduates will become teachers, lawyers, doctors, artists, activists, professors, and researchers at public and private policy think tanks. A Black Study minor also offers an excellent complement to majors offered in CHASS as well as in other schools such as Education, Engineering, Business, and Natural Sciences.

Importantly, the proposed department will maintain a robust graduate program. A 4+1 teaching certificate (with the Graduate College of Education and the Department of Ethnic Studies), and a transdisciplinary doctoral program in Black Study will be vital components of the academic unit. As such, the Department of Black Study, articulating transdisciplinarity and an indissociable partnership between scholarship and practice, will be the only one of its kind in Southern California. Presently, in the UC system UCLA offers a Law Juris Doctor degree (which includes a Masters in African American Studies), while UC Berkeley offers a doctoral degree in African American Studies.

The Department of Black Study's combination of a unique and wide-ranging undergraduate training and a vibrant graduate program will significantly improve UCR's appeal to Black students and those interested in the unit's rich course and programmatic offerings. As reputable universities attest, a dynamic Black Study department significantly improves campus climate, its reputation, and national and international rankings. Indeed, we anticipate UCR’s unique Black Study department to quickly become a national and international reference in approach and output deriving
from its difference in disciplinary, curriculum, research, community accountability, and transformative practices.

UCR is in dire need of an institutional presence of Black Study. In the last decade, while CHASS enrollment has remained somewhat stable (Graph 1), there was a marked decrease in the number of enrolled Black students (Graph 2).

Graph 1. Total Enrollment by UCR College

Source: https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs

Graph 2. Black Student Enrollment by UCR College

Source: https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs

Related problems occur in other UCR colleges and in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) fields. In the last 10 years, CNAS Black graduate student enrollment has remained stagnant, and in 2020 BCOE reported its
lowest enrollment of Black students. While the School of Medicine (SOM) has shown a steady increase in its enrollment of Black students, it acknowledges that Black medical students need stronger communities of support, which is precisely what the Black Study department embodies. It will incorporate integrative and innovative approaches to foster collaborations across colleges, including the establishment of multidisciplinary Designated Emphasis Programs. In dialogue with interested students, faculty, and staff from across various disciplines, and community members, it will host annual conferences exploring the intersections of research and practice from various disciplines.

A department of Black Study at UCR will attract a greater number of undergraduates to campus, many of whom will be Black. The department will also provide a graduate teaching certificate and a transdisciplinary doctoral degree. It will constitute a dynamic and vital home environment supportive of undergraduate and graduate students, and Black faculty and staff. The department will reverse the negative trends in Black student enrolment in CHASS and in other colleges, retain undergraduates, attract graduate students, and correct UCR’s poor record of retaining Black faculty and staff.

In recent years, UCR failed to retain a number of prominent CHASS Black faculty including MacArthur Fellow and critic-poet Fred Moten, expert in African American literature Erica Edwards, scholar-artist of religion and sound Ashon Crawley, activist and specialist in critical university studies Nick Mitchell, and award-winning author in performance studies Jayna Brown. Like Black students and staff, Black faculty are routinely told in myriad direct and indirect ways they are not expected to stay at UCR for long; the everyday messages and the micro and macro aggressions we receive from colleagues and administrators signal that we are unwanted and replaceable.

The department of Black Study will send a strong message about UCR’s commitment to its “excellence in diversity” approach, attracting and retaining Black scholars and increasing the number and proportion of Black undergraduates and graduate students on campus. Given that it will house the lone UC-wide transdisciplinary doctoral program of its kind in Southern California, the Black Study department will consolidate UCR as a dynamic, transdisciplinary, and innovating hub in the Inland Empire and beyond. A Department of Black Study will reverse the current dynamics by which UCR is experienced, at best, as a revolving door or a stepping stone for many Black scholars; it will provide the conditions in which Black Study scholars and staff will want to come to and stay at UCR.

Based on the numbers of enrolled African American Studies majors in the department of Ethnic Studies (22 in 2020, 23 in 2019, 19 in 2018, 12 in 2017), we conservatively project that the Department of Black Study will reach a combined enrollment of majors
and minors of 30 students in the first two years, 50 in the next two, and stabilize at about 75 students enrolled per year. After the initial five years, we project a total of about 300 enrolled majors in a given year, with about 70 graduating per year.\(^1\)

We expect such numbers due to the higher local, regional, national, and international visibility that UCR Black Study will attain once it is housed in a department that is unique, dynamic, and attractive. In conjunction with ASP, Black Alumni, and interested groups on campus, an aggressive recruitment strategy will be put in place that utilizes already existing national and international networks and develops new ones.

The Department of Black Study will have a strong and unique graduate component. It will offer a 4+1 teaching credential with the Graduate School of Education and other interested campus units. By recruiting and training future generations of high school teachers, and generating the curricular resources these teachers will need to excel, this program will promote diversity and inclusion not only on campus but also in California schools. UCSB has recently started a similar program that involves the departments of Feminist Studies, Chicana and Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies, and Black Studies. It is this model of collaboration within and across disciplines, departments, and colleges that will guide the establishment and operation of the Department of Black Study.

Importantly, as the only Black Study PhD program in Southern California, the department expects to admit 10 graduate students per year, and have a total of about 50 graduate students enrolled after the first five years. The Department's transdisciplinary doctoral program will be among the leading units of its type in the U.S., on par with yet quite distinct from those at Northwestern, UC Berkeley, Cornell, Harvard, UT Austin, and Temple, among others. In keeping with the innovative and insurgent goals of the Department, rather than just reproducing the professoriate, it will offer critical and innovative alternatives to the conventional graduate program. In dialogue with interested parties and academic units, it will develop specific graduate tracks such as “Combating Antiblackness,” focused on three areas -- i.e. health, environment, education, cultural production -- whose goal will be to form, capacitate, and further potentialize well-trained practitioners and activists.

Graph 3. Proportion of enrolled undergraduate and graduate students by race.

\(^1\) Campuses publish enrollment data using different measures. Currently UC Santa Barbara has a total of 27 enrolled majors in Black Studies; UC Berkeley has 30 degree recipients in African American Studies in the last two years, UT Austin has 22 currently enrolled majors in African and African American Studies.
Undergraduate Student Enrollment, Ethnicity

- Black or African American: 33.8%
- Asian: 41.5%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 11.0%
- Hispanic or Latino: 0.2%
- White: 0.1%
- Two or More Races: 1.1%
- Unknown: 3.4%

Source: https://diversity.ucr.edu/student-diversity-statistics

Graduate Student Enrollment, Ethnicity

- Black or African American: 2.3%
- Asian: 9.9%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.0%
- Hispanic or Latino: 28.4%
- White: 15.8%
- Two or More Races: 4.9%
- Unknown: 5.9%
- International: 32.4%

Source: https://diversity.ucr.edu/student-diversity-statistics
IV. THE MAJOR AND MINOR IN BLACK STUDY

In articulation and collaboration with various departments at UCR, within and beyond CHASS, the department of Black Study will offer a gamut of courses that are rigorous, transdisciplinary, attuned to the past, attentive to current social challenges, and oriented towards a transformed future. The Black Study department will be part of an articulated network of already existing curricular, research, and artistic performance efforts; with its administrative autonomy and concentration of faculty, student, staff, and community activists, it will also significantly enhance such efforts, providing much needed institutional support and a home base for practitioners, collaborators, and the broader public.

Cross listed courses will be encouraged and will be grounded in dialogue between and within disciplines and theoretical perspectives -- a crucial dialogue which will enhance both the dynamic network of intellectual affinity across campus and the open, articulated, and supportive nature of the department of Black Study. For example, the introductory courses will draw from and will be cross listed with the African American Studies courses currently offered in the department of Ethnic Studies. A number of lower and upper division courses will be cross listed with the department of Anthropology’s Black Diaspora and Health Disparities undergraduate tracks. The same will be true for courses currently offered in various departments whose content harmonizes with the principles of Black Study. All of which is to say that constant debate, exploration, and innovation will indelibly mark the new unit.

The major and minor in Black Study requires both an engagement with (a) broad perspectives on the past, current, and future challenges and possibilities Black people experience in the African continent and its diasporas; and (b) two specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience is thus both wide and deep in scope and yet specific and specialized.

In the introductory courses, undergraduate students will be exposed to the major social factors impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas currently (BLAC 001) such as the AIDS/HIV and Covid-19 pandemics, food and nutrition insecurity, state terror and industrial incarceration, residential segregation, exposure to environmental toxins, and early death by preventable diseases and blocked access to quality health care and education; his/their/herstories of organized resistance and epistemological invention since the dawn of modernity, with a particular focus on Black trans, queer, and feminist perspectives on what Cedric Robinson terms the Black Radical Tradition (BLAC 002); and a critical appraisal of political organizing efforts,
artistic practice, and theoretical prisms that imagine and propose alternatives to the current global state of antiblackness (BLAC 003).

The four undergraduate tracks, from which students will have to choose four courses in two of them (32 credits) in order to graduate, reflect the wide range of Black Study expertise already available at UCR:

i) “Critical Theories and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, Ability, and Blackness” explores the major theories informing Black Study, with an emphasis on the interlocking forms of oppression as offered by Claudia Jones’s concept of Black women’s triple oppression in 1949, the Civil Rights Congress’ “We Charge Genocide” in 1951, and the Combahee River Collective Statement in 1977.

ii) “Performance, Arts, and Literature” engages the multiplicity of theoretical invention and political insight necessary for, contained in, and enhanced by artistic practice. Drawing from the unique concentration of Black innovative and critical practitioners of dance, theater, film, music, and literature at UCR, this track explores the epistemological bases, the social challenges, and the futures engendered in the imaginative and performative realms.

iii) "His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences" zeroes in on (a) historiography, theories of history, and the various his/their/herstorical archives, aiming to comprehend the past as it is reflected in and inflected by our current social challenges and aspirations; and (b) relevant debates and findings emerging from Ethnic Studies, African American, Africana, and Black Studies, and traditional disciplines such as Anthropology, Economy, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work, and Sociology, among many others.

iv) “Law, Education, Health, Environment, STEMM, Social Activism, and Policy” recognizes UCR’s vanguard position in the study of environmental racism, a term coined by Professor Robert Bullard, faculty in the department of Sociology (1989-1994), and examines the multiple ways in which legal doctrines and disputes, the educational and health systems, and environmental challenges -- including climate change -- are implicated in and are impacted by past and current forms of social activism and the policies they propose.

The required course “Community Internship” will not only reinforce the department’s rootedness in social movements, but also enhance the student understanding of the theories and practices of community organizing. A capstone course, the “Senior Seminar” will revisit the principal challenges Black people face globally and engage in transformative projects of Black survival and well-being.
The Major in Black Study

1. Lower-division/General requirements (12 units)
   a. BLAC 001 Introduction to Black Study I: Black People Globally Now
   b. BLAC 002 Introduction to Black Study II: Diasporic Black Radical Traditions
   c. BLAC 003 Introduction to Black Study III: Imagined and Embodied Futures

2. Upper-division requirements (40 units)
   a. BLAC 190 Senior Seminar
   b. BLAC 191 Community Internship
   c. Additional 32 units chosen from two of the tracks below:
      i) Critical Theories and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Blackness
      ii) Performance, Arts, and Literature
      iii) His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences
      iv) Law, Education, Health, Environment, STEMM, Social Activism, and Policy

The Minor in Black Study

1. Lower-division/General requirements (12 units)
   a. BLAC 001 Introduction to Black Study I: The State of the Black Diaspora
   b. BLAC 002 Introduction to Black Study II: Diasporic Black Radical Traditions
   c. BLAC 003 Introduction to Black Study III: Imagined and Embodied Futures
2. Upper-division requirements (20 units)
   a. BLAC 190 Senior Seminar
   b. BLAC 191 Community Internship
   c. Additional 12 units in two of the following tracks:
      i) Critical Theories and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Blackness
      ii) Performance, Arts, and Literature
      iii) His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences
      iv) Law, Education, Health, Environment, STEMM, Social Activism, and Policy

V. PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Black Study does not intend and indeed will not have the administrative capacity to centralize all Black Studies on campus. On the contrary, when possible, the Department of Black Study will support various related efforts, even when not originating them. It seeks to multiply and strengthen all forms of Black Studies at UCR, thus engendering a climate that is receptive and nurturing of Black peoples and epistemologies. Black Study recognizes that its approach and practice is one among many. It is therefore absolutely not interested in dividing efforts, creating disputes, claiming ownership, or drawing boundaries.

Once formalized, the Department of Black Study will extend invitations, consider self-nominations, and establish a process by which campus faculty will have 0% or 50% appointments. After two years, budgetary conditions permitting, its members will begin conversations about a few 100% appointments. Following open collaboration and negotiation with departments and programs, it will offer cross-listed courses that support already-existing curriculum (such as within African American Studies in the Department of Ethnic Studies); develop a range of new innovative courses that bridge disciplinary
affiliations, methods, and pedagogies; establish programming that is attentive to both campus and extra-campus artistic, research, and activist concepts and practices at the local, national, and international levels; and finally, engender an inviting, rigorous, and supportive space -- physical, intellectual, and of affinity -- in which members of African and Black diasporic communities, students, scholars, artists, practitioners, and researchers will have relative administrative autonomy.

The department will combine first-rate scholarship, research, and artistic practice with community accountability and collaboration. Critical to the Department is an administrative structure that enables substantive participation of community members in its decision-making processes. Grounded in social movements demanding deep structural transformation, and in the spirit of a public university, Black Study will have representatives from the Inland Empire’s Black communities in its decision-making processes, including graduate admissions, faculty and staff hiring, and promotion, and retention, among other crucial department matters.

About 20 UCR faculty from the departments of Anthropology, Comparative Literature and Languages, Dance, English, History, Media and Cultural Studies, and from the Graduate School of Education, have expressed interest in transferring a percentage of their lines to the Department of Black Study.

At first, members of the Black Study Initiative Committee will be responsible for approving and managing Black Study courses in the curriculum. In the early phase of the department, the teaching faculty and the courses will be drawn from CHASS (and possibly other colleges, including the Graduate School of Education) with the approval of the relevant administrators and department chairs. Black Study will encourage interdepartmental and intercollege robust exchange, and will offer, upon administrative compliance, partial or full appointments to interested faculty. In its early phase, we anticipate that Black Study will have a core of about ten 50% faculty members, and a few 100% appointments.

As the student body grows and the program matures, a support staff will be added to the Department of Black Study. Dean McMullin envisions a new administrative structure, distinct from The Multidisciplinary Financial, Administrative, and Student Unit (MDU), with two Financial Analysts and, when the Graduate Program is in place, a Graduate Program Advisor. This new administrative unit will serve Black Study and other departments, and will alleviate the current high demand placed on MDU.
VI. SIGNATORIES

Appended below are the names and self-reported affiliations of signatories to a petition calling for the creation of a Department of Black Study at UCR. Signatures continue to come in, but the list below includes all of the 2,020 people who signed the petition by midday on March 30, 2021. Names are organized by relationship to UCR (i.e., UCR Undergraduate Students; UCR Staff; UCR Graduate Student; UCR Faculty; UCR Alumni; Prospective UCR students; community members who are colleagues at other institutions of higher learning; community members not affiliated with a college; and other signatories who did not declare belonging to one of those categories). Within those groups, signatories are listed alphabetically by first name. We also include the list of organizations that signed the petition in support of a Department of Black Study.

UCR Undergraduate Students

Abel Vargas
Abigail Rivera
BCOE
Adelaide Apostol
CHASS, Political Science Department
Agustin Perez
Ahja Henry
Aidan Davids
Ucr English major
Alaast Kamalabadi
Department of Art History
Alana Pitman
Alejandro Meza Aguilar
Alexander Ramirez
Alexis Anaya
Student
Alexis Meza
Hermanos Unidos de UCR

Alexis Vergara
Department of Dance

Alexys Guzman

Alicia Larson

Allyson Romano Rapada
UCR

Alysson Distor

Amanda N Ferry

Amina Hearns

Amina swallah
anâ sanchez
Dance Department

Ananya Verma

Andrea Gonzalez
CNAS, Neuroscience Department

Andrea Terrones
CHASS major, ASUCR External

Andrew Ha

Andrew Ortega
Independent Scholar

Andy Briseno
YOK Center at UCR

Angel Artiga

Angeles Rivera
Institution
Angélica Ballesteros
angelica sze
Antonio Torres-Moreno
Aqsa Hussain
Ashlee Stamp
Ashley Taylor
ASUCR Chief of Staff
BB Conteh
Bertha Ashley Olmedo
UC Riverside
Betty Duong
Bianca Verdin
National Residence Hall Honorary
Bibiana Canales
Blanca Estela Alba
Breann Barrera
UCR undergraduate
Breanna Rondilone
Brendan Rooks
Brenna Moran
Brianna Rivera
Brooke Bunte
Education minor
Caitlin Rivenbark
Camille Nguyen
Carlos Alarcon
PODER at UCR
Carlos Josef Flores
Carmen Blyden
Cayla Newnan
    Media and Cultural Studies
Cesar Landa
Chisom Nzerem
Chloe Reid
Christina Jogn
Christopher Diaz
    Student
Christopher Valdez
Corissa Redmond
Cristian Torres
Cynthia Vega
Daisy Anderson
Dalia Canseco
Damaris Sotelo
Daniel Aldrin Rubiano
Darian Jackson
Darwin Chavez
    Chass
Deidre Lynn Reyes
Diane Li
Diego Jacuinde
    CHASS, Psychology
Disha Patel
Eddie Ortega
The Ukulele Club at UCR

Edith Gonzalez
Élan Klein
Elizabeth Garmendez
Elysha Castillo

ASUCR, UCSA, BSU, CASA, SASI, CSU, LTA

Emeliy Garcia
Emmalee Brooks
Erica Heggen
Erick Gonzalez
Esteban Arellano

PODER at UCR

Farin Lea
Farrah Muhyieddeen

Institution

Felisa Vasquez Gonzalez

PODER member

Fernanda Herrera
Fernanda Mendoza
Fiona Geary

Undergraduate Political Science: Law and Society major

Fiona Yuen
G. Puneda

President of Planned Parenthood Generation Action

Gabby Monique Fernandez
Gabs Urquia
Gagan Mannur
Gina Huynh
Giovanny Cordova
Gisele M Njoh Njoh
Greg Sanchez
Hannah Abad
Hannah Benson
Hannarei Kinsey
Helen Bales
Helen Munguia
Ian Pitman
CNAS
Isamary Topete
Ismael Gonzalez
KUCR
Jacey Milliner
Jacqueline Aguilar
GSOE
Jaden De La Cruz
Jailene Diaz
Chass
Jalen Santiago
Jaqueline Delgado
Jaquelinne Rodriguez
UCR
Jasmine Rashidi
Jatara Newell
Dance
Jazmin Garcia
Riverside, CAT 911, Underground Scholars, and Ethnic Studies dept.

Jenna Nguo
CHASS - psychology

Jennesy Felix

Jessica De León Topete
Student

Jessica Espinoza
Student of Institution

Jessica Hernandez

Jessica Madrigal
Gender and Sexuality Studies/

Jesus Garcia-Torres

Jillian Jones

Jordan Smith

Jorge Rodriguez
TFDP student

Josemari Mapa

Joshua Lopez

Josiah Davis

Juhaina Habeebulla

Julia Martinez

Julia Sarcia

Justin Cheng
Student Worker - RA in PoliSci

Kaily Russell

Kalayah Wilson
Kamillah Pollard
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  La Familia
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Katherine Callejas
Keisha Forsythe
  Sustainability Studies
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Kendrick Davis
  National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), UCR, Bioengineering
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  QTPOC
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  Political Science department
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Liam Carrasco
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Chass

Lizbeth Marquez Torres
ASUCR CHASS Senator

Lúcia Maria Ribeiro de Lima
No onde.

Madeleine Bunting
Public Policy

Maeve-Darly Domond

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Maribel Gonzalez

Marisol De Los Santos Lopez

Marivel Palone
   University of California, Riverside

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Matthew Lutz

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Melanie Grigorian

Micahrae Osteria

Michael Martinez
   School of Business

Michael Risher
   UCR

Mikayla Campbell

minh le
Monica Diaz  
Sociology major

nadia williams  
Dance department

Nancy Bonilla Mejia  
CNAS undergrad

Natalia Chavez

Nayeli Martinez  
sophomore, GSOE

Neida Barco

Nicole Wolman

Nika Chegeni  
Iranian Student Association

Nirvana Pacheco

Nohely Gomez Arroyo  
Institution/Dept.

Orlando Cabalo  
Associated Students of UCR

orlando pareja

P Reilly

Pamela Juarez

Parvin Lester

Paula Nuguid

Persephone Schrick

Prashansa Agrawal  
Independent scholars

Precious Fasakin
UC Riverside
Queenie Nguyen
Raelin Martin
   Student
Rasneek Singh
   Gamma Phi Beta Sorority
Rayshuna Thomas
Rebecca Gomez
Rebecca Paplanus
Rebeka Lima Cavalcante
   Pós graduação de direito de FDRP/USP
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Ricardo Gonzalez
   CHASS - Political Science
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   Department of Anthropology
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Rocio Hernandez
Rogelio herrera
   puente
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Rossandra Martinez
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   University Honors
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Stella Aurelia
Stephanie Gutierrez
Stephanie Kiluba
Steven Sanchez
Summaya Khugyani
    MESC and SJP
    Students for Justice in Palestine, MESC
Sydney Hizon
sydney perez
Tania Gonzalez
Taylor Yamaguchi
Tempest Won
Tommy Thai
    Psychology
Tony Merino
Ulises Fuentes-Grijalba
    UCR
Vanessa Hernandez
vanessa viveros
Veronica Sanchez Gomez
Vianey Holguin
Victoria Alvarado
Victoria O.
Vihaan Madahar
Vikki Roberts
    I was a Black Studies major 1969-73
Vincent Rasso
Vice President of External Affairs, Associated Students of UCR

Viviana Martinez
Viviane Silva
UENF
Wendy Guzman
Winny Hoang
Xaire Patrick
Xochilt Salgado
Yanessa Hernandez
Yaritza Plata
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MESC
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Yurema Arvizu
Yvonne Garcia
UCR
Zachary Amador
California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP)

Zahian Vidal Cortes
Ziran Ren
ZObia Qazi

ASUCR, Global Brigades, Academic Resource Center, UCR SOM pipeline Programs, University Honors,

UCR Staff

Alice Chavez
Alisha French
UCR Staff
Allura Davis
UCR Community Engagement and Outreach unit

Alton Carswell
Fielding Graduate institute, Antioch University, Think Tank for Diversity and Inclusion

Andrea Gonzales
Graduate Division

Andrea Heraz
UCR ART

Andrea Hidalgo
University of California Riverside

Angela Andiorio

Anne Hilborn
EEOB department

Ben Tusher
UC Riverside Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production

Brian Shuve
Assistant Professor, Harvey Mudd College, Physics; Visiting Researcher, UCR, Physics

Bryan Bradford
Dept of Theatre, Film, & Digital Production, and CWPA

Cam Clifton
Residential Life-VCSA

Cecilia Luna
Undergraduate Admissions

Chanel Parrish
UCR Black Faculty & Staff Association

Claudineia Pereira Costa
Department of Entomology - UCR
Demetrius Patrick
UCR

Denise Davis
University of California, Riverside

Devon Sakamoto
The Well
UC Riverside

Diane Little
UCR SOM

Dr. Lotus Lofgren
UCR Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology

Eduardo Valencia
KUCR

Elisha Hankins
University Library

Eric Focht
Botany and Plant Sciences

Estella Acuna

Fortino Morales
UCR

Francisco Sola
Latino Voter Mobilization Project

Hayden Harris
Student Affairs Assessment & Research

Hillary Jenks
Graduate Division

Humberto Santiago
Student Affairs

Jeremy Alexander
POWUR at UCR

Jernine McBride
University Advancement

Jessika Hunt

Joaquin Tarango
UCR Student Affairs, NASP

Johnny Macias
Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production

Joshua Stephenson
UCR Department of Theatre, Film and Digital Productions

Katharine Henshaw
Associate Director, Center for Ideas and Society

Katheryn Rodriguez
UCR

Kerry Jones
TFDP

Kristen Roberts

Landis York
Theatre, Film and Digital Production

Laura Riley
UCR Student Disability Resource Center

Laurie Lee
Student Affairs Case Management

Lissett rojas

Marilyn Grell-Brisk
CE-CERT

Megan Rush

N.A

Monica De Dios

Early Childhood Services

Monique Franklin Pierce

Women’s Resource Center

Nina Ruedas

Family Medicine

Noah Geraci

UCR Library

Paige Mejia

Ucr alumni and current staff in Entomology

Phyllis Crabtree

Rayana Smith

UCR, Residential Life

Rebecca Brown

MARC U STAR Research Program for Underrepresented Students

Rodrigo Iturrieta

UCR

Samantha Eastman

Seana Nunez

UCR

Sharee Hughes

African Student Programs

Tia Truss

Staff
Titouan Bonnot
UC Riverside

Toi Thibodeaux
UC Riverside, LGBT Resource Center

UCR Women's Resource Center
UCR Women's Resource Center

Victor Moreira
UCR - CHASS Advising

Wendy Maddox-Wright
Financial Aid

Yike Ding
Entomology department

Ying Sun
Botany and plant science

UCR Graduate Student

Aaron Goodwin
Mathematics Department

Abigail Lopez
Education, Society & Culture

Adam Green
Physics and Astronomy

Agnes Varghese
University of California, Riverside

Ahtziri Hernandez

Aimee Uyehara
UCR, Botany and Plant Sciences

Aklima Khanam Lima
Alex Borowsky
botany and plant science
Botany Graduate Student Association

Alex White
UCR Botany and Plant Sciences

Alexa Canchola
University of California, Riverside

Alexander Pokorny
UCR Mathematics Department

Alexandra Ellison
Dance

Alice Lapoint
History

Alison Mills
UCR Biochemistry department

Allie Arend
English

Alyssa Duro
UC Riverside - Department of Environmental Sciences

Amanda Riggle
English PhD Student

Amaretta Azevedo
Anthropology

Ana Magaly Ojeda
UC-Riverside

Andrea Keeler

Andrea Stine
Mathematics Department, Graduate Student Association

Anna Acha
Pre-doctoral student in the Higher Education Administration and Policy program in the Graduate School of Education

Annika Rose-Person
Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology

Anthony Muljat
Department of Mathematics

Anthony Stoner
UCR, Philosophy

Aral Greene
Environmental Science

Ariana Romero
Higher Education Administration and Policy

Ariana Sabzeghabae
Mechanical engineering

Arturo Nevárez
UC Riverside GSOE

Ashley Shults
Anthropology Department

Aubrey Lancaster
UCR Graduate School of Education

Benjamin maki
UC Riverside, institute of environmental toxicology

Benjamin Russell
Department of Mathematics

Beyaja Notah
Ethnic Studies

**Beyzanur Han Tuncez**
Grad student ucr

**Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA)**
Organization

**Brandy Lewis**
Graduate Student of UCR English Dept.

**Briana Savage**
Higher Education Administration & Policy

**Brianna Herndon**
Anthropology Department

**Brianna Simmons**
Student, Anthropology

**Brooke Rose**
Department of Botany and Plant Science

**Bryan Scott**
Physics & Astronomy

**Bryce da Camara**
Chemistry

**Camilla Querin**
History of Art, UCR

**Candice Sirmollo**
Chemical and environmental engineering

**Carlos Cruz**
Underground Scholars

**Carlos Quesada**
International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights
Carolina Pires
Coletivo Anastacia Bantu

Catherine Nguyen
UCR

Celeste Jackson
English Department, UCR

Chelsea Cherry

Chelsea Keane
UCR English Dept

Chris Guerra

Christopher Queen
English @ UCR

Christos Stamatis
UC Riverside, Chemical and Environmental Engineering and Center for Environmental Research & Technology (CE-CERT)

Claire Mauss
Botany and Plant Sciences

Claire Whitaker
Botany and Plant Sciences

Clara Woodie
Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology

Clare Murphy-Hagan
Environmental Sciences

Clarissa Rodriguez
UCR Botany&Plant Sciences

Claudine Avalos
Music Department
Crystal Lau
GSOE

Cuauhtemoc Peranda
university of california-riverside

Cynthia Cordova

Daniel Collister
Mathematics

Daniel Green
University of California - Riverside

daniel mendoza
Art department

Danielle Stevenson
Environmental Toxicology program

David Chávez
History Department, UCR

Dayana Rivas
GSOE

Deborah Nelson
University of California, Riverside

Deja Simon
Psychology Department

Delaney Rood
UCR GSOE

Elizabeth Hann
Botany department

Elizabeth Miller
UCR
Elizah Stephens
UCR

Elliott Koch
Philosophy Department

Emily Blair
UCR Botany and Plant Sciences Graduate Student

Eric Davidson
Graduate School of Education

Eric Johns
Music

Eric Mackey
Political Science

Erik sease
MSE

Erin Walch
Graduate Student

Ethan Castro
UC Riverside, Music Dept

Ethan Jahn
Physics Organization for Womxn and the Under-Represented (POWUR)

Eun-A Park
Political Science

Evander Ramos
Mechanical Engineering graduate department

Evangelina Macias
University of California Riverside, Department of Dance

Fernando David Márquez Duarte
Franka Rissmann
UCR

Fulya Felicity Turkmen
Political Science Department

Gabriel Elvin
math department

Gabriela Almendarez
UCR, English Dept.

Gnei Soraya Zarook
Department of English, UC Riverside

Grant Palmer
UC Riverside, English Department

Grecia Perez
Anthropology

Greg Newkirk
Microbiology

Hannah Freund
GGB GSA and Queer GSA; UCR; GGB program
University of California Riverside

Heejoo Park
English

Hermann Hudde
Music

Holly Andrews
Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology

Humberto Flores
Sociology

Husna Mohiuddin

Ian Galbraith

English PHD, UWP GTA

Isaac Quintanilla Salinas

Department of Statistics

Isis Frausto-Vicencio

SACNAS

Ísis Higino Silva

Anthropology Department

Israel Santana

Itanacy Oliveira

Casa da Mulher do Nordeste

Ivana Guevara

SRC, UCR GSOE

Jack Choczynski

Chemistry

Jackson Kishbaugh-Maish

Physics and Astronomy

Jacqueline Hernandez

Jade Master

UCR Mathematics Department

James Alcala

Mathematics mini GSA

James Guilinger

Environmental Sciences Mini-Graduate Student Association

James Martin
Graduate School of Education, M.Ed. Student

Jared D Anderson-Huxley
UCR, Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology

Jared Gee
UCR Department of Comparative Literature

Jasmine Moore
English Department

Jason Estep
University of California Riverside, MCSB

Jekara Govan
UCR English

jemuel jr garcia
UC Riverside, Department of Dance

Jenna Wiegand

Jennifer Sayre
UCR

Jessica Bradford
Anthropology Department

Jessica Gutierrez Masini
Music Department

Jessica Noll
Biomedical Sciences

Jesus Orozco Jr
Latinx Medical Student Association

Jesus V Orozco Jr
UCR School of Medicine

Jin Chen
Environmental Toxicology Graduate Program

Johanna Najera
  Anthropology

Jonathan Alcaraz
  math department

Jonathan Donabo
  English

Jonathan Donabo
  English

Jonathan Extract
  Anthropology

Jonathan Van Niel
  English PhD Student

Jose Alvarez
  Anthropology Department

Joshua Liashenko
  Anthropology / Center for Health Disparities Research

Joshua Moreno

Judit Palencia Gutierrez
  Hispanic Studies

Judy Zhu
  Higher Education Administration and Policy

Justen Hamilton
  Sociology

Justin Phan
  Ethnic Studies Department, UC Riverside
  University of California, Riverside, Ethnic Studies Department
K Persinger
    UCR future grad student, English Dept
Kaleigh Russell

Katharine Stephens
    UCR Department of Anthropology
KavyasriPriya Samudrala
    S2P
Kayla Gelinas
Kelly Bowker
    Dance
Kelsey J Sullivan
    Department of Anthropology
Kendall Loyer
Kevin Chalek
    Chemistry
Kevin Frausto
    BCMB
Kevin Su
    Math Department
Kristen Skjonsby
Kristi Hernandez
    independent scholar
Lawrence Lan
    University of California, Riverside // Dept of Ethnic Studies
Leslie Fernandez
    UCR English Department
Leticia Meza  
UCR

Levin Welch  
Sociology

Liam Espinoza-Zemlicka

Lindsay Rapport  
Department of Dance

Lindsey Pedroncelli  
Microbiology and Plant Pathology

Liza Wemakor  
English Department

Luis Higinio  
Department of Sociology

Madeleine St. Marie  
Department of History

Madeline Vera-Colon  
Environmental Toxicology

Magaly Williams

Magnolia Yang Sao Yia  
Dance department  
Dance Graduate Student Association

Mallory Peterson  
Dance department

Manuel Macias  
Department of Dance + Community Member

Marcus Harland-Dunaway  
Department of Botany and Plant Science
Margaret Hanson
Graduate Student, UCR History dept

Margaret P Schmill
Neuroscience Graduate Program, EEOB

Maria Figueroa
UCR Earth & Planetary Sciences

Mariam Galarrita
UC Riverside

Maricruz Ariana Osorio
Political Science

Marina Vollin
Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology

Mario Tumen
University of California, Santa Barbara

Marissa Hull
UC Riverside History department

Marlene Chavez
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective

Martha Pulido
Microbiology and Plant Pathology - UCR

Megan Kendzior
Dance Department

Meghan Owens
UCR GSOE

Melina Acosta
UCR, EEOB Dept

Melina Fuentes-Garcia
Materials Science and Engineering

Melissa Mallon
Department of Hispanic Studies

Michael Rodriguez
Environmental Sciences

Ming-Feng Ho
Physics & Astronomy

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Political Science

Miranda Aiken
Environmental Toxicology

Misha Choudhry
UC Riverside English

Mordechai Wellish
Department of Political Science

Morgan Dundon
UCR Materials Science and Engineering

MT Vallarta
Department of Ethnic Studies

Nathaly Martinez

Nathan Boklage
UCR Org Spiritual Awakening

Nelda Issa Marengo C
Anth

Nichi Yes
Graduate Student Association

Nicholas Hanson-Holtry
Nicholas Manganelli
UCR Physics & Astronomy Department

Nick Domich
MFA CWPA

Nicole Corrigan

Nolan Goetzinger
University of California- Riverside

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Olivia Leiter

Olivia reid

Osup Kwon
Department of Philosophy

Paige Goodwin
TA TFDP

Patrick Lawton
UCR Biophysics

Peggy Brady
University of California, Riverside

Phung Quan
Chemical and Environmental Engineering

Pranee Pairs
Materials Science and Engineering

Preethi Ramaprasad
Dance

Priscilla Marrero
UCR MFA Experimental Choreography
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  botany and plant science

Rachel Surprenant
  Earth and Planetary Science

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  Ethnic Studies Department

Reed Miller
  Anthropology

Roberto Rivera
  University of California, Riverside

Robyn Johnson
  Department of English

Romina Garcia
  UCR

Rosalia Lerner
  UCR Dance Department

Roxana Coreas
  Department of Chemistry

Rudy Garcia

Ruth Kim
  UCR Botany and Plant Sciences dept and UP!4BA social media task force

Ryohei Takatsuchi
  Department of Anthropology
  Student Association of Graduate Anthropologists

Sabrina Gilmour
  UnitedPeople!4BlackAcademia (UP!4BA)

Sahar Foruzan
UCR, Anthropology

Sally Ireri
UCR

Sam Kubica
UCR EEOB

Sara Bruene

Sara Ellen Fowler
Dept. of Creative Writing

Sara Grummert
GSOE, UCR

Sarah Virginia Hayes
UC Riverside

Savanna Gee
UCR Mathematics Department

Sean Long
Political Science

Sean Wakasa
Mathematics Department

Selena Macias
UCR

Seongbin Jo
Chemical and Environmental Engineering

Shaafi Farooqi
UC Riverside

Shamoni Sarkar
UCR Philosophy department

shandell pahlen
Psychology

Shani Tra
Anthropology Department

Shawn Vee
Black Graduate Student Association

Shayna La Scala
University of California Riverside

Sneha E George
Ethnic Studies

Sofia Rivas
Underground Scholars Initiative

Somchate Wasantwisut
Chemical & Environmental Engineering Department

Unit Chair, UAW Local 2865 at UC Riverside (The elected officers of UAW 2865 at UCR have voted unanimously to endorse the petition and sign on as 'UAW Local 2865 at UC Riverside'.)

Soofia Lateef
Philosophy Department

Sophea Seng
Khmer Student Society

Sophia Levine
Dance department

Stefan Kehlenbach
UCR Political Science

stefanie sveiven
Biomedical Sciences

Stephanie Martinez
GSOE Single Subject Mathematics Credential and M. Ed.
Stephanie Piper
   UCR Botany and Plant Sciences

Summer Sutton
   UCR English Department

Sung Kim
   UCR

Talia Mason
   Dance department

Tania Kurbessoian
   AWIS UCR, Microbiology Department

Thelma Patnett
   Anthropology

Thomas Dugger
   Materials Science & Engineering Program

Timothy Hughes
   Graduate School of Education

Tori Porter
   UCR GSOE

tyler inskeep
   UC Advocacy - Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Valeria Orué
   Higher Education Administration and Policy

Valerie Carranza
   Environmental Sciences Department

Vanessa Aguilasocho
   UCR TEP
Veronica Lopez
UCR graduate student

Victoria McGruer
University of California, Riverside

Win Cowger
University of California, Riverside

Xiomara Forbez
UCR Dance Dept

Yvette Hayes

Zeinab F Shuker
Sociology

UCR Faculty

Ademide Adelusi-Adeluyi
History

Aerika Loyd
UC Riverside

Alessandro Fornazzari
UC Riverside, Hispanic Studies

Alfonso Gonzáles
Center for Latino and Latín American Studies

Alice Lee
University of California, Riverside

Allison Hedge Coke
UCR CREAT/SOM

Amalia Cabezas
MCS/GSST

Amos Lee
GSOE, UCR

Amy Kenny
  Department of English

Amy Litt
  Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, University of California, Riverside

andré carrington
  Department of English

Annika Speer
  TFDP

Anthea Kraut
  UC Riverside, Department of Dance

Anthony Jerry
  UC Riverside Department of Anthropology

Anusha Kedhar
  UC Riverside, Dance

Bella Merlin
  UCR TFDP

Ben Bishin
  Department of Political Science

Brandon Brown
  University of California, Riverside

Brandon Robinson
  Gender and Sexuality Studies

Brian Collier

Bronwyn Leebaw
  Political Science

Bruce Link
UCR Public Policy and Sociology

Charles Evered
TFDP

Christina Schwenkel
Anthropology, UC Riverside

Christophe Katrib
University of California, Riverside

Christopher K.- Chase-Dunn
university of california-riverside

Courtney R. Baker
Assoc. Prof., English, UC Riverside

Covadonga Lamar Prieto
Dept. of Hispanic Studies

Crystal Mun-hye Baik
Gender and Sexuality Studies; UCR

Dana Simmons
Department of History, University of California, Riverside

Danielle Dempsey
UCR

David Lloyd
Department of English, UCR

Dawn Nagel
Department of Botany and Plant Sciences

Deborah Wong
Department of Music

Denise McCarthy

Devra Weber

56
Emerita, Department of History

Diogo Ferrari
UCR - Dep. of Political Science

Dylan Rodriguez
UCR, President of American Studies Association

Eddie Comeaux
UC Riverside

Elizabeth Dinkova
TFDP faculty member

Ellen Reese
University of California Riverside

Eloísa Grifo
Math Department

Erith Jaffe-Berg
Department of Theatre, Film and Digital Production

Eugene N. Anderson
Dept. of Anthropology

Farah Godrej
Political Science Department

Fred Moten
Department of English (Emeritus)

Gabriela Canalizo
Department of Physics and Astronomy

Gehovany Limeira Figueira

Helen Regan
Dept. of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology

Imani Kai Johnson
Dance

Iván E Aguirre D
Department of Hispanic Studies

Jacqueline Shea Murphy
Dance

Jade Sasser
Gender & Sexuality Studies

James Anderson
Lecturer in the Media and Cultural Studies Department at UCR; UC-AFT Local 1966 VP for Communication; Lecturer in the Communication Studies Department & in the Journalism program at Riverside City College

James Tobias
English

Jane Ward
Gender and Sexuality Studies

Jason Stajich
Microbiology and Plant Pathology

Javier Gonzalez
math

Jeff Sacks
Department of Comparative Literature and Languages

Jennifer Doyle
UCR, English

Jennifer Merolla
Department of Political Science

Jennifer Syvertsen
UCR Department of Anthropology

Jim Isermann
Art Department

Jodi Kim
UCR Department of Media and Cultural Studies

Jody Benjamin
Committee on African Studies

Joel Mejia Smith
Department of Dance, University of California, Riverside

John Kim
Dept. of Comparative Literature & Languages

Johnavalos Rios
ARTS EDUCATOR ethnic studies/ DANCER

Jose Reynoso
Department of Dance, University of California Riverside

Joshua Malkin
Theater Dept.

Judith Rodenbeck
MCS

Juliet McMullin
Anthropology

Kate Anger
TFDP

Katherine Kinney
English UCR

Kathryn Ervin
Theatre and Film Studies

Katja M. Guenther
Department of Gender & Sexuality Studies, University of California, Riverside
Keith Miyake
Department of Ethnic Studies

Kelli King
Dance department

Kelly Jeong
UC Riverside

Ken Ehrlich
UC Riverside, Lecturer, Department of Art

Kendrick Davis
Keunpyo Root Park
Theater Film & Digital Production

Kevin Esterling
UCR Public Policy and Political Science

Kim Yi Dionne
UC Riverside, Political Science

Kimberly Guerrero
The Department of Theatre, Film and Digital Production

Kurt Anderson
Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology, UCR

Latipa
Media and Cultural Studies

Loralee Larios
Botany and Plant Sciences

Luis A Lara Malvacías
Dance

Luis Carazo
Theatre Film and Digital Production
Madison Brookshire
Departments of Art, Art History

Makeda Kumasi
The Umoja Ensemble of the Inland Empire

Maria Regina Firmino-Castillo
UCR, Department of Dance

Marissa Brookes
Political Science

Mark Minch-de Leon
English

Marko Spasojevic
EEOB

Marta Gabardo
No affiliate

Matthew Durham
UCR Department of Mathematics

Megan Asaka
UCR History Department

Melinda Ritchie
University of California, Riverside, Department of Political Science

Melissa M. Wilcox
Department of Religious Studies, UCR

Michael Bucklin
Theatre Film and Digital Production

Molly McGarry
History

Nalo Hopkinson
Department of Creative Writing, and Speculative Fiction & Cultures of Science

NATALIE HOLT
UC Riverside EEOB

Nathaniel Gabor
University of California Riverside

Nick Weller
UC Riverside

Noel PJ
UCR Political Science

Patricia Cardoso
UCR TFDP

Patricia Morton
Media and Cultural Studies

Philip Brisk
Department of Computer Science and Engineering / BCOE

Philippe Rolshausen
UC ANR, UC Riverside

Quinn McFrederick
Entomology

Raquel Rall
University of California, Riverside

Rengin Firat
University of California, Riverside

Ricardo Rocha
Department of TFFP

Richard T. Rodriguez
UC Riverside
Rita Kohli
UCR, Graduate School of Education

Robin Russin
TFDP

Sally Ness
Anthropology

Samantha Ying
UC Riverside, Environmental Science

Sarita See
Professor, Media & Cultural Studies, UCR

Setsu
Media & Cultural Studies

Sherryl Vint
English

Steven Liao
Political Science, UCR

Stu Krieger
UCR

Suji Jun
BPS

Sunni Ivey
CE-CERT

Susan Zieger
Susan Zieger

Tanya A Nieri
UCR Sociology

Thomas Perring
Traise Yamamoto
  UCR Dept. of English

Uma Jayakumar
  University of California at Riverside

Victoria Reyes
  University of California, Riverside

Wesley Leonard
  UCR Ethnic Studies

William Wohleb
  TFDP

Yat Tin Chow
  Department of Mathematics

Yolanda Moses
  Department of Anthropology-UC Riverside

UCR Alumni

Abbie Perry
  Rio Hondo College- History faculty

Adrian phipps

Adrian Robles

AG López

Ainsley Chac

Alejandro Avila Alatorre

Alejandro Rosas

Alejandro Villalpando
  CalStateLA, Pan African and Latin American Studies

Alex Armendariz
Alex Cortez
Alumnus and UCR employee.

Alexander Sterling
UCR

Alexis Álvarez

Alfonso Ruiz
Alumni

Alisha Bland

Alyeska Gutierrez
CSU Dominguez Hills

Analiesa Delgado
UNLV Graduate Student

Andrea Carreno Cortez
UCR

Andrew La Mar

Angela Lunt
UCR Alumni Association Board, Orange County

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Anselm Krause

Ariana Dieguez

Arleen Alonso

Arleth Rivera

Ashlee Turner

Ashley Conner

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Ashli han

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Aundrey Jones
   Ethnic Studies UC San Diego

Azadeh Zohrabi
   UC Berkeley Underground Scholars

Azalea Macedo

Belen Sanchez

Bianca Zabala
   Alumnus, UCR, Department of Art History

Brandon Sloot

Brenda Saldaña
   UCR Alumni

Brian Gray

Briana Harris

Brisely Martínez

Brittnay L. Proctor

Brittney McKenzie
   UCR Bioengineering

Bryanna Parra
   UCR CLA

Caitlyn Meyers

Cameron
   The Real News

Cara Szafranski
   UC Riverside Class of 2020

Carmen Lau

Carolina Miranda

Carolyn Segovia
Cecirahim Sesay
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   Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.
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   Chicano Student Programs
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   Phi Sigma Pi - Zeta Eta
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   Tower Center, Southern Methodist University
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Dikymbe Martin
Dolores Ortiz
Oxnard College, Social Sciences

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DuBron Rabb
Theater

Eddy Arce-Elias

Edith Macias
Community Member

Edwin marin

Efren Bose
University Health Services Pharmacy, UC Berkeley

Eli K
History dept

Elias Hernandez

Elizabeth del Campo

Emerald Anastasia

Emily Pasqualetto
UC Riverside, Mt. San Jacinto College

Enrique Rodriguez
Alumni

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Esperanza Bey

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Evelyn Perez
UCR Alumni

Evita Limon-Rocha
Chicano Latino Alumni Association

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   Athletic department and GSOE
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   Incoming PhD student at UCLA
Gabriela Ocon
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Gretel Garcia
Guadalupe Arcos
Hailey Levi
Hamid Rahim
Hannah Johnson
Hannah Manshel
   Department of English, University of Hawaii Manoa; PhD UCR English
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Hannah Tavakoli
Hannah Tran
   Alpha Delta Pi, Vietnamese Student Association
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Iris Blake
   UCLA, Musicology
Ivette Mota
Colton Joint Unified School District

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Jaimie Stewart
California Institute of Technology, Division of Engineering and Applied Science

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Jasmine Wilson
Ethnic Studies

Jason Yuen
UCR alumni - school of business administration

Jeanette Garcia-Balberan
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Binghamton University

Jenny Dang
Jerry Flores
Univ of toronto, sociology

Jessica Del Real
Jessica Urquidez
Jessica Wuerth
Alumni from the sociology department and the school of education

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UCR alumni
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Joshua Morris

Joy Chen

UCR Alum

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Kareem Gongora

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Kathleen McCabe

Keilani Conner

NSBE & council of advancement of black engineers (CABE)

Keona Henderson, BAC President

UCR Black Alumni Chapter

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Community Member/UCR Alumni

Kevin Eddington

Khalil Riley

Blaqout

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Kim Geron

California State University East Bay

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    UCR CHASS Creative Writing Department
Kirby Marshall-Collins
Kitzia Gomez
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Kristine Specht
    Inland Empire Educators for Social Justice (IEESJ)
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    Henderson Professional Mentorship Group
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Laura Reyes
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    UCR MFA Creative Writing alumna
Lisa Iopata
    undergraduate
Lori Walkington
    California Faculty Association
Loubna Qutami
    Department of Asian American Studies, UCLA
Luis Trujillo
    Ethnic Studies - UC Riverside
Luisa Bertotto
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Marina Eskander
    Rooted Resolutions
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Martha Delgado
Martha Jasso
UCR Alumni
Mary Perkins

Maudie Wilson Gooden
Community member
Meenakshi Mukherjee
Megan Awwad
Melissa Báez
Melissa Duncan
Melissa Knoll
  Irvine Valley College--Department of English
Melissa Sagun
Capital Fellows
Melody Valdini
Portland State University
Michaela Curran
  Department of Community and Behavioral Health, University of Iowa
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Mike Chavez
  Riverside City College
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Nelson Guevara
Nerli Paredes Ruvalcaba
Michigan State University
Nieva
Nikita Kheni
Nisha Somasundaram

Ofelia Valdez-Yeager
Community

Patrice Douglass
Duke University, Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies

Patrice Ford
Independent Scholar, Co-Director of Communities of Restoration

Paul Almeida
UC Merced

Paul Michael Leonardo Atienza
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Rachelle Ruble

Raj Chetty
St. John's University, English Department

Ralph Armbruster Sandoval
UCSB, Chicana and Chicano Studies Department

Raul Armenta

Raymond Rim
University of Redlands, English Department

Rebecca Álvarez
New Mexico Highlands University, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice

Regina Holman

Remie Rahman

Renee Hayse-Porter
Revere Wood
Rhiannon Little-Surowski
UCR African Student Programs
Richelle Concepcion

Rigoberto Gandara
Dr. Maya Angelou Community High School

Robert Merrill
Roberto Manjarrez
Roberto Rodriguez
UC Riverside Alumni

Ryan Mongelluzzo
San Diego Mesa College

S C
Samantha Reid Aviña
Sandra Soares
Sandrine Bartos
UCR Alumni

Sanya Terracina
Sarah Allec
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Sarah bazzy
Kucr

Sarena Minawala
Sean Arayasirikul
UCSF Faculty

Selina Garcia
Semi Cole  
UCR Alum, Former Student Body President

Shaida Akbarian  
Ohio State University, African American and African Studies Dept

Shamish Irving
Shante Hall
Sharon Bennett
Shruti Dasgupta  
Psychologist

Sierra Davis
Sierra Lopez
Simon Lee  
Assistant Professor of English, Texas State University

Sormeh Hameed
Sovanndath Cheav
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Stephanie Revollosso
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Tanya Lieu
Tiawna Blair
Tiffany Hollins  
Chass

Timurhan Vengco

Tony Baltierra  
UCR

Troy Liggins  
Media and Cultural Studies Alumni
valarie bennett
  alumna

Valeria Mens

Vanessa Ruvalcaba
  creative writing

Vanessa Johnson

Vanessa K Ferrel, MD MPH

Vanessa Tapia

Veronica Quesada
  UC Riverside, Academic Senate

Victor McGautha

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Victor Miller
  Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.

Victoria Truong

Viviana Haro Hernández

Viviana Nava

Wajeha Mahmoud

Wendy Pineda

Wendy Sanchez
  Chicano Latino Alumni Association

Wendy Sung
  UT Dallas, Critical Media Studies

Wendy Thompson Taiwo
  Dept of AFAM @ San Jose State University

Yadira Sanchez
  UCR Alumni
Yeram Cheong
University of Maryland, College Park

Yesenia Padilla
Alumni, Ethnic Studies BS

Yolanda Warren

Prospective UCR Student (Graduate or Undergraduate)

Gabriel Muniz
Coletivo negro USP-RP

Alan Schultz

Alejandra Rodriguez

Amy Raasch

Angel Neri
RCC Muse / RABBLE REVIEW

Ariel Kay

Bakari A Wallace

Brandon Hull

C g

Camila Santos de Oliveira
Comunidade

Chasity Holman

Danielle Walker

Darling Santiago

David Carre

Denise Spencer

DERRIS ANDRE HAWKINS-SMITH
Renaissance Academy High School #443
Elisabeth Etchell
Eva Terekhova
Evemarie Kigvamasudvashti

Fernanda Cantarim
  Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná
Filipe Castro
Gabriel Mohamed
Gabriela Pereira
Grace Del Aguila
Ismael Santos
Jason Myles
Javier Ezcurdia
Jay G.
John Mietus
Johnnie Corina III
Julia Foote
Ka-Bang Lauron
  UCSB Feminist Studies Department, UCSB Art Department, UC Davis Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies
Katherine Gan
Katie
  Appalachian State University, English
Kayanna Byrnes
Kevin Seyedin
Kofi Ofosu-Yeboah
Lawrence Grandpre
independent scholar

LAYSI DA SILVA ZACARIAS
Department of Anthropology

Lindsey Whitmore

Luiza Carvalho
Universidade de Brasilia - PPGPS

Madeline Bailey
Marie Stebbings
Max Figueroa
Maya Changaran Kumarath
Mita beach
Naomi Lopez
Community Member

Nathaly Ortiz
San Francisco State University

Nathan Kim

Nepantla Canizzo
Nursing

nudi x

Pedro Chagas
University of Brasilia

Poliana Kamalu
Quentin Savage
Rainah Barnes
Ralph Anderson
Ray Hill-Cristol
Ross Clowser
Samantha Stone
Sara Macwan

Shayaan Naseerkhan
Smaran Dayal
  New York University
Sophia Willis
Suiyi Tang
  University of Cambridge
Sydney Thibeaux

Community Members (staff/faculty at another college)
A Auburn Sheaffer
Abigail Boggs
  Wesleyan University
Abigail Gabriel
  Arizona State University
Abigail🌹
Abrielle De Veaux
Achintya Thakur
Ahmad Greene-Hayes
  Religion and African American Studies, Princeton University
Alaina Carly Moguel
Alana Bock
  University of New Mexico, American Studies Graduate program
Alana Varner
  University of Arizona
Alejandro Covarrubias
Cal State LA department of Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies

Alex Lubin
Penn State University, African American Studies

Alexandre Da Costa
Social Justice and International Studies in Education, University of Alberta, Canada

Alexandria Gurley

Alfa ounmar Diallo
UFGD

Alfredo Huante
UCLA

Alice Kang
University of Nebraska Lincoln

alicehank winham
mphil buddhist studies, university of oxford,
oxford public philosophy
people for womxn* in philosophy, university of oxford

Alicia Virani
Criminal justice program, ucla school of law

Alissa Matus
UC Irvine

Allison Robertson

Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales
San Francisco State University, College of Ethnic Studies, Asian American Studies

Amanda Boston
New York University

Amber Kelsie
 Dept. of Communication, Wake Forest University

Amber St. James

Amy Dao

Cal Poly Pomona

Amy Mihyang Ginther

Theater Arts faculty, UCSC

Amy Ritterbusch

UCLA

Ana Carolina Mattoso Lopes

PUC-rio

Ana Claudia Dos Santos Sao Bernardo

Tulane University

Andrea Gambino

Andrea Graeser

UC staff

Andrew Culp

California Institute of the Arts

Andrew Cutrone

Dept. of Sociology, University of Texas - Austin

Andrew Dilts

Department of Political Science, Loyola Marymount University

Andy Clarno

Sociology and Black Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago

Angel Lira

Angela Ting

MA Student, Art History, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Angie Monreal
Columbia University School of Social Work

Anita Tijerina Revilla
CSULA

Anneeth Kaur Hundle
Assistant Professor of Anthropology, UCI

Anthony Alessandrini
Professor of English & Middle Eastern Studies, City University of New York

Anthony Farley
Albany Law School

Anthony Ratcliff
Department of Pan-African Studies at CSULA

April M. Bartlett

Aqdas Aftab
PhD Candidate, University of Maryland, English Department

Ariel Davis
San Bernardino Valley College

Arryonna Santos

Asha Nadkarni
University of Massachusetts Amherst, English Department

Ashanté Reese
African and African Diaspora Studies - UT Austin

Ashley Lucas
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Theatre & Drama and the Residential College

Austin Hoffman
Graduate Employees' Organization at UIUC, IFT/AFT Local 6300

Auzimuth Jackson
The University of Kent Canterbury
Azucena Molina Jimenez
   Trinity Washington University

Bárbara Crateús

barrymore Bogues
   Africana Studies, Brown University

Behnam Fomeshi
   Monash University

Bekeh Ukelina
   Suny cortland

Belinda Linn Rincon
   John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Ben Brubaker
   Tulane University Center for Public Service

Bench Ansfield
   Yale University, American Studies

Benjamin Alexander-Crossan
   Cal Debate

Benjamin Scherrer
   UMass Amherst, WEB Du Bois Fellow

Bernard Brown

Beshara Kehdi
   Cultural Studies, UC Davis

Beth Baker
   California State University, Los Angeles, Anthropology Department

Bianet Castellanos
   University of Minnesota Twin Cities
Boke Saisi  
UCSD - Ethnic Studies

Brandy Nālani McDougall  
Univ of Hawaii at Manoa

Brian Sargent  
University of Massachusetts Amherst, Department of Sociology

Brian Williams

Brianna Ross  
Associated Students Irvine Valley College

Brit Cashatt

Brooke Kipling  
UC Davis graduate student, department of Spanish & Portuguese

c nelson  
University of Wisconsin

C. Darius Gordon  
UC Berkeley

C.N. Le  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Caitlin Adams  
Purdue University, Materials Engineering

Cam Owen  
Lecturer in Sociology at Cal Poly Pomona

Camryn Davis  
Undergraduate Student @ Kennesaw State

Candice Segree

Caren Kaplan  
American Studies, UC Davis
Carlin Wing  
Scripps College, Media Studies

Carlos Serrano  
UNC Chapel Hill, Geography

Carol Jean Gallo  
Temple University

Caroline Yang  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Carolyn Hall  
Clark Atlanta University

Cedric de Leon  
Professor of Sociology and Director of the Labor Center, UMass Amherst

Charisse Burden-Stelly  
Carleton College, Africana Studies

Charlie Samuya Veric  
Ateneo de Manila University

Chiedo Nwankwor  
Johns Hopkins -SAIS

Chris Durán  
Seton Hall Concerned 44

Christina Aushana  
Communication Department, UC San Diego

Christina Baker  
UC Merced / History & Critical Race and Ethnic Studies

Christina Salvin

Christine Hong  
UC Santa Cruz
christine zozula
University of Rhode Island

Christofer Rodelo
PhD Candidate in American Studies, Harvard University

Christopher Csikszentmihalyi
Cornell University

Christopher Uejio
Florida State University

Cindy Huynh

Clarissa Rojas
Chicanx Studies UC Davis

Cleide Aparecida Vitorino
Amanar Casa das Áfricas

Colin Dayan
English department Vanderbilt University

Cristian Roberto Walk
Graduate Student, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, History Department

Cynthia Lima
Universidade Federal Fluminense

Cynthia Wu
Indiana University

Daisy Saucedo

Damien Sojoyner
University of California, Irvine

Dana Cuff
CityLAB- UCLA

Daniel Vázquez Sanabria
Puerto Rican Alliance @ Brooklyn College

**Daniel Widener**
University of California, San Diego

**Danielle Greene**
PhD Candidate Education, Stanford University

**Danny Sanchez**
The University of Texas at Austin

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NYU

**Darrell Hucks**
Keene State College

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Florida Atlantic University

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UC Berkeley

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Louise Hewlett Nixon Professor, Stanford University

**David Seitz**
Harvey Mudd College, Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts

**David Stein**
UC President’s Postdoctoral Fellow, UCLA Department of African American Studies

**Dawn Shedrick**

**Dawnita Franklin**
Cal poly Pomona

**Debarati Biswas**

**Deejay brown**

**Denise Ferreira Da Silva**
University of British Columbia

Derrick White

Professor, History/African American & Africana Studies, University of Kentucky

DESHONAY DOZIER

California State University, Long Beach

Desmond Goss

Georgia State University

Devon Lee, PhD

Jopwell

Diana Gamez

Graduate Student at UCI

Diane Fujino

UCSB Asian American Studies

Dimitri Jimenez

Dixon Li

Doctoral Candidate/Graduate Worker, UPenn, Department of English

Dr Jeff Share

UCLA

Dr. Amina Humphrey

California State University, Dominguez Hills

Dr. Emmett C. Goods

University of Rhode Island

Dr. Maryan Soliman

Intercollegiate Department of Africana Studies, Claremont Colleges

Dr. Meghan McDowell

Justice Studies, Winston Salem State University

Dr. Sé Sullivan
Independent Scholar

Dr. Stephanie Richardson

Ebony Coletu
Pennsylvania State University

Edgar Rivera Colon
Keck School of Medicine USC

Eduardo
UCLA Teacher Education

Edward R. Curammeng
California State University, Dominguez Hills

Eileen Boris
Department of Feminist Studies, UCSB

Elena Mallander
UCSB

Elena Sesma
University of Kentucky, Department of Anthropology

Éllen Daiane Cintra
University of Brasilia (Brazil), School of Education

Elyse Ambrose
Meadville Lombard Theological School

Emanuel Preciado
Grad student, UC Irvine, Urban Planning and Public Policy

Emiko Saldivar
UCSB

Emmanuel Balogun
Skidmore College

Emmy Denison
Enitan T. Marcelle  
UC Berkeley  

Enrique Iglesias  
UT-San Antonio  

Eric castillo  

Eric Stanley  
assistant professor, Gender and Women’s Studies, UC Berkeley  

Erika Hayasaki  
UC Irvine Literary Journalism Program  

Erin Debenport  
UCLA Department of Anthropology  

Ernesto Javier Martinez  
Department of Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies (University of Oregon)  

Ernesto Mireles, Ph.d.  
Prescott College  

Esther Hong  
NYU School of Law, Lawyering Program  

Ethan Johnson  
Portland State University  

Eymmy Machado  
UCSB Alumna, Class of 2018  

Fábio Duarte  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  

Faye Caronan  
Associate Professor, University of Colorado Denver Ethnic Studies Program  

Franklin Odo  
Amherst College
Frederick Aldama
    The Ohio State University

Freeden Blume Oeur
    Tufts University

Gabe Miller
    Department of Sociology & African American Studies Program, Mississippi State University

Gantt Thomas
    Georgia State University

Garrett Felber
    University of Mississippi

Gayle Brandeis
    Sierra Nevada University (former UCR faculty)

Gean Rodrigues
    University of São Paulo

Gene McAdoo
    UCLA Urban Schooling, Incoming Doctoral Student

George Lipsitz
    Black Studies and Sociology Departments, UCSB

George Yancy

Gesse F Lima
    PUCPR - BRASIL

Gilda Ochoa
    Professor of Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Pomona College

Grace Hong
    Center for the Study of Women, Department of Asian American Studies, Department of Gender Studies

Guadalupe Cardona
LAUSD Educator, UTLA, CTA, CFA, NEA member, CSULB Ethnic Studies adjunct lecturer

Guilberly Louissaint
UCI

GUILHERME MARTINS DO NASCIMENTO
Universidade de Brasilia

Guy Emerson Mount
Professor if African American History at Auburn University

Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon
Oakland University

Hannah Appel
UCLA Department of Anthropology

Hannah Bailey
American Studies at KU, grad worker

Heath Schultz
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Art

Hector Peralta
Yale University, American Studies

Helen Le
UCSD

Hilary Malson
UCLA Urban Planning

IGOR THIAGO SILVA DE SOUSA
PPGS/ UFRGS

Ingrid Banks
Department of Black Studies, UC Santa Barbara

Isabelle Soifer
UCI
Iyko Day
Department of English, Mount Holyoke College

Jae Kyun Kim
Davidson College, Sociology

James Bliss

James Trafford
University for the Creative Arts, London UK

Jamie Danis
Courtauld Institute of Art; University of California, Berkeley

Jan Andres
Riverside City College, Dept. of English and Media Studies

Jan Padios
Williams College

Jane Degenhardt
UMass-Amherst, Dept of English

Jane Hood
UC Berkeley, Department of History

Jane Lehr
California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly SLO)

Jane Mantey

Janelle Levy

Janice Marie Yu
University of California, Berkeley

Janine Jones
UNC-G

Janna Haider
UC Santa Barbara Asian Pacific Islanders Graduate Student Alliance
Jaqui Thomas

Jason Ferreira
Race and Resistance Studies, College of Ethnic Studies, San Francisco State University

Jean A Hostetler-Diaz
RCC, Latin American Perspectives

Jee Soo Kang

Jef Oliveira
Master in Law at University of Brasília

Jen Stacy
California State University Dominguez Hills

Jenna Loyd
Department of Geography, UW-Madison

Jennifer Kelly
Feminist Studies and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, UCSC

Jennifer Zelnick
PhD Candidate, Anthropology, UC Irvine

Jerri Mendivel

Jess Hamilton
Riverside City College, Ethnic Studies

Jessica Kondrath
El Camino College - dance department

Jimmy Patino
Jimmy Patiño

Jocelyn Proietti
Yale University

Jodi Scofield
UCLA and Cal State LA grad student

John Fasakin
Independent Scholar

Jonathan Gayles
Georgia State University, Africana Studies

Jonathan Hsy
Department of English, George Washington University

Jonathan Rosa
Associate Professor of Education and Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Stanford University

Jonathan Tan
University of Michigan, staff

Joo Ok Kim
University of Kansas, American Studies

Jordie Davies
University of Chicago

José G. Ortega
Whittier College Africana and Black Studies

José Héctor Cadena
The University of Kansas, American Studies

Jose Lumbreras
UCSD history department

Josef Nguyen
School of Arts, Technology, and Emerging Communication; The University of Texas at Dallas

Joseph Winters
Duke University

Joshua Clover
Mellow Sawyer Seminar on Contemporary Political Struggle

Josslyn Luckett
New York University

Joy James
Ebenezer Fitch Professor of the Humanities, Williams College

Juily
Asian American Studies at Cal State LA

Juli grigsby
Haverford College, Department of Anthropology

Juli Kang

Julia Lowenthal

Juliana Lopes
University of Brasilia

Julie Williams-Reyes
American University

Justin Dunnavant
Vanderbilt University, anthropology, postdoctoral fellow

Justin Leroy
University of California, Davis

K. Wayne Yang
UC San Diego, Department of Ethnic Studies

Kaden Paulson-Smith
University of Wisconsin, Madison, Department of Political Science

Kafele Khalfani

Kaneesha Parsard
Department of English Language and Literature, University of Chicago

Karina Halliman
Katherine Alvarez
Katherine Gutierrez
University of New Mexico, Department of Economics

Katie Silva

Katja Antoine
UCLA Center for the Study of Women

Keith Camacho
UCLA

Kelly Fong
UCLA

Kelly Nielsen
University of California San Diego Extension Center for Research and Evaluation

Kelsey Owyang

Kendrick Manymules
UC Berkeley

Kenji Tomari
UC Davis

Kenny Jones
UCI Academic Advisor

Kenyatta McLean
UCLA 2011

Kevin Lawrence Henry, Jr., PhD
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Kiaya Moser
UC Santa Cruz

Kiera Bono
The Graduate Center, CUNY

Kisha Calbert
Former Athletics staff member at UCR

Kit Myers
University of California, Merced

Koritha Mitchell
Ohio State University

Krista Benson
Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Department, Grand Valley State University

Kristen Thomas-McGill

Krystal Kavita Jagoo, MSW, RSW

Kyle Mays, PhD
African American Studies, UCLA

L Kucera

Lara Kiswani
San Francisco State University, Department of Race and Resistance Studies

Laura G Gutiérrez
The University of Texas at Austin

Laura Ng

Laureen Adams

Lauren Berlant
University of Chicago, English

Lawrence Maminta

Lawson Bush V
Pan African studies Cal State LA

Lea Joseph

Leah Gasser-Ordaz
UCLA Law Criminal Justice Program

**Leda Ramos**

Chicana(o) Latina(o) Studies Cal State LA

**Leece Lee-Oliver**

**Leigh Davis**

UC Santa Cruz student

**Léonie Newhouse**

Department of Geography, Durham University

**Leslie Alexander**

Leslie Alexander, Arizona State University

**Leslie Gross-Wyrtzen**

Yale University

**Liat Ben-Moshe**

Uic

**Linda Hasunuma**

Temple University

**linda yun**

UCLA

**Lissa D Ramirez-Stapleton**

**Loan Dao**

**Long Bui**

UC Irvine

**Lorraine Lopez-Janove**

**Lucien Baskin**

CUNY

**Luz Acosta**
Ly T Nguyen
UCSD, Ethnic Studies

Magally Miranda
Chicana/o and Central American Studies, UCLA

Maja Vodopivec
Leiden University, The Netherlands

Marcelitte Failla
Emory University, Graduate Division of Religion

Marcelo Marques de Almeida Filho
ELA, GEPPHERG and NEAB of UnB, Brazil.

Marcia Cross
Georgia State University--J.Mack Robinson College of Business

Margherita Long
School of humanities, uc irvine

Maria Betania Santos
Phd Student

Maria E. Lopez-Garcia
UIC Museum and Exhibition Studies Department

Marie Lo
Portland State University, English

Marieme Diallo
UCLA student

Marina Reyes Lopez Mautner
UC Davis

Mario Sifuentes
UC Merced
Marisol Vejar

Mark Anthony Neal
  African & African American Studies, Duke

Mark Lewis Taylor
  Professor, Religion & Society, Princeton Theological Seminary

Mark Padoongpatt
  Asian & Asian American Studies, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

mark rydzik
  UCSF

Marques Kitchen

Marquise Jones

Martha Elena Rojas
  University of Rhode Island, English

Mary Valdemar
  SB Valley College & ChlCCCAA

MATHEUS ABNER DE OLIVEIRA BARBOZA
  USP - Universidade de São Paulo. (CeMus - Centro estudantil do departamento de Musica)

Matthew Zundel
  New York University, Italian Studies

Maywa Montenegro
  UC Santa Cruz, Environmental Studies

Megan Unden
  Rutgers- New Brunswick, UCSB alum

Melissa A. Navarro, Ph.D.
  San Diego State University

Melissa Banks
  UCSD School of Global Policy & Strategy
Mia McIver  
UCLA Writing Programs

Michael J. Coyle  
California State University, Chico

Michael Miller  
University of Sheffield, UK

Michael Reyes  
University of Texas at Austin

Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz  
Northwestern University

Michael Rosino  
Dept. of Sociology, Molloy College

Michael Sakamoto  
UMass Fine Arts Center

Michelle Bostic  
University of Virginia

Michelle Christina Velasquez-Potts  
University of Texas at Austin

Michelle Kim Gardner  
Department of Political Science University of California, Irvine

Mina Baek  
UC Berkeley Philosophy

Mirah Mirzazadeh  
UC Berkeley undergraduate

Mireille Miller-Young  
Feminist Studies, UC Santa Barbara

MiRI Park
CSUCI
Mirian Martinez
UCLA
Misa Nguyen
UCSB
Mohan Ambikaipaker
Department of Communication, Africana Studies and Asian Studies, Tulane University
Momal Rizvi
Monica Cunha
Movimento Moleque
Monica Rosales
UC Affiliation
Moon-Kie Jung
Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Muhammad Yousuf
PhD Student in Ethnic Studies, UCSD
Nadia Kim
Loyola Marymount University
Naila Ingrid Chaves Franklin
Naomi Schneider
University of California Press
Natalia Cintra
University of Southampton, Department of Political Science and International Studies
Natalia Deeb-Sossa
Department of Chicana/o Studies at UCD
Natalia Villanueva
Chicanx & Latinx Studies, Sonoma State University
Naunihal Singh  
US Naval War College (BUT SPEAKING FOR MYSELF)

Naya Jones  
UC Santa Cruz

Neill Kennedy  
University of Kansas, Department of American Studies

Nic John Ramos  
Assistant Professor of History, Drexel University

Nick Henning  
CSU - Fullerton

Nick Mitchell  
Associate Professor, Feminist Studies and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, UC Santa Cruz

Nicole Dib  
Southern Utah University, Assistant Professor

Nicosia Shakes  
University of California, Merced

Noelle Sepina  
UCSD Ethnic Studies PhD

Noenoe Silva  
Department of Political Science, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Nora Cisneros  
CSULA

Oluwatosin Adebiyi  
UC Berkeley, CU School of Medicine, Diagnosing Racism in Medical Education

Orisanmi Burton  
American University

Oronne Nwaneri
Doctoral student, higher ed professional

Parnia Ayari

Paul Spickard
Department of History, UC Santa Barbara

Pavithra Vasudevan
The University of Texas at Austin

Perry Aliado
Contra Costa College (Dept. of Mathematics)

Peter James Hudson
UCLA, African American Studies and History

Porntip Israsena Twishime
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Priya Vasu
Foothill-De Anza Community College District Board of Trustees (Student Member)

Professor Jemma M DeCristo
Assistant Professor, American Studies, UC Davis

Ra Malika Imhotep
UC Berkeley, Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies

Rachel Barros
CIDADES-Núcleo de Pesquisa Urbana/UERJ

Rachel Zellars
Saint Mary's University

Rahsaan Mahadeo
Georgetown University, Sociology

Ramon Vasquez
State University of New York at New Paltz

Rania Jawad
Birzeit University

Rashad Timmons
African American Studies, UC Berkeley

Ray Buckner
Northwestern University, Department of Religious Studies

Rebecca Cepeda
The Ohio State University Higher Education and Student Affairs Program

Rei Terada
Director of Critical Theory, UC Irvine

Ricardo Corona

Richard Morrison
Editorial Director, Fordham University Press

RJ Boutelle
Department of English, UNCG

Robin DeLugan
University of California, Merced

Rodolfo Rosales
Retired, University of Texas at San Antonio

Ronak Kapadia
University of Illinois at Chicago

Rony Castellanos

Ross Frank
Ethnic Studies, UC San Diego

Roy Pérez
Department of Ethnic Studies, UC San Diego

Ruby Tapia
University of Michigan
Rute Honorio
University of Sao Paulo

Ryan Huerto
University of Michigan and UC Alumnus

Ryan R Rising
University of California Santa Barbara

SA Smythe
Assistant Professor, African American Studies and Gender Studies, UCLA

Sabrina Smith
UC Merced

Sal Wanying Fu
NSFGRFP and PSDoros fellow in the UC Berkeley Astronomy Department

Salvador Herrera
UCLA

Salvador Vidal-Ortiz
Department of Sociology, American University

Salvador Zarate
Uci anthropology

Sam Harrell
Portland State University

Sam Markwell
New York University Department of Social & Cultural Analysis

Sam Tecle
University of Toronto

Samar Al-Bulushi
UC Irvine

Sammy Roth
PhD student, UCLA Department of World Arts & Cultures/Dance

Sandy Grande

Professor, University of Connecticut, Dept. of Political Science

Sapana Doshi

UC Merced

Sara-Maria Sorentino

Gender & Race Studies, The University of Alabama

Sarah Haley

UCLA Departments of African American Studies and Gender Studies

Sarah Mayo

Sarah McGarry

Sarah Watkins

Sari Fordham

Sarita Davis

Department of Africana Studies at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

dava saheli singh

University of Ottawa

Savannah Shange

UC Santa Cruz, Anthropology

Scott Jung

Anthropology, University of California, Irvine

Seeta Chaganti

UC Davis, English

Semassa Boko

UC Irvine Culture and Theory

Seth N. Asuamah

Africana Studies Department
Seulghee Lee
   African American Studies, University of South Carolina

Shana L. Redmond
   UCLA

Shaneya Simmelkjaer
   Black Student Union at SUNY Cortland

Shani Shay
   Black Underground Scholars

Sharifa E. Taylor
   UC Berkeley Alumni

Sharon Tettegah
   University of California, Santa Barbara

Shavonne Coleman
   An R1 Institution but I don’t want it to seem as though I’m trying to speak for them.

Simone Browne
   University of Texas at Austin

Siona Gupta
   School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Sohail Jouya

Sônia Beatriz dos Santos
   Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ)/ Núcleo de Estudos Afro-Brasileiros (NEAB-UERJ)

Sonia Lee
   Associate Professor, Department of American Studies and Latino Studies Program, Indiana University at Bloomington

Sonja Lanehart
   University of Arizona

Sora Han
UC Irvine

Stephanie Jones

UC Irvine

Stephanie Narrow

Department of History, UC Irvine

Stevie Marvin

Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen

University of California Irvine School of Law

Sydney Epps

Louisiana State University, School of Education

Sydney Ji

UC Berkeley

Sylvia Chan-Malik

American & Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Rutgers-New Brunswick

Taija Mars McDougall

University of California, Irvine, Culture and Theory

Takkara Brunson

CSU Fresno

Tala Malek

CSUF

Tamura Lomax

Michigan State U

Tanya Hernandez

Fordham University

Tarsila

Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública ENSP FIOCRUZ RJ

Tarun Yadav
Williams College

Tashi Ghale
Washington University in St Louis

Tavengwa Gwekwerere
Cal State LA

Thatyane Souza
University of Brasilia

Theresa Gonzales

Theresa Montaño

Thom Donovan
New School University

TIAGO AUGUSTINI DE LIMA

Tiffany J. Armstead-Flowers
Georgia State University Perimeter College

Tim Gutierrez
Riverside City College, Sociology

Timothy Malone
Bridge program, Antioch University

Tina Shull
UNC Charlotte, History

Todd Honma
Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies, Pitzer College

Tracy Buenavista
Asian American Studies, California State University - Northridge

Tulio Bermúdez
University of Chicago

Tyller Kenke
Ula Taylor
UC Berkeley, African American Studies
Valerie Talavera-Bustillos
CSULA full professor
Vanessa Acheampong-Tieku
Vanessa Diaz
Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies, Loyola Marymount University
Vanessa Luu
Vanessa Segura
Vania Lee
Climate Justice TO
Vernadette Gonzalez
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa
Veronica Reyes
English Dept.
Veronica Terriquez
UCSC
Veronika Zablotsky
UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy
Vi Huynh
University of California, Los Angeles
Victor Ultra Omni
Emory University, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Vik Peer
Arizona State University
Vincente Perez
UC Berkeley, TDPS
Wendy Y Matsumura  
UCSD, History Department

Whitney Battle-Baptiste  
UMass Amherst, Department of Anthropology

Whitney Francis

William Hamm  
Independent Scholar

William John Sparks  
Anti Bias Education Projects

Xavier Livermon  
UC Santa Cruz

Yasmina Martin  
Yale Grad student and graduate of Amherst College Black Studies

Yomaira Figueroa Vásquez  
Michigan State University

Yu-Hui Lin

Yulia Gilich  
PhD candidate, Film and Digital Media, UC Santa Cruz

Yunyi Li  
UCLA, Cinema and Media Studies, UAW 2865

Zillah Eisenstein

Zoe Akoto

Community Member (not affiliated with any college)

Aaliyah Webster

Aaron Santamaria

Adaku Anusiem

adam smith
PUCPR
Andrea Camarillo
Andrea Herrera
Andreea Tanase

Angel Akia
Ángela Aguilar
Angela Cooper
Angelique Brunson
Anish Krishnan
Anita McDaniels
Anna Ibarra
Sacramento State

Anna Rose Benson
Anna Stevenson
Anna Valles
Anthony Rosales
Antoine Ortega
Antonia Garcia

April Wesolowski

Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)

Arieh Simon
Independent community member

Ariel Chu
Arya Woody
Ashlee Sprague
Athena Tan
  PhD, UC Santa Barbara

Austin Gross

Austin Hoffman
  University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Department of Anthropology

Avalon Edwards

BARBARA OLIVEIRA SOUZA
  University of Brasilia

Bela Stearns

Bill V. Mullen
  Professor Emeritus Purdue University

Brandon Sanchez

Brenda Gonzalez

Brenda S. Lussier

Brian Cabral
  PhD Candidate @ Stanford University

Brian Duncan

Brian Perez

Brianna Montalbano

Brianna Roche

Brittany Miller
  Janelle Levy

Brittney Enin

Britton Johnson

Caleb Dawson
  UC Berkeley, Graduate School of Education

Camille Alger
Camille Samuels
    Haverford College
Camryn Canson
Chardé Reid
    William & Mary
Chelsee Morris
Chevi ODonnell
Christina de la Cruz
Christina Tenorio
    kucr listener
Christopher McCarron
Christopher Walsh
Chu Minhtrang
Cindy Hernandez
Cinthia Catoia
    Universidade de Brasilia UnB
Claire Cude
Colin Tucker
    Independent Artist-Scholar
Collin Dow
Connie Martin Trevino
CRIOLA
    CRIOLA, a black women’s organization based in Brazil, supports the creation of a Department of Black Studies at the UCR
Crystal Rust
Cynthia
Cynthia Huerta
Dana Polson
Daniel Cruz
Daniel Cumming
Daniel Gonzalez
  Family member of current student
Daniela Costa
  Universidade de Brasilia
Daniela Villalobos
Danielle Jones
Danielle Martinez
Darin Chaichitatorn
DaVanté Cole
David Lane
David Maldonado Rivera
  Kenyon College
Davielle Lakind
  Mercer University, Dept of Clinical Psychology
Debbie Margison Allen
DEEPIKA Thompson
Deidtre Whack
DeNeatia Robinson
  Former staff member of UCR and BFASA
Derek Yang
  Community member
Destinee McGhee
Devon Skufca
Diann Rowland
Community member

Dominique Gale
Donna Gasapo
Dr. Peter Grimes
Dr. Regina Patton Stell

NAACP Riverside County Branch

Elena Akimoto
Elgin Bailey
Eli Kramer

The New American Baccalaureate Project

Elisabeth Domond
Elisabeth Sturges
Elizabeth Pence

Platform & Chronicle

Emilia Cline Arellano
Emily Harrington
Emily Schmitt
Emily Wysocki

Emma cook

Wake forest university undergraduate

Emma Li

ENG-BENG LIM

Dartmouth college

Eric Gomez
Érik Eduardo Pereira de Oliveira

University of São Paulo, Brazil

Erin Browder
Eva Ruiz

Evelyn Vincent

Faith Fasakin

NYU

Fernanda Lopes

Brazilian researcher on public health, racism, racial and gender equity issues.

Franklin Lassen

Gabby Hartemann

Society of Black Archaeologists / NegrArqueo

Gabe Boyer

Gabe Newland

Gaby Gascon

Gamaliel Fasakin

Garrett Pugliese

Garrett Wright

Génesis Zárate Guerrero

Gennethel Fuqua

Giancarlo Marquez

Giordano Hardy-Gerena

Glenda Procter

Gracie Torres

Vice President, Western MWD

Gregory Stevens

Grieve Chelwa

The New School

Gwen Chodur

UC Davis
Gwen Meshorer
Hannah Spray
Hayden Bixby
Hector Paez
Hilarie Ashton

CUNY Grad Center

Holly Clancy
Howard Dafney
Iago Vanderlei

Graduate Program in Law, University of Brasilia, DF, Brasil

Iman Sigman
Inara Flora Firmino
India Pierce

UCSD

Ivana Braga
izabelle romero
Jacqueline Molina
Jacqueline Okeke
Jahlezzah Eskew

Former UC Berkeley staff member for 15 years also graduated from there.

Jaime Ceja
Janae Burney
Janet Sarbanes

California Institute of the Arts

Janette Stanford

Jason Wozniak

Latin American Philosophy of Education Society (LAPES)
Jayden Taylor
Jeffrey Hogrefe
Pratt Institute

Jenn M Jackson
Syracuse University, Political Science, Assistant Professor

Jennifer Cazares
Jennifer Gomez
UC San Diego student

Jenny Kwon
Public Health Undergraduate @ UC Berkeley

Jeremy Ignacio Garza
Jessenia Garcia
Jessica Amezcua
Jessica Hatrick
UC Alum
Jessica Jiménez
Jesus Astorga
Jo Ann Bollen
Joe Virata
Johanna Molina
John Cook
Jonathan Oyaga
Student California Teachers Association

Jordan Krikorian

Jorge Cruz
(UCLA STUDENT)

Jorge Dominguez
Jose Romero
Joseph Ukockis
   United Grad Workers at University of New Mexico
Joseph Young
JR Martin
Julayne Lee
   Adoptee Solidarity Korea - Los Angeles (ASK - LA)
Julie Lemus
Julie Nunez
Julissa Ortiz-Delatorre
Jurema Werneck
K Ye
Karina Contreras
katherine teehee
   sonoma state university
Kathryn Bedecarré
Katie Grotewiel
Kayla Gonzalez
Kayla Jones
Keana Flores
Keila Renteria
Kendahl Meno
Kenly Brown
   Postdoctoral Fellow, African and African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis
Kenneth Jones
Keonte' Sealey
Kevin alvarez
Kevin Penate
Kim Campbell
Kim Nguyen
Kimmai Phan
KIRK Lauby
Kojo Tabiri
Kristian Aguilo
Kristin Koster
Kristine Piedad
Kyle Mullen
Kyle Sweeney
La Tisha Conto
Laura Hernandez
Lauren Owens
  Community Member
Leila Nasrolahi
LEONARDO DA SILVA SANTANA
Leslie Fuentes
Leyla Navarrete
  Independent Scholar
Liliana Michel
Lily Ge
Lindsey Beardsley
Liz Kaufman
Lucia Stein
Luciane Rocha

  African Diaspora Program, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Kennesaw State University
Luisana Ruvalcaba
Maajada Brown
MaCalyn Hadley
Madelaine Martin
madeline jacobson
Malu Stanchi
  Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro
Mamta Ahluwalia
Manoela Massuchetto Jazar
Marc Monteon
Marcelo Paixão
  The University of Texas at Austin
Marcos Vinícius Lustosa Queiroz
  Universidade de Brasília
Maria Ambriz
Mário Soares-
  Ubuntuff, MNU, Comunidade Samba Maria Cursi, Coalizão Negra por Direitos.
Marlene Dietrich
Marshall Sheetz
Matei Tichindelean
  Cotsen Institute of Archaeology
Mauri Balanta Jaramillo
May Fyn
  A University of California system alum
Maylin Tu
Melba Winsell
Melisa Resch
Melissa Briseño
Melissa Leon Pons
Melissa Orobko
Melvina King
Mercy Loyo
mia holder
Michael Perkins
Michelle Bernardino
   Community Member
Miles Hogerty
Millie Wilson
   Professor Emeritus, CalArts
Milo Santamaria
Mirya Holman
Misha Ponnuraju
Moira Sommerfeld
   University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Student
Monica Leung
Morgan Leonpacher
Morgan McGhee
Morgan Smith
Muriel Casamayor
Naomi Wilson
   University of Michigan
Natalia Brizuela
   Professor, Spanish & Portuguese and Film & Media, UC, Berkeley
Nate Horton
Nathan Shulkin
Nathaniel Ashley
Neha Vora
   Associate Professor, Lafayette College
Nicole Bagley
Nicole Powell
   Law Student at UCLA School of Law
Nicole Welch
nikola mitrovic
Nitasha Sharma
   Associate Professor African American Studies Northwestern
Noah Angell
Noelia Ochoa
Odily Balcarcel
Olka Forster
Omar Zahzah
   Independent scholar ( )
Omi Jones
   Independent Scholar/Artist/Facilitator
Orlando Reade
   Bork beck College, University of London
Orlando Serrano
   National Museum of American History
Osama Ahmad
Paul Akers
Paul Kruijs
Paul Palsa
Advocate-Unity in Diversity, NAACP (Life Member)

Paulo Fernando Soares Pereira
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro - PUC/Rio

Penelope D Lowder

Rachel David
UC Berkeley public health and education student

Raeleen Williams

Rayane Gomes

Rebecca Rios

Rebecca Uniacke

Reina Robinson
Center for Urban Excellence

Renee Grange
UCLA

Ricky Manier Jr

Riverside Food Not Bombs
Community Activist Group

Robin L. Turner

Rodrigo Firmino
Graduate Program in Urban Management / Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná, Brazil

Ross Wolfarth

Sally N MacNNichol

Salome Tash

Samantha E Arbegast

Sandra Williams
QQ Research Consultants

Sandy Naranjo
Sarah Griffith
Sarah Schornagel
Sarah Sherwood
Saul Nuno
Shafreen Singh
Shana Kleiner
Shannon Frye

I am a Catholic Worker with Casa Maria Hospitality House, which offers shelter to single mothers and refugees

Shawn Darling
shenandoah hammond
Sherrina Gibson
Silvana Kreines

University of Haifa

Siya Pun
Sofia Balingit
Sophia Massie
sophia ponce
Stacy Villalobos
Stephanie Schaudel
Susan Ito
SuZi Roberts
Talia Tucker
Tamara Silva
Tatiane Reis
Thiago Tolentino

University of Uberlandia (Brazil)
Thomas Swindler
Thuane Nascimento
Thula Pires
   NIREMA (PUC-Rio)
Tiffany Medois
Tim Johnson
Tobias Smith
   UC Davis, Cultural Studies PhD Candidate
Toni Shaw
   UCLA Alumna
Tonya Turpin-Self
Trinity Elliott
Tyler Reed
Vaciane Simeon
   Boston University alum
Verónica Urbano
Vicenta Moreno Hurtado
   Asociación Casa Cultural el Chontaduro
Victor On-Sang
Victoria Gonzales
   Community Member
Viri Garcia
vonya k quarles
   Starting Over, Inc.
Wania Cidade
   Sociedade Brasileira de Psicanálise do Rio de Janeiro
Whitney Ijanaten
William Bryant
   UC MEMBER(UCLA student)

Xavier Flores
   Antelope Valley League of United Latin American Citizens

Yabundu Conteh

Yane Silva

Yara Yousef

Yen-Vy Ngo
   UC Davis Undergraduate

Yridian Villanueva
   Cabrillo College

Yvette Vargas

Zachary J Gaston

Zanetta Harris

Zariya Williams

Zun Lee

No Affiliation Recorded

AJ Reed
   Independent Scholar

Aline Cristina Oliveira do Carmo
   Núcleo de Estudos Afro-brasileiros e Indígenas do Colégio Pedro II (NeabiCp2) - Rio de Janeiro, Brasil.

Ana Flávia Magalhães Pinto
   Universidade de Brasília (UnB) / Rede de HistoriadorXs NegrXs (Brazil)

Ananya Roy
Andrew Carbaugh

Andrew Jolivette, Professor and Chair Ethnic Studies UC San Diego

Ethnic Studies Chair/Native American and Indigenous Studies Director, UCSD

Anna I

Ayana Aisha Flewellen

UCR, Department of Anthropology

Benjamin Fields

UC Berkeley Sociology

Bernadette Hartfield

Georgia State University (retired)

Bobby Rivera

St. John’s University

Charlene Carruthers

Northwestern University, PhD Student

Claire Nguyen

Claudio mattos

Cristóbal Martinez

Michigan State University, Department of English

Dominque Conway

Emma Huang

Gabrielle Foreman

English, African American Studies, History at Pennsylvania State University

Giulia Giamboni

University of California, Santa Barbara, History Departement

Jahari Shelton
Jaleah Cullors
Jalen Storey
Jemima Pierre
   Associate Professor, Department of African American Studies, UCLA
John Sweeney
Jolie Mahr
Iakin easterling
Lee Ann A Wang
   UCLA
Logan Phillips
   Washington University in St. Louis
Lucas Jupy
Madelyn Millen
   Retired UCR Staff, Riverside NAACP Chapter #1059
Marcelo Ramos
   Federal Fluminense University (Brazil)
MARIA SYLVIA APARECIDA DE OLIVEIRA
   m.sylviaadv@hotmail.com
Maurice Stevens
   Professor, Department of Comparative Studies, The Ohio State University
Miliann Kang
   University of Massachusetts - Amherst
Minkah Makalani
   University of Texas at Austin
Mlondi Zondi
   Wesleyan University
Myles Ali
Department of History and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, UC Merced

Nana Amoah-Ramey
Indiana University

Ofurhe Igbinedion

Peyton McGill

Phoebe Kim

Regina Ebo
Berkeley Grad student

Restituta marco

Sara Smith
Department of Geography, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Shakeer Rahman
Race and Technology Practitioner Fellow, Stanford Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity

T. Le
UCLA

Takunda Darwish
Independent

Thainara Silva

Theresa Johnson
University of California, Santa Cruz

Uri McMillan
UCLA, Associate Professor, English & Gender Studies

VaNatta Ford
Williams College Africana Studies

Ven Griffin

Vitoria Buzzi
Organizations In Support of the Creation for the Department of Black Study

Adoptee Solidarity Korea - Los Angeles (ASK - LA)
Africana Studies Department
Amanar Casa das Áfricas
Antelope Valley League of United Latin American Citizens
Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)
Asociación Casa Cultural el Chontaduro
Associated Students Irvine Valley College
Black Graduate Student Association
Botany Graduate Student Association
Cal Debate
California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP)
California Faculty Association
Center for Latino and Latin American Studies
Center for Urban Excellence
CIDADES-Núcleo de Pesquisa Urbana/UERJ
Coletivo Anastacia Bantu
Coletivo negro USP-RP

Community Activist Group

CRIOLA, a black women's organization based in Brazil, supports the creation of a Department of Black Studies at the UCR

Dance Graduate Student Association

Dept of AFAM @ San Jose State University

Emory University, Graduate Division of Religion

Environmental Sciences Mini-Graduate Student Association

Federal Fluminense University (Brazil)

Gamma Phi Beta Sorority

Graduate Employees' Organization at UIUC, IFT/AFT Local 6300

Graduate Student Association

Graduate Student at UCI

Henderson Professional Mentorship Group

Hermanos Unidos de UCR

International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights

Iranian Student Association

Khmer Student Society

La Familia

Latin American Philosophy of Education Society (LAPES)

Latino Voter Mobilization Project

Latinx Medical Student Association

LAUSD Educator, UTLA, CTA, CFA, NEA member, CSULB Ethnic Studies adjunct lecturer

MARC U STAR Research Program for Underrepresented Students

Mellow Sawyer Seminar on Contemporary Political Struggle

Movimento Moleque

National Residence Hall Honorary
National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), UCR, Bioengineering
NIREMA (PUC-Rio)
oxford public philosophy
Pan African studies Cal State LA
people for womxn* in philosophy, university of oxford
Physics Organization for Womxn and the Under-Represented (POWUR)
Pós graduação de direito de FDRP/USP
Pre-Veterinary club at UCR
Puerto Rican Alliance @ Brooklyn College
QQ Research Consultants
Retired UCR Staff, Riverside NAACP Chapter #1059
Riverside City College, Ethnic Studies
Rooted Resolutions
Seton Hall Concerned 44
Starting Over, Inc.
Student Association of Graduate Anthropologists
The Ukulele Club at UCR
The Well
UC Santa Barbara Asian Pacific Islanders Graduate Student Alliance
UCR Black Alumni Chapter
UCR Black Faculty & Staff Association
UCR Community Engagement and Outreach unit
UCR Org Spiritual Awakening
UCR Women's Resource Center
UENF
UMass Fine Arts Center
Underground Scholars
Underground Scholars Initiative

Unit Chair, UAW Local 2865 at UC Riverside (The elected officers of UAW 2865 at UCR have voted unanimously to endorse the petition and sign on as 'UAW Local 2865 at UC Riverside'.)

YOK Center at UCR
May 18, 2021

TO: Jason Stajich, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

CC: Department of Black Study Initiative Group

FROM: Lucille Chia, Chair  
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Proposal for the Establishment of a Department of Black Study

______________________________________________________________________________

The CHASS Executive Committee states its strong support for the establishment of a Department of Black Study, which we deem as most timely and necessary at UCR. The proposal itself makes compelling arguments, which were also voiced by members of the Black Study initiative committee, who met with the Executive Committee at our meeting on April 21. At this meeting, the authors of the proposal addressed, among others, two important issues: the specific pedagogical and research aims of the Black Study Department, and the relationship of the Black Study Department with Ethnic Studies.

First, the origins for the proposal of the Black Study department arose from the 2020 mass transnational mobilization for black lives, similar to the 1960’s protests which led to the first departments of Black Studies and Ethnic Studies in the United States. In close conversation with these students on campus, it became clear that to make black lives on campus minimally viable there needed to be an infrastructure that recognized all black lives, such as the black feminist, black trans, and black queer. These are foundations within the proposal. A Black Study Committee was formed and included faculty, staff, and Inland Empire activists.

One Black Study initiative committee member said that the proposal signaled a relationship to a historical project of cultivating academic departments and programs that focus on researching and understanding black lives and experiences. It also signaled something new by not separating the arts from the social sciences or humanities—all modes of study were included. It focused on an interdisciplinary approach, which would allow for more access to resources. The proposal would not be a repetition of the same nationally, but instead would create a plan on how UCR could step into the future of higher learning that is in demand. Another committee
member noted that there has been a lack of investment in black studies in the U.S. Only 20% of the institutions have formal units in black studies (one third of the 20% are black studies departments). The Department of Black Study at UCR would have a more radical, structural, and abolitionist critique, which would make it unique to comparable programs nationwide.

Second, the Black Study initiative committee indicated that the relationship between the Department of Black Study and the Ethnic Studies Department should be built on the notion of collaboration and dialogue. The new department noted that it was not interested competing with any department or college. For instance, they would like to cross-list with Ethnic Studies. There would be several innovative opportunities such as possible cluster hire initiatives and collaboration with the School of Education.

The Executive Committee made the point that it would be important to ensure that the Black Study Committee consider initiatives to maintain the department once established. They should consider how to take institutional steps to ensure protections of the faculty and the new department.

Rather than repeat the proposal’s reasons about why UCR needs this department, we give the following comments, questions, and suggestions from various members of the Executive Committee are meant to help strengthen the proposal that we reviewed as we send it forward to the Senate.

1. The proposal for the Department of Black Study at times seems to be so expansive that it was difficult to define it.

2. What specific benefits would departmentalization create that cannot be captured within the existing or a modified Ethnic Studies Department or by the creation of an interdisciplinary program in Black Studies?

   If Black Study is split off from Ethnic Studies, and what would be the effects on the remaining undergraduate major and minor Department of Ethnic Studies?
   
   The Executive Committee invited the Department of Ethnic Studies to respond to the proposal for establishing a Department of Black Study and received the following comments sent by Prof. Jennifer Nájera, the Chair of Ethnic Studies:

   Several members of the Department of Ethnic Studies support the effort of a Department of Black Study that would support Black faculty on campus, especially in providing a vibrant, self-determined intellectual space on campus. Many express concerns about the retention and promotion of Black faculty and believe that a Department of Black Study could be an important academic space to grow and amplify the critical work of UCR’s Black faculty.
Given that the Department of Ethnic Studies has a long standing African American Studies major, at least one faculty member expressed concern that, aside from two African American Studies faculty members, the department itself was not involved in the planning of a Black Study department. Other faculty members expressed optimism that the Ethnic Studies Department and a Department of Black Study could potentially co-exist in collaborative partnership, but stakeholders would need more time for open discussion about the administrative, logistical, and programmatic options. Perhaps most critically, Ethnic Studies faculty express concerns that the Black Study major would--over time--displace or subsume the African American Studies major in the Department of Ethnic Studies. Other faculty expressed the view that some elements of the Black Study Proposal could be incorporated within the existing African American Studies Program in Ethnic Studies, but that would require a significant investment from the administration to hire more Black Studies faculty in Ethnic Studies.

We recommend that the authors of the proposal for the Department of Black Study provide specific responses to these comments.

3. If a new Department of Black Study is established, what measures would prevent the new department and Ethnic Studies from suffering the negative effects of reduced and small faculty size?

4. What are the substantive parameters and core questions/concerns of black studies as a subject and what unifies the wide-ranging topics within it into a coherent whole?

5. What is the estimated number of majors within a black studies department and how is this estimate calculated?

6. What human resources (including additional faculty lines and staff FTEs) would be needed from the CHASS and UCR as a whole for this new Department of Black Study to function viably as a strong academic unit?

In particular, the proposal states that (p. 15) “About 20 UCR faculty from the departments of Anthropology, Comparative Literature and Languages, Dance, English, History, Media and Cultural Studies, and from the Graduate School of Education, [sic] have expressed interest in transferring a percentage of their lines to the Department of Black Study.” Can the proposal clarify in great specific detail how this transfer would take place, and can the proposal authors consult with the CHASS Dean’s Office and the Provost about the procedure for such transfers?
8. Sustainability of the proposed department in terms of human and financial resources. The proposal would be greatly strengthened by providing quantitative estimates of the costs for:
   a. instructors and administrative staff to be assigned to work for this new department.
   b. infrastructural needs, including space for offices, classrooms, meeting rooms; office and other operating supplies.

Furthermore, what support would the proposal have from the CHASS Dean’s Office, from the office of the Provost/EVC, from Undergraduate Education, etc.? Can the proposal provide documentation of commitment from these groups for the needs of this new department?

9. Faculty welfare issues
   In addition to the issues already mentioned, there are concerns about assessing the personnel files of faculty, both ladder and adjunct, who would be joining or participating in the pedagogical and research activities of this new department. One particular concern is that of files for faculty members being considered for tenure.
March 31, 2021

Dear Dean McMullin,

The Department of Dance writes to express its enthusiastic support for the urgently needed Department of Black Study at UCR, recently proposed by the UC Riverside Black Study Initiative (BSI), composed of Inland Southern California community members, staff, students (undergraduate and graduate), and faculty.

The development and resourcing of a Department of Black Study at UCR would be a catalyst for necessary changes on campus and across the UCs in order to fully center and support Black Innovation and Knowledge Production and to ensure that Black voices are a guide for interdisciplinary, intercollegiate and interdepartmental curriculum design and implementation. Such a department will be a critical force on campus, the region, and across the UCs; a center for community building and abolitionist practices and thinking and a home for Black students, staff and faculty who continue to feel marginalized and silenced. While we recognize there are initiatives across campus to hire more Black faculty and to appeal to and retain Black students, a dedicated Department of Black Study will demonstrate and more fully enact UCR’s uncompromising pledged commitment to its Black community members, will address past and ongoing grievances of antiblackness and antiblack violence, and will be a powerful step in preventing the continued exodus of Black faculty and students from UCR which has included esteemed scholars Fred Moten, Ashon Crawley and Jayna Brown, among others.

Last summer there was a campus-wide fury to respond to the racial and social justice uprisings spreading across the globe in response to the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, as well as the much less publicized murders of Black Trans folks like Tony McDade and Nina Pop. There was a host of university, college and department pronouncements against state-sanctioned violence and the murder of Black people by the police. In particular, there was immediate response to the UCR Demands to Administration - Call to Action that members of the Black Student Union, ASUCR, Sisters Affirming our Socio-Cultural Identities,
and Queer Alliance, and a number of other student organizations sent to Chancellor Wilcox and the UCR administration on May 31, 2020. The list of demands student community members called for included “The campus-wide support for the Black student community regarding accountability, educational equity, and increased support services.” We see accountability, equity and support services to include the building and resourcing of a Department of Black Study which, as the “Black Study at UCR” proposal states, would “Bring together a diverse group of dynamic scholars and practitioners of Black Study already at UCR…” and whose self-governing structure would privilege those students, faculty, staff, and Black progressive community members in promoting its own well-being, research/curricular agendas, and advancement.

We too responded to the students’ Call to Action and included our own commitment to “CENTER Black voices, ideas and research, and work diligently to decolonize the academic canon and the epistemological and methodological praxes in our field and related disciplines, as well as in our graduate and undergraduate curriculum design.” As a faculty largely comprised of Black, and other historically marginalized persons, including Latinx, South Asian, LGBTQ folks and persons of Indigenous descent, an equally diverse student body and staff, and whose curriculum is indebted to African diasporic practices, Black scholarship and theory, we see this as an opportunity for our own department to strengthen its research and curricular endeavors and to be in partnership with a department dedicated to Black Study. With so many faculty and students (many who are not Black), in our department and at UCR, interested and employing Black scholarship, theory, and creative practices, and for there NOT to be an academic department dedicated to this field of research, is a huge contradiction.

As part of UCR’s ongoing efforts to do more than pay lip service to diversity slogans and cliche publications that list our national rankings for social mobility, supporting and fully resourcing a Department of Black Study is a decisive step in the right direction towards a university that embodies and enacts its core values.

As part of these university wide efforts, the Department of dance full-heartedly and without reservation supports a Department of Black Study at UCR.

Sincerely,

The Department of Dance
March 29, 2021

Dear Dean McMullin and Professor Vargas:

I write to express my support for the efforts underway to found a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. I have read the “pre proposal” with great interest, drawing both on my own scholarly commitments with Black Studies, and on my current role of Dean at UC Santa Barbara. In this latter role, I provide leadership and guidance for our own Department of Black Studies, which offers important areas of convergence and future collaboration with the Department that you seek to found.

As the pre proposal text attests, this historic moment provides a unique and urgent context for this effort: from the heightened awareness of racially structured societal inequities that disproportionately impact Black populations, to the steady stream of antiblack violence and related patterns of harm, to the astounding upsurge of Black-led mobilizations, which contest these systemic conditions, and in so doing, open pathways for more just and equitable societal conditions for us all. Although UC Santa Barbara and UC Riverside acted in sync to form their respective Departments some 50 years ago, in response to that prior moment of enabling conditions, we learn from the pre proposal document that forces at UC Riverside converged to keep the Department from persisting and flourishing. Historically constituted openings to meet these needs do not occur often; it is exciting to think that another such moment has emerged.

The Department of Black Studies at UC Santa Barbara is a vibrant space for Black-centered pedagogy, research, and publicly engaged intellectual work, which echoes in many respects the aspirations laid out in the pre proposal. Together with the Center for Black Studies Research (CBSR), the Center for Publicly Engaged Scholarship (CPES), and many other divisional and campus units, the Department has stepped up to engage the acute and chronic intersecting crises of the moment, from the racially disparate impact of the pandemic, to the rise of white supremacist political currents, to environmental racism, to the longstanding plague of antiblack police violence and mass incarceration regimes. As the pre proposal also emphasizes, these units also foreground Black cultural and political creativity, which generates alternative visions for societal organization, and innovative praxis that offers principles and paths forward to guide processes of societal change. The yearlong “Race to Justice” series, organized by UCSB Arts and Lectures, and guided by an advisory committee drawn from our Black Studies community, has offered us a steady stream of inspiration—in the face of dire adversity—along these lines. We can now look forward to a much-deepened relationship of collaboration with UC Riverside, building on our distinctive features, as well as the foundation of common ground that we share.

One further comment is in order, regarding the pre proposal’s stated goal of forming a doctoral program, which would make UCR a leader among the UC campuses of Southern California. We strongly support this initiative, as an essential component of any tier 1 research University, as a crucial step in forging a vibrant Black Study intellectual community, and to widen the “pipeline” for future scholars and teachers in this tradition. At the same time, this element of the pre proposal document reminds us that graduate education is an absolutely critical goal for our own Black Studies department as well. We view our goal, and the one you have outlined, as mutually reinforcing; in addition, we see exciting possibilities for collaboration along these lines—perhaps even thinking together about innovative “next generation” graduate training...
programs, which might more fully address the needs and aspirations of future generations of Black intellectuals, and more directly engage the conditions of societal crisis that produced the need for the Black Study department in the first place.

We wish you all the best in your endeavor, and look forward to further exchange as your efforts unfold.

Yours Sincerely,

Charles R. Hale
SAGE Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences
College of Letters & Science
Marilyn Grell-Brisk, Ph.D.
Assistant Project Scientist
CE-CERT - UC, Riverside

25 March, 2021

Dear Dr. Grell-Brisk:

It was a pleasure to hear about your participation in the effort to start a Department of Black Study at UCR. As Dean of the Bourns College of Engineering, I can attest to the fact that our college has not experienced the success in recruitment and retention of Black students that we desire. We have worked with our Council of Advisors and our NSBE student organization to develop an endowment that will help provide specific professional development resources for Black students such as attending workshops and conferences as well as support an operating budget for their many activities. The NSBE leadership has been advising us during weekly meetings on how to be more effective in our recruitment and retention of Black students.

Across the UC system there is far too little participation of Black students in engineering, even though there are high paying jobs available to engineering graduates. Depending on the goals of the faculty in a future department of Black Study, there could be many opportunities for us to collaborate; and the presence of this department could provide a more welcoming atmosphere for future Black engineering students. Ideally, some of these students will continue on for a Ph.D. in engineering and contribute to the pipeline of Black engineering leaders in the academy. We continue our efforts to hire more Black faculty who serve as role models.

I am strongly supportive of your efforts. Please be aware that I need to be respectful of the faculty-driven process and the role of the academic senate in the development of new degree programs and departments and thus I cannot directly advocate for a new department in another college. I look forward to the opportunity to participate in future discussions if the faculty working on this proposal feel this would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Lynch
Dean Bourns College of Engineering
William R. Johnson Jr. Family Endowed Chair
March 30, 2021

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to offer my strongest support for the creation of a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. The proposed department will articulate with initiatives underway in the Anthropology Department, draw together disparate scholars and students across the university and address longstanding needs and concerns on the campus. It also will facilitate recruitment and retention of Black faculty and students, and generate critical scholarship and pedagogy. Moreover, the proposal articulates a unifying, relational position on Black Study that will position UCR as innovative and transformative, “encompass[ing] but exceed[ing]” conventional disciplines and interdisciplinary models for the field. The proposed department and the scholarly community that it represents deserve the full support of the university, and I hope that you will look favorably on the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Derick A. Fay, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Acting Chair
Department of Anthropology
University of California, Riverside, USA
March 26, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my support for the creation of a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. The creation of a department focused specifically on Black Study fulfills a longstanding need and will make UCR visible at the cutting edge of transformative scholarship, pedagogy and praxis concerning the Black Diaspora, critical race theory, and anti-blackness. Based on my graduate experiences of involvement in a program with a focus on the African Diaspora, with a high concentration of Black faculty and students, such a department will serve to enhance community, belonging, success and retention among faculty and students.

Sincerely,

Mark Anderson
Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology
University of California, Santa Cruz
March 31, 2021

Dear Dean McMullin,

The Department of Dance writes to express its enthusiastic support for the urgently needed Department of Black Study at UCR, recently proposed by the UC Riverside Black Study Initiative (BSI), composed of Inland Southern California community members, staff, students (undergraduate and graduate), and faculty.

The development and resourcing of a Department of Black Study at UCR would be a catalyst for necessary changes on campus and across the UCs in order to fully center and support Black Innovation and Knowledge Production and to ensure that Black voices are a guide for interdisciplinary, intercollegiate and interdepartmental curriculum design and implementation. Such a department will be a critical force on campus, the region, and across the UCs; a center for community building and abolitionist practices and thinking and a home for Black students, staff and faculty who continue to feel marginalized and silenced. While we recognize there are initiatives across campus to hire more Black faculty and to appeal to and retain Black students, a dedicated Department of Black Study will demonstrate and more fully enact UCR’s uncompromising pledged commitment to its Black community members, will address past and ongoing grievances of antiblackness and antiblack violence, and will be a powerful step in preventing the continued exodus of Black faculty and students from UCR which has included esteemed scholars Fred Moten, Ashon Crawley and Jayna Brown, among others.

Last summer there was a campus-wide fury to respond to the racial and social justice uprisings spreading across the globe in response to the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, as well as the much less publicized murders of Black Trans folks like Tony McDade and Nina Pop. There was a host of university, college and department pronouncements against state-sanctioned violence and the murder of Black people by the police. In particular, there was immediate response to the UCR Demands to Administration - Call to Action that members of the Black Student Union, ASUCR, Sisters Affirming our Socio-Cultural Identities,
and Queer Alliance, and a number of other student organizations sent to Chancellor Wilcox and the UCR administration on May 31, 2020. The list of demands student community members called for included “The campus-wide support for the Black student community regarding accountability, educational equity, and increased support services.” We see accountability, equity and support services to include the building and resourcing of a Department of Black Study which, as the “Black Study at UCR” proposal states, would “Bring together a diverse group of dynamic scholars and practitioners of Black Study already at UCR…” and whose self-governing structure would privilege those students, faculty, staff, and Black progressive community members in promoting its own well-being, research/curricular agendas, and advancement.

We too responded to the students’ Call to Action and included our own commitment to “CENTER Black voices, ideas and research, and work diligently to decolonize the academic canon and the epistemological and methodological praxes in our field and related disciplines, as well as in our graduate and undergraduate curriculum design.” As a faculty largely comprised of Black, and other historically marginalized persons, including Latinx, South Asian, LGBTQ folks and persons of Indigenous descent, an equally diverse student body and staff, and whose curriculum is indebted to African diasporic practices, Black scholarship and theory, we see this as an opportunity for our own department to strengthen its research and curricular endeavors and to be in partnership with a department dedicated to Black Study. With so many faculty and students (many who are not Black), in our department and at UCR, interested and employing Black scholarship, theory, and creative practices, and for there NOT to be an academic department dedicated to this field of research, is a huge contradiction.

As part of UCR’s ongoing efforts to do more than pay lip service to diversity slogans and cliche publications that list our national rankings for social mobility, supporting and fully resourcing a Department of Black Study is a decisive step in the right direction towards a university that embodies and enacts its core values.

As part of these university wide efforts, the Department of dance full-heartedly and without reservation supports a Department of Black Study at UCR.

Sincerely,
The Department of Dance
March 31, 2021

To: João Costa Vargas  
   Professor, Department of Anthropology

From: Jeff Sacks  
   Chair, Comparative literature and Languages

Re: Department of Black Study

This is to forward the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages’ enthusiastic support for the creation of a Department of Black Study at the University of California, Riverside.

Given the hegemonic and persisting forms of antiblackness, anti-immigrant xenophobia, and racism, and the long histories of violence, coercive social practice, intellectuality, and material-legal institutions, since the founding of the American state and prior to it, the formation of a Department of Black Study appears to us as at once as an intellectual and social imperative.

We wish to underline that this initiative has significant relevancy for a Department of Comparative Literature and Languages. Because Black Study occasions a re-thinking of the forms of thought and intellectual practice in modernity, it compels a renewed attention to the basic categories that attend the practice(s) of reading in literature studies, which is also to say, a renewed attention to terms we understand ourselves to have properly understood, for example: “language,” “reading,” “poetry,” “relation,” “history,” “philosophy,” “religion,” “the social,” and many others.

We are concerned not only about the marginalization and exclusion of Black thought, literary production, poetics, cinematic intervention, philosophy, and criticality from the University and from departments of Comparative Literature, but also with the ways in which the social forms for intellectual life and practice, in America, can tend to remain derivative of antiblack, racialized terms for social understanding.

For example, in his work Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition (1983), Cedric Robinson explained this linkage:

In America, the accommodation of Western historical consciousness to racial ideologies created a particular chain of social misperceptions and historical distortions that endured into the present century [the 20th century]. Not only was popular thought affected but the very foundations of that American academic thought which first began to mature in the nineteenth century was suffused with racialist presumptions [our emphasis—JS]. The emerging American bourgeoisie, in its mercantile, manufacturing, and plantocratic aspects, was purposefully and progressively achieving its first stages of ideological coherence. The intellectual grounding came to absorb the past of those peopling America as well as their present. The result was the construction of the historical legends that obscured
the origins and character of the republic and the social relations upon which it rested. (p. 76)

Because they enable us to understand the social form of American institutions and “academic thought,” and because they illumine the study of race and antiblackness on a global scale in diverse contexts—“Capitalism we less a catastrophic revolution (negation) of feudal social orders than the extension of these social relations into the larger tapestry of the modern world’s political and economic relations” (p. 10), Robinson wrote—a Department of Black Study, and the modes of thought and sociality it creates, significantly contribute to the discipline of Comparative Literature and the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages at UC, Riverside.

The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages, its undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty, will substantially benefit from its collaborations with a Department of Black Study. The forms of thought, critique, and social understanding, which emerge in Black Study, provide a nexus for the critical interrogation of social life; without a Department of Black Study, the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences remains significantly incapacitated in its desire to produce knowledge about, and also to change, the world in which each of us lives.

Faculty in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages work in and with a wide variety of languages and literary traditions, including African, Arabic, Chinese, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Vietnamese and others. Our work spans periods and media, and so the intervention of the Department of Black Study opens numerous pathways for critical engagement and interaction in our writing, teaching, reading, and scholarship.

In our own department, we are in conversation regarding initiating a major in African Literatures and Languages, and we view the initiative to form a Department of Black Study as a complementary one to our own; while the disciplinary and intellectual terms are distinct from this proposed major, and while the forms of scholarly and pedagogical practice are also distinct, there are moments of mutual overlap and nurturing, and we therefore view this initiative for a Department of Black Study to be in sync without our short- and long-term pedagogical goals, intellectual project, and hiring plans.

We wish to underline the following passage in the proposed frame for this department, forwarded by the conveners of this initiative:

Drawing from Black transformative, queer, trans, and feminist epistemologies, the department will house and nurture rigorous research, pedagogies, curriculum, and artistic practices that are historically-grounded, dialogically engaged in local and global communities, abolitionist, and future oriented. Black Study encompasses the social complexities, interconnections, and discontinuities that mark the African continent and its diasporas in varied times and spaces. Bringing together a diverse group of dynamic scholars and practitioners of Black Study already at UCR, its self-governing structure will emphasize the participation of students, faculty, staff, and Black progressive.
community members in decision making regarding all department matters, including admissions, hiring, promotion, tenure, and programming.

Our work and teaching intersects with the frames suggested here; further, we are of the view that the sorts of interaction and intervention that will open with the formation of this new department will lead to collaborations, which we—from our present vantage point, where this department is at once much-needed and still-absent—are not able, yet, to imagine.

Finally, we wish to underline that Black faculty and students at UC, Riverside are significantly harmed by the absence of a Department of Black Study on our campus. The organizers of this initiative write that:

The latest demand for a Department of Black Study at UCR originates in the 2020 mass transnational mobilization for Black Lives. It dates back to 1968, when the UCR Black Student Union pleaded the case for a Black Studies department. The institutional absence of such a department has contributed to repeated waves of Black faculty departures for other universities, the alienation of Black students and staff from UCR, and a generalized climate of antiblackness.

We affirm this assessment and we share the concern that Black faculty, students, and staff—and faculty, students, and staff of color—have been significantly impacted in manifestly negative and ongoing ways because of the absence of a Department of Black Study at UC, Riverside. The initiative to create this new department, therefore, is at once socially and intellectually urgent, and we very much hope that the various institutional bodies that review this proposal will view it with the same enthusiasm, and with same sense of timely urgency, that we do.
March 29, 2021

Dear Dean McMullin,

The Department of English enthusiastically supports the proposed formation of a Department of Black Study at UCR, believing that it will synergize productively with the research and teaching agenda of our own and other departments in CHASS, will greatly enhance the experience of all students, and especially that of Black students who have long sought the establishment of such a department, and will help to bring UCR’s intellectual and departmental profile into line with the most progressive of UC campuses, most of which already have distinct departments of Black, African American or African Diaspora Studies. Moreover, the distinctive way in which a department specifically of Black Study promises to put UCR on the leading edge of developments in the field.

As you know, the establishment of such a department is long overdue and grows from a long history of demands and from an equally long history of racism at UCR that caused the dismantling of a Black Studies program and major in 1982. The latest demand for a Department of Black Study at UCR originates in the 2020 mass transnational mobilization for Black Lives. But it dates back to 1968, when the UCR Black Student Union pleaded the case for a Black Studies department. The institutional absence of such a department, and the history of hostility towards it, have contributed to repeated waves of Black faculty departures for other universities, from which our own department recently suffered, with the loss of three senior and nationally known Black faculty whom we have yet to replace completely, and to the alienation of Black students and staff from UCR within a generalized climate of antiblackness.

Drawing from Black transformative, queer, trans, and feminist epistemologies, the department promises to house and nurture rigorous research, pedagogies, curriculum, and artistic practices that are historically-grounded, dialogically engaged in local and global communities, abolitionist, and future oriented. Black Study encompasses the social complexities, interconnections, and discontinuities that mark the African continent and its diasporas in varied times and spaces. Imagined in such a way, it is clear to us that a Department of Black Study would intersect with and richly inform the work that we already seek to do in English in studying and teaching about the racial formation of culture from the early modern period to the present. Collectively we have an ongoing commitment to race critical research and anti-racist pedagogy and strive to realize this in our practice. Having a strong and active Department of Black Study can only enhance the work that we seek to do across diverse periods, distinct and intersecting racial histories, and bodies of literature.

Black Study is a transdisciplinary body of knowledge emerging from historical and contemporary African, African American, and diasporic Black experiences. It encompasses but significantly exceeds conventional curricular frameworks of Black Studies, African American Studies, Africana Studies, as well as traditional disciplines in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, and the
Arts. As Black Study emphasizes insurgent African and Black diasporic queer, trans, and feminist transdisciplinary approaches to a global framing of Black experiences, it also sets a bar and a model for other scholars to engage with and drives all of us to a sharper conceptualization of the field of race and other intersecting histories of differentiation and racial injustice. While we believe that the establishment of a Department of Black Study is unquestionably and in itself the right thing to do, we also welcome the stimulus it would give to our own thinking and teaching.

We look forward to any further opportunity to vote more formally on this matter, but in the interim are pleased to express our support and our confidence in the colleagues who have shaped this proposal.

Sincerely,

David Lloyd
Distinguished Professor and Chair of English
March 29, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The faculty of the Department of Religious Studies unanimously and enthusiastically support the creation of a Department of Black Study at UCR. Black Study is a critically important aspect of our own field, and like many departments on campus we have found ourselves unable to retain faculty members in this field because of precisely the structural challenges pointed to in the petition for the creation of this department – structural challenges that the presence of a well-supported, well-staffed, and thriving Department of Black Study would help to address not only for its own faculty but for scholars of Black Study across the campus.

In the recent past, two scholars of African American religions have been hired at UCR – one in our department and one in English – who left our campus for other positions prior to receiving tenure. Both were leading-edge figures in their fields when they were hired, and both continued meteoric ascents as scholars after their departures from UCR. One went from here to Harvard, and from there to a deanship at Wake Forest; he was recently featured in Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s documentary on the Black church. The other, one of a small number of leading scholars merging queer studies and Black study in religion, went to the University of Virginia; his second book was just selected as a finalist for the prestigious Lambda Award. While both of these scholars left UCR to pursue excellent opportunities elsewhere, both were looking for those opportunities because UCR was not a place they wished to stay over the long haul. Had the proposed Department of Black Study been in place, there is a reasonable chance they would have chosen differently.

Because of the departure of the first scholar, the second had no colleagues directly in his area of study. Because of both their departures, our undergraduates seeking to study Black religious traditions must seek out independent study courses with those of us qualified to teach them. Graduate students seeking specifically to pursue Black study in religion do not even apply to our department. Just as the lack of a Department of Black Study has had a snowball effect that has reinforced a climate of anti-Blackness at UCR, the creation of such a department would have a snowball effect in combatting that climate. For our students, for our colleagues, for the betterment of the university, and to move UCR forward into the academic future, we join our voices with those of our colleagues in urging that this department be created.

Sincerely,

Melissa M. Wilcox
Professor and Holstein Family and Community Chair of Religious Studies
Department Chair, Department of Religious Studies
March 30, 2021

Black Study Initiative
University of California, Riverside (UCR)
Riverside, CA 92521-0418

RE: Creation of Black Study Department

Dear Black Study Initiative Committee Members,

I, Byron Ford, Ph.D., want to express our support for the creation of a Black Study Department at UC Riverside. I am Professor of Biomedical Sciences and Associate Dean for Medical Education in the UCR School of Medicine.

The innovative nature of the Black Study Department will allow UC Riverside to become a national leader in supporting and promoting Black scholarship and matriculation. By developing opportunities for collaboration between UCR’s STEM and Humanities colleges, the Black Study Department will serve as a community focal point to bring together scholars supporting Black scholarship from across the university.

Further, I would be interested in understanding how the designated emphasis in Black Study can be applied to our needs. I am most interested in helping to identify or connect researchers in our department/school that are focused on or whose research interests could align with Black Study.

In conclusion, I am strongly committed to your effort to bring a Black Study Department to UCR. Such a department would demonstrate that the university values its Black scholars and prioritizes Black scholarship. Further, the Black Study Department provides an exciting opportunity to showcase the incredible talent of UC Riverside’s faculty and students.

As a Black faculty member at UCR, I highly anticipate the wonderful work to come.

With best wishes for success,

Byron D. Ford, Ph.D.
Professor of Biomedical Sciences
Associate Dean for Medical Education
UCR School of Medicine
March 30, 2021

Black Study Initiative
University of California, Riverside (UCR)
Riverside, CA 92521-0418

RE: Creation of Black Study Department

Dear Black Study Initiative Committee Members,

I wish to express my support for the creation of a Black Study Department at UC Riverside.

The innovative nature of the Black Study Department will allow UC Riverside to become a national leader in supporting and promoting Black scholarship and matriculation. By developing opportunities for collaboration between UCR’s STEM and Humanities colleges, the Black Study Department will serve as a community focal point to bring together scholars supporting Black scholarship together from across the university.

Further, I would be very interested in understanding how the designated emphasis in Black Study can be applied to our needs. I am most interested in three areas being discussed:

1. Being a part of developing and/or enhancing research training opportunities for individuals in our department/organization that are interested in a Designated Emphasis in Black Study
2. Disseminating information and marketing of the DE in Black Study to our department/organization
3. Helping to identify or connect researchers in our department/organization that are focused on or whose research interests could align with Black Study

In conclusion, I am strongly committed to your effort to bring a Black Study Department to UCR. Such a department would demonstrate that the university values its Black scholars and prioritizes Black scholarship. Further, the Black Study Department provides an exciting opportunity to showcase the incredible talent and innovative scholarship in an area of need by UC Riverside faculty, fellows and students.

With best wishes for your success
Respectfully,

Monica J Carson, PhD
March 31, 2021

To: João Costa Vargas  
Professor, Department of Anthropology

From: Jeff Sacks  
Chair, Comparative literature and Languages

Re: Department of Black Study

This is to forward the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages’ enthusiastic support for the creation of a Department of Black Study at the University of California, Riverside.

Given the hegemonic and persisting forms of antiblackness, anti-immigrant xenophobia, and racism, and the long histories of violence, coercive social practice, intellectuality, and material-legal institutions, since the founding of the American state and prior to it, the formation of a Department of Black Study appears to us as at once as an intellectual and social imperative.

We wish to underline that this initiative has significant relevancy for a Department of Comparative Literature and Languages. Because Black Study occasions a re-thinking of the forms of thought and intellectual practice in modernity, it compels a renewed attention to the basic categories that attend the practice(s) of reading in literature studies, which is also to say, a renewed attention to terms we understand ourselves to have properly understood, for example: “language,” “reading,” “poetry,” “relation,” “history,” “philosophy,” “religion,” “the social,” and many others.

We are concerned not only about the marginalization and exclusion of Black thought, literary production, poetics, cinematic intervention, philosophy, and criticality from the University and from departments of Comparative Literature, but also with the ways in which the social forms for intellectual life and practice, in America, can tend to remain derivative of antiblack, racialized terms for social understanding.

For example, in his work *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (1983), Cedric Robinson explained this linkage:

In America, the accommodation of Western historical consciousness to racial ideologies created a particular chain of social misperceptions and historical distortions that endured into the present century.[1] Not only was popular thought affected but *the very foundations of that American academic thought which first began to mature in the nineteenth century was suffused with racialist presumptions* [our emphasis—JS]. The emerging American bourgeoisie, in its mercantile, manufacturing, and plantocratic aspects, was purposefully and progressively achieving its first stages of ideological coherence. The intellectual grounding came to absorb the past of those peopling America as well as their present. The result was the construction of the historical legends that obscured
the origins and character of the republic and the social relations upon which it rested. (p. 76)

Because they enable us to understand the social form of American institutions and “academic thought,” and because they illumine the study of race and antiblackness on a global scale in diverse contexts—“Capitalism we less a catastrophic revolution (negation) of feudal social orders than the extension of these social relations into the larger tapestry of the modern world’s political and economic relations” (p. 10), Robinson wrote—a Department of Black Study, and the modes of thought and sociality it creates, significantly contribute to the discipline of Comparative Literature and the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages at UC, Riverside.

The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages, its undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty, will substantially benefit from its collaborations with a Department of Black Study. The forms of thought, critique, and social understanding, which emerge in Black Study, provide a nexus for the critical interrogation of social life; without a Department of Black Study, the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences remains significantly incapacitated in its desire to produce knowledge about, and also to change, the world in which each of us lives.

Faculty in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages work in and with a wide variety of languages and literary traditions, including African, Arabic, Chinese, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Vietnamese and others. Our work spans periods and media, and so the intervention of the Department of Black Study opens numerous pathways for critical engagement and interaction in our writing, teaching, reading, and scholarship.

In our own department, we are in conversation regarding initiating a major in African Literatures and Languages, and we view the initiative to form a Department of Black Study as a complementary one to our own; while the disciplinary and intellectual terms are distinct from this proposed major, and while the forms of scholarly and pedagogical practice are also distinct, there are moments of mutual overlap and nurturing, and we therefore view this initiative for a Department of Black Study to be in sync without our short- and long-term pedagogical goals, intellectual project, and hiring plans.

We wish to underline the following passage in the proposed frame for this department, forwarded by the conveners of this initiative:

Drawing from Black transformative, queer, trans, and feminist epistemologies, the department will house and nurture rigorous research, pedagogies, curriculum, and artistic practices that are historically-grounded, dialogically engaged in local and global communities, abolitionist, and future oriented. Black Study encompasses the social complexities, interconnections, and discontinuities that mark the African continent and its diasporas in varied times and spaces. Bringing together a diverse group of dynamic scholars and practitioners of Black Study already at UCR, its self-governing structure will emphasize the participation of students, faculty, staff, and Black progressive
community members in decision making regarding all department matters, including admissions, hiring, promotion, tenure, and programming.

Our work and teaching intersects with the frames suggested here; further, we are of the view that the sorts of interaction and intervention that will open with the formation of this new department will lead to collaborations, which we—from our present vantage point, where this department is at once much-needed and still-absent—are not able, yet, to imagine.

Finally, we wish to underline that Black faculty and students at UC, Riverside are significantly harmed by the absence of a Department of Black Study on our campus. The organizers of this initiative write that:

The latest demand for a Department of Black Study at UCR originates in the 2020 mass transnational mobilization for Black Lives. It dates back to 1968, when the UCR Black Student Union pleaded the case for a Black Studies department. The institutional absence of such a department has contributed to repeated waves of Black faculty departures for other universities, the alienation of Black students and staff from UCR, and a generalized climate of antiblackness.

We affirm this assessment and we share the concern that Black faculty, students, and staff—and faculty, students, and staff of color—have been significantly impacted in manifestly negative and ongoing ways because of the absence of a Department of Black Study at UC, Riverside. The initiative to create this new department, therefore, is at once socially and intellectually urgent, and we very much hope that the various institutional bodies that review this proposal will view it with the same enthusiasm, and with same sense of timely urgency, that we do.
Dear Professor Chia,

Below find the Ethnic Studies response to the Pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study.

Thank you.

Jennifer

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Several members of the Department of Ethnic Studies support the effort of a Department of Black Study that would support Black faculty on campus, especially in providing a vibrant, self-determined intellectual space on campus. Many express concerns about the retention and promotion of Black faculty and believe that a Department of Black Study could be an important academic space to grow and amplify the critical work of UCR’s Black faculty.

Given that the Department of Ethnic Studies has a long standing African American Studies major, at least one faculty member expressed concern that, aside from two African American Studies faculty members, the department itself was not involved in the planning of a Black Study department. Other faculty members expressed optimism that the Ethnic Studies Department and a Department of Black Study could potentially co-exist in collaborative partnership, but stakeholders would need more time for open discussion about the administrative, logistical, and programmatic options. Perhaps most critically, Ethnic Studies faculty express concerns that the Black Study major would--over time--displace or subsume the African American Studies major in the Department of Ethnic Studies. Other faculty expressed the view that some elements of the Black Study Proposal could be incorporated within the existing African American Studies Program in Ethnic Studies, but that would require a significant investment from the administration to hire more Black Studies faculty in Ethnic Studies.

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Jennifer R. Nájera
Associate Professor & Chair
Department of Ethnic Studies
University of California, Riverside

Additional questions from the CHASS Executive Committee:

In addition, the number of enrolled African American Studies majors in the department of Ethnic Studies was 22 in 2020 and the proposal says "After the initial five years, we project a total of about 300 enrolled majors in a given year." Is this viable? How is this estimate calculated?
To the Leadership of the University of California, Riverside

The Black Leadership Alliance Council at the University of California (BLAC@UC) is pleased to lend its support to the proposed Department of Black Study at the University of California Riverside (UCR).

As a collective of Black Affinity Group leaders from across the University of California, we are committed to the elevation and support of Black students, faculty and staff. As an academic collective that will integrate multidisciplinary and intersectional research, the Department of Black Study would allow for robust collaboration among Black faculty on an undergraduate and graduate level. Beyond academics, we believe that the thoughtful and organized governing would be inclusive and welcoming to UCR’s students, staff, alumni and the community.

As a department that existed at UCR until budget cuts in the 1980s mandated its closure, we see the restoration and reimagining of this department as a beginning step to enhancing the Black experience at UCR. The restoration of the Department of Black Study is an expansion of the work that is occurring throughout the University of California, such as UC Santa Cruz and UC San Diego, which recently established a minor in Black Studies and major in Black Diaspora and African American Studies respectively. As an institution which highly values cutting edge research, reestablishing an official department with official undergraduate and graduate pathways would place UCR at the forefront in this important area of study.

Among many things, 2020 taught America the importance of amplifying Black voices so that we can all move forward together. We humbly believe that the Department of Black Study at UCR is a feasible and pivotal step in the right direction.

Respectfully Submitted,

Black Leadership Alliance Council at the University of California (BLAC@UC)
March 30, 2021

Black Study Initiative
University of California, Riverside (UCR)
Riverside, CA 92521-0418

RE: Creation of Black Study Department

Dear Black Study Initiative Committee Members,

I wish to express my support for the creation of a Black Study Department at UC Riverside.

The innovative nature of the Black Study Department will allow UC Riverside to become a national leader in supporting and promoting Black scholarship and matriculation. By developing opportunities for collaboration between UCR’s STEM and Humanities colleges, the Black Study Department will serve as a community focal point to bring together scholars supporting Black scholarship together from across the university.

Further, I would be very interested in understanding how the designated emphasis in Black Study can be applied to our needs. I am most interested in three areas being discussed:

1. Being a part of developing and/or enhancing research training opportunities for individuals in our department/organization that are interested in a Designated Emphasis in Black Study
2. Disseminating information and marketing of the DE in Black Study to our department/organization
3. Helping to identify or connect researchers in our department/organization that are focused on or whose research interests could align with Black Study

In conclusion, I am strongly committed to your effort to bring a Black Study Department to UCR. Such a department would demonstrate that the university values its Black scholars and prioritizes Black scholarship. Further, the Black Study Department provides an exciting opportunity to showcase the incredible talent and innovative scholarship in an area of need by UC Riverside faculty, fellows and students.

With best wishes for your success
Respectfully,

Monica J Carson, PhD