A PROPOSAL FOR A

DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

By the Black Study Initiative Committee,

Appointed by Interim Dean Juliet McMullin in Fall 2020,

The Committee consists of the following UCR undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty, and Inland Empire community members:

Aaron Brown, graduate student, Department of English
Ayana A Flewellen, faculty, Department of Anthropology
Dennis Frederick McIver, University Honors and Past President of the Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFASA)
Donatella Galella, faculty, Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Imani Kai Johnson, faculty, Department of Dance
Íxkári Noé Estelle, graduate student, Department of English
Jalani Bakari, community member
Jamal J Myrick, director, African Student Programs (ASP)
joão costa vargas, faculty, Department of Anthropology
John Epps, minister, community member
Kim Yi Dionne, faculty, Department of Political Science
Marilyn Grell-Brisk, researcher, Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT)
Ni'Ja Whitson, faculty, Department of Dance
Precious Fasakin, undergraduate student (UCR Class of 2021)
Rickerby Hinds, faculty, Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Toi Thibodeaux, Assistant Director, LGBT Resource Center
Vorris Lynn, faculty, Department of English
PROPOSAL FOR A DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

I. OVERVIEW AND WHY A DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

II. A HIS/THEIR/HERSTORY OF BLACK STUDIES AT UCR

III. RATIONALE AND IMPACT

IV. THE MAJOR AND MINOR IN BLACK STUDY

V. PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION

VI. APPENDICES

Please note: except for Appendix B, all other Appendices are separate files included with this document packet.

A. Senate Committees comments on the Pre-Proposal for a Department of Black Study
B. Answers to Senate Committees’ Queries and to Frequently Asked Questions
C. Proposal for a Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in Black Study
D. Sample Syllabi (additional syllabi available upon request)
E. A Bibliography
F. Research Statement for the Department of Black Study
G. Letters of Support
H. $496,570 UCOP Award Letter for “ADVANCING FACULTY DIVERSITY AND EPISTEMOLOGIES IN BLACK STUDY” and letters of support from UCR administrators
I. Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Pathway Proposal
J. Signatories
This 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 transgender people Nina Pop (May 3), Tony McDade (May 27), Brayla Stone (June 25), Merci Mack (June 30), Shaki 3Peters (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 antiblack state violence. More recently, in 2018, UCRPD killed a person; in 2019, UCPD had a violent encounter during an arrest of a Black scholar; and in 2020, Sheriff deputies attacked protestors with rubber bullets and pepper balls. UCPD has virtually no transparency, the Riverside Faculty Association has repeatedly called for accountability, and UCR students wrote in a Highlander editorial, “it is a huge slap in the face to see so much funding be put toward a police department who make African Americans and other students of color feel in danger with their history of racial profiling.” 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 and at times hostile to the growth of Black curricula and Black intellectual presence, and unsafe for Black students, staff, faculty, and community members.

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 programs, departments, colleges, and their
representatives, 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 October 5, 2021 this initiative has been endorsed by 2,293 people and organizations. In March 2020 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 is attached as an appendix.) 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 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 Brasília, Universidade de São Paulo, University of Toronto). 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, as a verb rather than a noun, stresses collective activities that are simultaneously corporal and theoretical, practical and speculative.

Black Study is a multi-, extra- and 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, transgender, 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 of being and theories of knowing -- Black epistemologies -- in the African continent and its diasporas: Blackness beyond the veil of antiblackness, Blackness as being and becoming. At the same time, introducing invention and improvisation into existence, Black Study is future-oriented, and as such, informed by collective past experiences, and continuing spiritualities, explores becoming and 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 Amefricas, 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 years of 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 curricula 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 deny 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 is provided by focused discussions with community members, CHASS students, faculty, and staff, including a forum organized by the African Student Programs (ASP). (For more details, please see the FAQs).

At UCR Black people are present as workers, students, and faculty, but have yet to become an integral part of its curricular, academic, and research infrastructure. The Department of Black Study will help solve this long standing problem by (a) articulating
ongoing and future collaboration between existing departments and programs, and (b) providing 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. It plans to have a 4+1 teaching certificate (with the Graduate School of Education and the Department of Ethnic Studies), and a transdisciplinary doctoral program in Black Study will be vital components of the academic unit. Members of this committee have started dialogues with the GSOE, the initial result of which is a proposal for a “Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Program Pathway” (included in the appendices.) 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. Only 20% of U.S. colleges and universities have academic units in Black Studies, and of those only ⅓ are departments.

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).
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 Department of Black Study 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 (the blueprint of which is currently being discussed with the GSOE) 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, award-winning author in performance studies Jayna Brown, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America 37th Damon Knight Grand Master Nalo Hopkinson, and Freedom Scholar Alisa Bierra, a former member of this committee. 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, attractive, and inviting. In conjunction with ASP, Black Alumni, and interested groups on campus, an aggressive undergraduate and graduate 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 plans to 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, programs, 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 combined areas of interest -- such as health, environment, education, cultural production -- whose goal will be to form, capacitate, and further potentialize well-trained practitioners and social justice activists.

¹ Campuses publish enrollment data using metrics that are seldom comparable. 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, currently UT Austin has 22 enrolled majors in African and African American Studies.
Graph 3. Proportion of enrolled undergraduate and graduate students by race.

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

The Department of Black Study emphasizes the verb “study” and stresses the engaged and embodied practice of teaching and research that is simultaneously diasporic, local, communal, planetary, historical, contemporary, and future-oriented. It is therefore, necessarily transdisciplinary in scope, straddling various disciplines in the Social Sciences, Humanities, STEMM, and the Arts. Black Study trans-disciplinarity is anchored in an intersectional lens, maintaining both symmetry and dissonance to seriously engage Black epistemologies, Black metaphysics, Black temporality, and Black social, cultural, and spiritual life.

Rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, Transformative Justice, and Abolition, the Department of Black Study is a collective experimental methodology of liberation in action, study, and future-making. Accordingly, the major and minor in Black Study requires both an engagement with (a) broad perspectives on possibilities and challenges Black people experience in the African continent and its diasporas across timescapes; and (b) specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience offers transdisciplinarity as a value and intentional methodology, excavates multi-directionally in scope, and yet is specific, specialized, and rigorous. Through thorough research, analysis, creative practice, applied scholarship and close partnership with transformative grassroots organizations, Black Study students and community critically address and seek to overcome all forms of antiblackness while imagining and prefiguring an altogether new world.

Students who seek a deeper engagement in research and praxis can choose the “With Distinction” option. Those who wish to be recognised as completing the BA in Black Study with distinction normally complete BLAC 191A or B, 192 A & B, 193, 194.

The B.A. degree consists of 52 units with requirements focused on the major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas, as well as courses along the following themes: 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; v) Social Activism and Policy.
Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Apply transdisciplinarity as theory and practice to address the social, cultural, and political in the making of Black futures
2. Describe/Explain the tracks of Black Study as an holistic and epistemic discipline that studies the breadth of Global Black histories, presents, and futures
3. Apply transformative and anticolonial ethics in engaging in research, practice, and with communities
4. Demonstrate proficiency in artistic and embodied praxis
5. Develop and Demonstrate critical thinking and analysis in reading and reviewing theory, art, and embodied praxis
6. Co-cultivate and apply collaboration equitably and as a principle in engagement, organizing, mobilization, research, and creative efforts
7. Construct informed research-based arguments
8. Develop and Demonstrate proficiency in writing, and in the language and grammar of Black Study

Major Requirements (B.A.)

1. Lower-division/General requirements (3 courses, 12 units)

   a. BLAC 001 Introduction to Black Study I: Black People Domestically and Globally Now. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Introduces major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples on the African continent and its diasporas currently. Topics include the creation of movements/spaces of possibilities to navigate issues around AIDS/HIV and Covid-19 pandemics, food and nutrition insecurity, state terror and industrial incarceration, residential segregation, exposure to environmental toxins, and blocked access to quality health care and education, to create vibrant futures.

   b. BLAC 002 Introduction to Black Study II: Imagined and Embodied Futures. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Engages critical appraisal of artistic forms, political organizing efforts, embodied praxis and resistance formations, and theoretical prisms that imagine and propose alternatives to antiblackness. Examines Black
interventions through time and technologies with a focus on transgender, queer, and feminist perspectives that build on what Cedric Robinson terms the Black Radical Tradition.

c. BLAC 003 Introduction to Black Study III: Black Ways of Knowing, Doing, and (B)eing Otherwise. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Central to any critical notion of Black Study and Black becoming requires an explicit engagement with Black fungibility, knowledges, and the linguistic, racial and gendered order of things. As such, Radical Black Study requires epistemic disobedience. This class disrupts a fundamental cultural assumption: the study of Black culture and black life is the study of mere difference.

2. Upper-division requirements (10 courses, 40 units)

a. BLAC 191A OR B:

**BLAC 191A - Black Study Research Methods I: Gateways to Inquiry** - 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, and BLAC003. Introduces traditional and experimental methodologies used to pursue transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects required for a Bachelor’s degree. Examines contemporary research practices and methods deriving from various Black diasporic epistemologies. This course prepares students for extended research projects in BLAC 193, College Honors, and other undergraduate research programs through research- and practice-based skill building. This course is for the beginning stages of research for the students’ senior project.

**BLAC 191B - Black Study Research Methods II: Practicing Inquiry** - 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC191A. Engages practical use of research practices, methods, and epistemologies introduced in BLAC191A. Facilitates student design of research questions and projects for Black Study Major Senior Capstone as well as further exploration of themselves as researchers. This course focuses on research development skills and field-based concentrations to help students identify relevant theoretical frameworks and bibliographies.

b. BLAC 192A AND 192B: **Senior Capstone**. 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001, BLAC002, and BLAC003 & BLAC191A and B. In this two semester, co-taught course students will develop a transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research project. Capstone projects demonstrate and employ research as an intersection of critical writing methods, performance and
embodied praxis, visual cultures, and media. This course will provide students with mentorship throughout the revision processes of their projects. Students will also learn about the ways in which their work is in conversation with ongoing work in their field(s).

c. BLAC 193: Black Study Inland Empire Community Initiative 4 units; Practicum/Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, and BLAC003. Introduces students to guiding principles and orienting concepts of Black Study as applied community engagement, namely, the prevention of social problems and the promotion of well-being among individuals within diverse contexts, such as families, schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Students will engage in critical examination of how to define and propose solutions to social and institutional problems. Students will be concerned with the ideas of empowerment, resilience, diversity, cultural competence, and social action, among others. In order to gain a better sense of how organizations develop efforts that encompass these ideas, students will engage in community service learning in Inland Empire communities working alongside community organizations. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

BLAC 194: Directed Research or Creative Activity in Black Study 4 units; Research, Variable hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, BLAC003, and consent of instructor. This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in concentrated, in-depth, study with a particular faculty member for a quarter. This seminar is designed to enable students to conduct interdisciplinary research in one or two of the upper division track concentrations. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

d. Additional 24 units (6 courses) chosen from two of the tracks below:

**A) Critical Theories, and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, 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.

- Potential courses:
  - Envisioning Black Futures, Social Order and Utopianism through the works of Octavia Butler
    - knowing and understanding the world through a uniquely Black perspective allows for new and different visions of human possibilities. Black futures, social order and
utopianism are examined through the works of visionary sci-fi author Octavia Butler's Xenogenesis, Patternist, and Parable book series.

- Trans Embodied-Ologies
  - A gathering place for the radical Queer imaginaries of Black Transgender and Nonbinary Artists. Here, we centralize a Futurity that requires the lives and leadership of Black Trans and Nonbinary peoples. We propose dangerous making to combat dangerously violent anti-transgender cultures, while traversing the Spiritual, empowered, speculative and mysterious of embodied intelligences and aligned creative practices.

- The Medicine Sessions: Futurist Cypher Technologies
  - We step into Black and Queer improvisatory social and spiritual practices to study the Diasporic technologies of the circle. Unique to this exploration, the ring shout will be foundational to unlocking the structures, the sacred, the corporeal liturgies embedded within Black trance-inducing social dance forms. House will be our musical and technical grounding, a Black Queer form within this spiritual lineage that will unite, lift, shift. Each week we are visited by a live DJ and guests who speak to class themes.

- Blackness and American Sexual Economies
  - A comprehensive look at the formation of race and American sexual economies from slavery to the present
  - Radical Black Feminist Thought of the Global South;
  - Black Masculinities: Beyond the Biology in Art, Culture, & Spirituality;
  - Critical Theories of Blackness, Gender, and Sexuality;
  - Torn to Pieces: Affect and the Lexicon of Black Pain;

B) Performance, Arts, and Literature

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, theatre, film, music, art, and literature at UCR, this track explores the epistemological bases, the social challenges, and the futures engendered in the imaginative and performative realms.

- Potential courses
  - Dark Matters/s in Black Performativities
    - From Black Quantum Futurism: “How does our trauma affect the cosmos? What memories are forced upon us and what memories are we forced to forget? What affects do they have over our bodies?” We look at possibilities within an embodied Black Futurist practice and lens, the ways in which the unknown of the dark become known (or do not). We engage Afrofuturism, Black Speculative Arts, and Black Quantum Futurism as guides into the Spirit of the Black [dark] and Dark [black]. I'll ask, "How
do you see something you can't see?" This is a hybrid lecture and practice course

- **The Racial Politics of Performance: Blackface to #OscarsSoWhite**
  - Introduction to a history of how media technology, cultural production, and critical reception have shaped racial representation. Considers theories of Black performativity as well as films and plays by Black artists.

- **Transforming Blackness(?): Gender Betrayal, Spirituality, and Re-visioning the Dark Feminine in the Novels of Toni Morrison**
  - Class will explore the transformation of Black personal/communal life through Black Study, literature, and a pedagogy of unlearning. We will examine the stories we tell ourselves and the narratives society tells Black folks through the fiction and theorizing of Toni Morrison as she re-visions Blackness and Black life.

- **Black Aesthetics Lab;**
  - Practice and theory of Black aesthetics

- **Black Aesthetic Epistemologies;**
  - Systems of knowledge embedded in Black aesthetics

- **House (making);**
  - Using tenets, aesthetics of Hip Hop and House as art/dance making structure

- **Performance as/in Ritual**

**C) His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences** zeroes in on (a) historiography, theories of history, and the various his/her/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.

- **Potential courses:**
  - Sites of Memory: Imagination, Archaeology, and the African--American Past
    - In "Site of Memory" Toni Morrison writes that truth is intricately linked to memory and the imaginative. How do we as a society make, memorialize and imagine our past? How do we speak about difficult pasts, such as that of enslavement, in the present? In an attempt to explore these questions, we will examine the different ways that archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, storytellers, and artists attempt to make sense of the past, breaking the binary of fact versus fiction. We will look at evidentiary sources (artifacts, archives, paintings, literature, and performances) that are used to both illuminate and silence the
past. In this course, students will read and discuss historical narratives, novels, and archaeological and anthropological case studies to examine the different ways we might examine pasts that have been made invisible or elided in mainstream histories; specifically those relating to African Diaspora experience in the United States and the Circum Caribbean. As a seminar course, this is intended to introduce students to the core concepts of close reading, as well as critique and composition through an anthropological lens.

- **Politics of Race and Ethnicity in Africa**
  - 4 units; Lecture, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Covers the politics of ethnicity and race, surveying theory and evidence utilizing a wide range of cases from the African continent, with a focus on the contemporary period. An inquiry-based course where students will consider social science theories of identity politics and gain knowledge on measurement of ethnic and racial identity and skills in uncovering and analyzing patterns of identification as well as politicization of ethnic and racial identities.

- **Political Behavior in African Societies**
  - 4 units; Lecture, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): N/A. Examines participation in everyday and contentious politics in contemporary African societies through examining decades of data collected by Afrobarometer, a Pan-African research network. A research-based course where students will gain skills in data analysis, data visualization, and storytelling.

- **Embodied modes and methods in research of marginalized populations**
  - Examine systems of knowledge and how they influence research methods; examine research processes; theory generation and the ethics of engaging research within marginalized populations. Emphasizes mixed methods through a research project.

- **Black Diaspora social movements, utopia, and the building of a new world**
- **The materiality of Black aquatic lifeways**

D) **Law, Education, Health, Environment, and STEMM** 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.

- Potential courses:
- **Black People in the Inland Empire: Creating Resilient Communities**
  - In this course, we trace contemporary demographic changes in the Black population of Southern California, particularly the shift from Los Angeles county to the Inland Empire. We examine how Black folx continue to create vibrant communities in the face of red lining, white flight, gentrification, further economic marginalization and environmental racism.

- **Blackness, Rape, and Mass Incarceration**
  - The rate of incarceration in the United States is the largest in the world: about 751 people are in prison for every 100,000 in the population. Russia comes in 2nd, with 627 prisoners for every 100,000 in population. In the US today, more than 2.5 million people are behind bars. In absolute numbers, the People’s Republic of China comes in second place with 1.6 million, despite its population being over four times that of the United States. What explains this phenomenon? What historical developments, criminal justice policies, and shared beliefs help us understand this unprecedented scale of incarceration?

- **Artist Healers: Transgender Indigenous Medicine and Art Intersections**
  - Centered in trans-indigeneity students will learn about and directly from a range of contemporary live performance makers and healers who call us to question the construction of norms, binaries, borders, Being. Classes will be centered on healing modalities, positioning wellness and political, critical engagement as partners in accessing a radical imaginary.

- **HIV/AIDS in Africa and Beyond**
  - 4 units; Lecture, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001 or instructor consent. Critical examination of the AIDS pandemic and responses by citizens and states. Introduces epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and explores politics and policies of pandemic response shaped by global inequalities. Focuses on the local realities of the international intervention against AIDS.

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**E) Social Activism and Policy** will engage the multidisciplinarity of activism, community mobilization, and service that cultivates an approach to movement and social justice works as: 1) embodied praxis; 2) an archive of global liberation efforts and future-making strategies; 3) an inquiry into the theories and practices of policy. The required course “Community Internship” will not only reinforce the department’s rootedness in social movements, but also enhance the student’s understanding of the theories and practices of community organizing.

- **Potential courses**
  - **Futurities in Bebop and Black Power**
    - An exploration of the origins, developments, imbrications, performance, and visions of society in jazz and the origins of Black Power.
  - **Organizing for Black Lives in the 21st Century**
    - Using engaged praxis, we explore creative ways U.S. Black
movement organizers have re-configured old ideas and the new ones that have emerged in the 21st Century. The course is designed around three themes: What is to be done; How is it to be done; The possibilities of what can be done.

- Black Diaspora social movements, utopia, and the building of a new world
  - Exploring diasporic collaborations and epistemes in the past and present, this course explores transnational political and imaginative efforts focused on common concrete social problems affecting Black people.

- Methods of Activist Research
  - Focusing on the theory, politics, and methods of activist research, this course introduces students to an emerging field of knowledge and practical intervention. While Anthropology and Sociology are centrally implicated in this emerging field, activist research draws from and is applicable to the broader social sciences, humanities, and the arts. As well, activist research is an effective collaborative tool with which communities experiencing injustice and distress attempt to conceptualize and overcome their challenges.

- Black Parades. Queer Magics
- Hip Hop, Collectivity, and Change
  - Hip Hop as rooted in collective social practices with political, historical, and artistic expressions

**The Minor in Black Study**

The Minor in Black Study **consists of 32 units** with requirements focused on the major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas, as well as courses along the following themes: 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, and STEMM; v) Social Activism and Policy

1. Lower-division/General requirements (3 courses, 12 units)
   
a. BLAC 001 Introduction to Black Study I: Black People Domestically and Globally Now

b. BLAC 002 Introduction to Black Study II: Imagined and Embodied Futures

c. BLAC 003 Introduction to Black Study III: Black Ways of Knowing, Doing, and (B)eing Otherwise
2. Upper-division requirements (5 courses, 20 units)

a. BLAC 192 A & B Senior Capstone

b. BLAC 193 Black Study Inland Empire Community Initiative

c. Additional 8 units chosen from two of the tracks below:

   A) Critical Theories and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Blackness

   B) Performance, Arts, and Literature

   C) His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences

   D) Law, Education, Health, Environment, and STEMM

   E) Social Activism, and Policy

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

LOWER DIVISION COURSES

a. BLAC 001 Introduction to Black Study I: Black People Domestically and Globally Now. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Introduces major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas currently. Topics include the creation of movements/spaces of possibilities to navigate issues around AIDS/HIV and Covid-19 pandemics, food and nutrition insecurity, state terror and industrial incarceration, residential segregation, exposure to environmental toxins, and blocked access to quality health care and education, to create vibrant futures.

b. BLAC 002 Introduction to Black Study II: Imagined and Embodied Futures. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Engages critical appraisal of artistic forms, political organizing efforts, embodied praxis and resistance formations, and theoretical prisms that imagine and propose alternatives to antiblackness. Examines Black interventions through time and technologies with a focus on transgender, queer, and feminist perspectives that build on what Cedric Robinson terms the Black Radical Tradition.
c. BLAC 003 **Introduction to Black Study III: Black Ways of Knowing, Doing, and (B)eing Otherwise.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Central to any critical notion of Black Study and Black becoming requires an explicit engagement with Black fungibility, knowledges, and the linguistic, racial and gendered order of things. As such, Radical Black Study requires epistemic disobedience. This class disrupts a fundamental cultural assumption: the study of Black culture and black life is the study of mere difference.

**UPPER DIVISION COURSES**

a. BLAC 192A **AND** 192B: **Senior Capstone.** 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001, BLAC002, and BLAC003 & BLAC191A and B. In this two semester, co-taught course students will develop a transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research project. Capstone projects demonstrate and employ research as an intersection of critical writing methods, performance and embodied praxis, visual cultures, and media. This course will provide students with mentorship throughout the revision processes of their projects. Students will also learn about the ways in which their work is in conversation with ongoing work in their field(s).

b. BLAC 193 - **Black Study Inland Empire Community Initiative.** 4 units; Practicum/Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, and BLAC003. Introduces students to guiding principles and orienting concepts of Black Study as applied community engagement, namely, the prevention of social problems and the promotion of well-being among individuals within diverse contexts, such as families, schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Students will engage in critical examination of how to define and propose solutions to social and institutional problems. Students will be concerned with the ideas of empowerment, resilience, diversity, cultural competence, and social action, among others. In order to gain a better sense of how organizations develop efforts that encompass these ideas, students will engage in community service learning in Inland Empire communities working alongside community organizations. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

BLAC 194: **Directed Research or Creative Activity in Black Study** 4 units; Research, Variable hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, BLAC003, and consent of instructor. This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in concentrated, in-depth, study with a particular faculty member for a
quarter. This seminar is designed to enable students to conduct interdisciplinary research in one or two of the upper division track concentrations. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

c. Additional 12 units (3 courses) chosen from two of the tracks below:

A) **Critical Theories and Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, 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 1977 Combahee River Collective Statement.

B) **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.

C) **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.

D) **Law, Education, Health, Environment:** 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.

E) **Social Activism and Policy** will engage the multidisciplinarity of activism, community mobilization, and service that cultivates an approach to movement and social justice works as: 1) embodied praxis; 2) an
archive of global liberation efforts and future-making strategies; 3) an inquiry into the theories and practices of policy. The required course “Community Internship” will not only reinforce the department’s rootedness in social movements, but also enhance the student’s understanding of the theories and practices of community organizing.

Collaboration with Campus Units

Cross Listed Courses

Interested current faculty members on the Black Studies Initiative Committee will work to approve their courses that articulates, embodies, and engages with Black Study for cross listing within their appropriate units. We will also strategically reach out to faculty across CHASS for cross listing courses that engage Black Study and advance the learning outcomes outlined by the Department.

Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Program Pathway 2021-2022

In the spirit of collaboration, the Teacher Education Program Pathway has expressed interest in creating an articulation with the Department of Black Study that provides a path to students wishing to pursue that line of study. In this same spirit of collaboration, and being in dialogue with other units on campus the Black Study Department will seek to develop a pathway for an agreed upon number of students to enter the Teacher Education Program.

PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Black Study does not intend and indeed will not have the administrative capacity to centralize all forms of Black Studies on campus. On the contrary, when possible, the Department of Black Study will support and collaborate with various related efforts, even when not originating them. It seeks to multiply and strengthen all modalities 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 is one among many other possible versions of Black Studies. 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 students, scholars, artists, researchers, practitioners and members of African and Black diasporic communities 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 governance. Grounded in social movements demanding deep structural transformation, in compliance with all relevant UCR protocols, 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.

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. Former Dean McMullin envisioned 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. APPENDICES

Please note: except for Appendix B, below, all other Appendices are attached as separate files.

B. Answers to Senate Committees Queries and to Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the difference between Black Study and African American Studies, Africana Studies, African and African Diaspora Studies? What is the specificity of Black Study?

2. Won’t the Department of Black Study threaten and/or damage (enrollment, resources of) other departments and programs already at UCR?

3. What will be the relationship between the Department of Black Study and the Department of Ethnic Studies African American Studies Major and Minor undergraduate programs? What is the relationship between the Department of Black Study and the Graduate School of Education, which is mentioned in the pre proposal?

4. Why not start a program of Black Study, or a concentration of Black Study, instead of a department? Why not combine the efforts put into Black Study with the already existing program in African American Studies?

5. How will the Department of Black Study, with its emphasis on staff, students, and community members involvement in decision making at the levels of hiring and promotion, abide by campus norms such as The Call and Bylaw 55?

6. How will the Department of Black Study fund faculty FTEs?
7. How will the joint appointments with the Department of Black Study impact the budget of the collaborating departments?

8. Won’t the joint appointments between two or more departments make it more difficult for pre-tenured faculty to obtain tenure? How will faculty members of two or more departments balance each department service expectations?

9. Won’t the Department of Black Study further challenge the current CHASS administrative structure?

10. Isn’t the push for the departmentalization of Black Study rushed? Don’t the campus and the surrounding community need more time to discuss the proposal? Isn’t this the worst possible fiscal time to start a new department?

11. What is a realistic timeline for a Graduate Program in the Department of Black Study?

1. What is the difference between Black Study and African American Studies, Africana Studies, African and African Diaspora Studies? What is the specificity of Black Study?

Instead of drawing boundaries, demarcating disciplinary territories, and buying into the all-too-common destructive competition for scarce campus and extracampus resources, we envision and seek to practice Black Study as a fundamentally collaborative, relational, intersectional, as well as transformative endeavor that is theoretically, methodologically, and epistemically hybrid.

Specifically, Black Study, as a verb rather than a noun, stresses activities that are corporal and theoretical, practical and speculative, that are conducted collectively. Black Study draws from an emphasis on the simultaneous embodied nature of intellectuality and the intellectual nature of embodiment, as in the quotation below:

A couple of people seem to be reticent about the term ‘study,’ but is there a way to be in the undercommons that isn’t intellectual? Is there a way of being intellectual that isn’t social? When I think about the way we use the term ‘study,’ I think we are committed to the idea that study is what you do with other people. It’s talking and walking around with other people, working, dancing, suffering, some irreducible convergence
of all three, held under the name of speculative practice. The notion of a rehearsal – being in a kind of workshop, playing in a band, in a jam session, or old men sitting on a porch, or people working together in a factory – there are these various modes of activity. The point of calling it ‘study’ is to mark that the incessant and irreversible intellectuality of these activities is already present. These activities aren’t ennobled by the fact that we now say, “oh, if you did these things in a certain way, you could be said to have been studying.” To do these things is to be involved in a kind of common intellectual practice. What’s important is to recognize that that has been the case – because that recognition allows you to access a whole, varied, alternative history of thought.” (Harney and Moten 2013, 110, our emphasis)

Rather than establishing sharp differences between Black Study and other important versions of Africana Studies, African American Studies, African and African Diaspora Studies, and Black Studies, we affirm our specificity in two ways.

First, Black Study inhabits dynamic confluences, intersections, relationships, interstices, and productive tensions between the fields above as well as various disciplines in the traditional Social Sciences, Humanities, Arts, Education, Medical Sciences, and Natural Sciences. Black Study is unapologetically and concomitantly multi-, trans- and extra-disciplinary; its practitioners seek dialogue across and beyond institutional boundaries, pursue collaborations and bridges rather than division; embrace cross pollination instead of isolation and exclusivity; engender synthesis instead of antithesis.

Second, we stress Black ways of knowing and being in this and other imagined worlds -- Black epistemologies, or as in the quotation above “a whole, varied, alternative history of thought” -- as they articulate with the following thematic axes: a) Africa and its Black Diasporas; b) Black Radical Traditions with an emphasis on Black Feminist, Queer, and Transgender perspectives; c) Black inventions, futurities, and abolition.

a) Africa and its Black Diasporas
Black Study expands the notion of “African American” to include peoples of African descent everywhere, including the United States, the Americas -- or Amefricas, as Black Brazilian theorist Lelia Gonzalez terms it -- and the African continent. While a number of programs and departments of African American Studies and Black Studies adopt similar expanded frameworks, the UCR Department of Black Study actualizes, in
its multidisciplinary and diverse course offerings, an expanded time, space, and epistemological universe. Our faculty are specialized in various geographical, ethnic, linguistic, and political regions, historical periods, topical foci, and disciplinary and methodological approaches. We conceive of the Black Diaspora via the analytical prism of roots and routes, as indicated in The Black Atlantic: rooted in African geographies, historical matrices, and contemporary social processes as they impact and are inflicted by Diasporic routes and processes globally. Africa and its Diasporas -- imagined, experienced, ancestral, present and future -- suggest a constantly replenished and revised reservoir of epistemologies, practices, and political projects in pursuance of futurities. Following Hortense Spillers, M. Jacqui Alexander and others, we queer the Black Atlantic, engaging multiple and vital agencies -- political, social, sexual, ontological -- thus opposing the normative conditions of flesh and immobility imposed on Black people since the Middle Passage.

b) Black Radical Traditions with an emphasis on Black Feminist, Queer, and Transgender perspectives

Black Study draws from constantly replenished transgenerational archives of collective genius. What Cedric Robinson called the Black Radical Tradition constitutes an epistemic reservoir from which African and Diasporic communities have drawn critical theory, strategies of survival, social critique, and imagined futurities. Analogous concepts have appeared in African and Black Diaspora scholarship and activism. For example, Black Brazilians Abdias do Nascimento, Lelia Gonzalez, Beatriz Nascimento, and Jurema Werneck, among others, have developed the concept of quilombismo (maroonage) and, in the case of Gonzalez, B. Nascimento, and Werneck, centered the roles Black women played in formulating critical analyses and political philosophies. Black Study explores the ways in which such collective epistemic reservoir is always and already necessarily modulated by Black feminist, queer, and transgender experiences and transformative projects. Black Study invites a perspective on the Black Radical Tradition that suspends, rather than accepts, normative assumptions and practices of gender and sexuality. Black Study recognizes that the formation of the modern world, inasmuch as it demarcates the permanent exclusion of Black people from its realms, is also one in which Black people have formulated an existence characterized by invention -- one that is in pursuance of survival as well as transfiguration. Although the research on and recognition of histories of Black transgender identities are relatively recent, Black Study insists on reframing Africa and its Diasporas through a prism that is plural, insurgent, and equipped with the most daring analysis of gender and sexuality that articulate with and modify critical theories on race. To study Blackness in Africa and its Diasporas, by necessity and definition, is to suspend normative dynamics and incite the permanent explosion of gender and sexuality categories.
c) Black inventions, futurities, and abolition

Seriously pursuing Frantz Fanon’s reminder to himself that “the real leap consists in introducing invention into existence,” Black Study embraces a necessary futurity. Invention is not predictable, and it is not engineered. Much like the uprisings of 1992 in Los Angeles, 2014 in Ferguson, 2015 in Baltimore, and 2020 in various parts of the United States and elsewhere, such unmanageable events require that we suspend formulaic predictions of how, when, why, and to what ends transfigurative possibilities happen. Such uprisings unveil how the Black Radical Tradition and its revolutionary potential necessarily, though unpredictably, actualize themselves in Black spaces of possibility and invention.

Black Study’s embracing of a necessary yet unpredictable futurity is exemplified in its commitment to abolition. As abolitionist scholar and activist Ruth Gilmore explains,

Abolition seeks to undo the way of thinking and doing things that sees prison and punishment as solutions for all kinds of social, economic, political, behavioral and interpersonal problems. Abolition, though, is not simply decarceration, put everybody out on the street. It is reorganizing how we live our lives together in the world. And this is something that people are doing in a variety of ways throughout the United States and around the planet already. It is not a pie-in-the-sky dream. It is actually something that is practical and achievable in the city of New York, in Texas, in South Africa, around the world.

By recognizing African and Black Diasporic transformative epistemes inflected by Black feminist, queer, and transgender theorizations, practices, and people, Black Study seeks the undoing of the way of thinking and doing that have not only created a worldwide carceral system based on punishment, but also shared notions of the Social and the Human that exclude Black people from their realms.

Another way to express Black Study’s commitment to invention, futurity and abolition, is to stress our unapologetic experimental approach. Abolitionist organizer Mariame Kaba’s emphasis on the “importance of building a million different experiments” comes with a confident and informed reminder that “We’ll figure it out by working to get there. You don’t have to know all the answers in order to be able to press for a vision.”
2. Won’t the Department of Black Study threaten and/or damage (enrollment, resources of) other departments and programs already at UCR?

Willfully collaborative from the onset, the Department of Black Study will work with and not against existing programs and departments. While stressing its relative autonomy regarding programming, curriculum, hiring priorities, and horizontal decision-making practices, the Department of Black Study will also recognize the autonomy of other units. Such collaborative approach and co-existence models already exist at UCR: for example, the Departments of English and of Comparative Literature; the Department of Hispanic Studies, Chicano Studies minor, and the new Latino and Latin American Studies Research Center. Too often, a scarcity mindset pits university stakeholders against each other when in fact they can enrich one another. With a unique Department of Black Study, UCR could recruit and retain not only excellent faculty doing cutting-edge research and creative activity but also recruit and retain undergraduate and graduate students eager to learn Black epistemologies. This growth would bolster areas such as Ethnic Studies and African Studies, among others, as we agree on the shared importance of Black studies from Africa to the diaspora. At the same time, we recognize that these fields are not the same. To presume otherwise erases their different intellectual histories, constituents, and objectives. To overgeneralize Black people, Black thought, and Blackness is to reify antiblackness.

In the spirit of collaboration, to assuage concerns about competition and divisiveness, dialogue about the Department of Black Study proposal, and explore potential collaborations around curriculum and research, we have met, often more than once, with many committees, organizations, and individuals to seek their ideas, insights, and inquiries. They include:

- African Studies
- GSOE
- Department of Ethnic Studies
- CHASS Executive Committee
- Undergraduate and graduate students via African Student Programs Office
- Faculty and staff via the Black Faculty and Staff Association
- Faculty from Comparative Literature, Media and Cultural Studies

These dialogues have helped further define what a Department of Black Study means and requires, and how it will serve UCR's stakeholders. Above all else, these dialogues have made it abundantly evident that Black Study is fundamentally about being in inclusive conversation and exploring collaboration, recognizing past and contemporary social experiments, and embracing the imperative of constant transfiguration. Rather
than shy away from controversial topics, Black Study invites difficult but frank and open debates. While the Department of Black Study rests on the principles and thematic axes explored in item 1 above, it will embrace the dialogue opportunities to further define its epistemological foundations. In curriculum, research, performance, community engagement, and visions of the future, Black Study reasserts dialogical and transformative epistemologies grounded in Black collective experience.

3. What will be the relationship between the Department of Black Study and the Department of Ethnic Studies’s African American Studies Major and Minor undergraduate programs? What is the relationship between the Department of Black Study and the Graduate School of Education, which is mentioned in the pre proposal?

On July 1st, 2021, the faculty of the Department of Ethnic Studies, Dean Juliet McMullin, and the Black Study Initiative Committee met to discuss possibilities of collaboration. Reflecting item 2 above, members of the BSIC were assertive about (a) our desire to collaborate with, and not undermine, ongoing efforts in Ethnic Studies, in particular its undergraduate tracks in African American Studies, (b) the potentially beneficial co-existence and collaboration between the Department of Black Study and the Department of Ethnic Studies.

Regarding potential collaborations, there were discussions about crosslisting courses across the departments, collaborating in programming and community projects, and providing support for faculty in both units. Crosslisting courses could increase enrollment in both units: as students become familiarized with the instructors whose courses are crosslisted, they may research related classes, epistemological orientations, and faculty in both units. We consider crosslisted courses potential gateways for students to explore the departments that support such courses. This process of exploration, as it multiplies among students, can lead to increased course enrollments, thus benefiting both departments.

As the Department of Black Study builds its curriculum, it will invite Ethnic Studies faculty to not only crosslist their courses, but also collaborate in the very crafting of the curriculum, thus signaling and putting into practice intentional dialogue and intersections from the beginning. Indeed, in August 2021, members of the BSI committee met with members of the departments of Ethnic Studies, Comparative Literature, and Media and Cultural Studies to discuss such possibilities, among other topics.
Thus, rather than envisioning a zero sum scenario in which the success of the Department of Black Study leads to or depends on the decline of the African American program in Ethnic Studies -- or any other UCR unit for that matter -- via crosslisting courses, collaborating on programming, and offering mutual support, we affirm our intention to improve our campus climate, enhance our overall research efforts, and deepen our community engagement. We consider the Department of Black Study a benefit for our entire campus and surrounding communities.

A concrete example of the collaborative approach that marks the Department of Black Study is the attached proposal for a “Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Program Pathway.” It resulted from a dialogue with members of the Graduate School of Education, including Dean Louie Rodriguez, in which we shared our mutual commitment to facilitating and providing means by which our students acquire the coursework necessary to enter UCR Teaching Education and Credential Programs. In partnership with the GSOE, the Department of Black Study will orient and encourage its interested undergraduates to pursue this exciting pathway to graduate school and to professionalization. We consider such partnership one of the points of attraction for new undergraduates who will contribute to the vibrancy not only of the Department of Black Study and the GSOE, but indeed the entire campus. Indeed, this partnership, which is explicitly structured to facilitate our student’s entry into teaching professions, furthers UCR’s mission as the premier campus for social mobility.

4. Why not start a program of Black Study, or a concentration of Black Study, instead of a department? Why not combine the efforts put into Black Study with the already existing program in African American Studies?

The case for a Department of Black Study, instead of a program, or a center, is fundamentally about relative autonomy and institutional stability.

Well documented are the historical, structural, and ongoing challenges Black faculty encounter at every stage of their career: from hiring, to negotiating salary, and from merit and promotion to retention. A Department of Black Study constitutes a relatively autonomous administrative unit in which faculty (as well as students, staff, and community members) share a perspective on rigorous and relevant scholarship according to which its members are hired, evaluated, promoted, tenured, and retained by committed peers.

According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, UCR has only five tenured Black women faculty. In the past year alone, several Black faculty have decided to leave or
retire from UCR including Nalo Hopkinson, Alisa Bierria, and Carolyn Murray. The department’s relative autonomy, and the standards of excellence it will permanently emphasize, will contribute to a campus climate in which not only our faculty are retained, but others around the country and the planet are attracted to its dynamism, welcoming atmosphere, and emphasis on its student, staff, faculty, and community relative autonomy and well-being. The Department of Black Study at UCR represents an unprecedented opportunity to attract, hire, nourish, celebrate, and retain Black students, staff, and faculty.

Besides relative autonomy, a Department of Black Study also signals an institutional stability that programs and centers cannot provide. Decision-making over the allocation of financial and human resources is key to promoting Black epistemologies and its practitioners. Our historical research shows that UCR Black Studies programs were too vulnerable to internal disputes and antagonistic campus climate in ways that a Department would not be as it is far more difficult to terminate a department than a program or a center.

5. How will the Department of Black Study, with its emphasis on staff, students, and community members involvement in decision making at the levels of hiring and promotion, abide by campus norms such as The Call and Bylaw 55?

“The method of voting to comply with Bylaw 55,” states THE CALL 2021-2022 AY, p. 9, “is left to the discretion of the department. It is important that this be done in a consistent way that results in a clear picture of faculty opinion about the proposed action.” Also, on September 7, 2021, in an email correspondence to the Deans and Department Chairs, the Chair of the Academic Senate, Jason Stajich stated the following:

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that Senate Bylaws do not prevent any school or department/program from eliciting and collecting advisory votes from non-Senate faculty on personnel actions. The mechanism to allow such votes must be approved by at least 2/3 Senate members of the unit and the results should be tabulated and reported separately from the Senate members’ votes.

In consultation with the relevant offices on campus, the Department of Black Study will (a) guarantee norms of confidentiality in all personnel actions and (b) establish guidelines according to which the opinion of students, staff, and community members are taken into consideration, either by means of a vote, or by consultation. Again, such
guidelines will be transparent, and will be established only after the relevant UCR administrative bodies are consulted for their approval.

Currently, a number of academic units, such as the Department of Anthropology, practice consultation with graduate students who are represented in most committees and regularly participate in department meetings. Expanding this model of inclusion, the Department of Black Study will explore compliant mechanisms by which undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and community members are organically and formally involved in its shared governance.

In conversation with the Dean’s Office and other relevant administrative units on campus, the Department of Black Study will develop and implement a model of administration that emphasizes transparency, horizontality, inclusion, and continuity. It will propose a structure of shared governance that lessens the Chair’s burden, introduces other related functions -- such as Vice Chairs and a Coordinating Committee -- and in the process guarantees a democratic and efficient collective leadership.

6. How will the Department of Black Study fund faculty FTEs?

The University of California Office of the President (UCOP) sponsored the Blackness Unbound Faculty Commons group via UCR’s Center for Ideas and Society. BU members have had an important role in the crafting of the Department of Black Study proposal. On July 21, 2021, UCOP provided further support for the Department of Black Study by awarding $496,570 through its Advancing Faculty Diversity Program. As the attached proposal and award letter show, UCOP supports the hiring of four new faculty specializing in Black Study. One of these faculty will be tenured and hold their appointment in the Department of Black Study; one junior faculty will be jointly appointed between the departments of Black Study and Political Science; one junior faculty will be jointly appointed between the departments of Black Study and Religious studies; and one tenured faculty will appointed in the Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Health Equity (ESHQ). UCOP demonstrates financial support not only for the hiring of faculty specializing in Black Study, but also for the Department of Black Study.

Another likely financial source for faculty recruitment is the UCOP President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (PPFP). The program provides the hiring incentive in the form of five years of salary. The Department of Black Study will not only be highly
attractive to a number of such fellows, but will also partner with CHASS to intentionally and aggressively recruit them.

Finally, as much as we can expect, over the years, to add regular lines to the department -- as other departments do -- we are not waiting. We have been actively seeking funding opportunities, as the UCOP grant above demonstrates. For example, with Cassie Rigger (Senior Director, Foundation Development) and Clyde Derrick (Assistant Dean for Development), we have been exploring funding possibilities with the Mellon Foundation, among others, and are constantly applying for such opportunities.

7. How will the joint appointments with the Department of Black Study impact the budget of the collaborating departments?

In the first few years of the Department of Black Study, we anticipate one or perhaps two fully appointed faculty, and about 10 jointly-appointed faculty. This model is familiar to UCR. In 2012, for example, the School of Public Policy started with a similar arrangement. In the short term, as Dean McMullin suggested, departments with two or more faculty members who move 50% of their lines to the Department of Black Study may request one lecturer. If five lecturers are required in the departments whose faculty become jointly appointed with DBS, the cost will be $50,000 per year. Over time, however, there will be new hires in the departments in which faculty have shared their lines, and there will be hires in DBS.

Such investment in the Department of Black Study will be more than justified by an increase in CHASS enrollment (undergraduate and graduate students once the graduate program is established), potential for extramural funding, and its potential to attract dynamic students, scholars, staff, and community people. Fundamentally, the added value its faculty will generate with their rigorous, innovative, and consistent academic production will only enhance UCR’s R1 mission, vocation, and standing nationally and internationally.

8. Won’t the joint appointments between two or more departments make it more difficult for pre-tenured faculty to obtain tenure? How will faculty members of two or more departments balance each department service expectations?

“For purposes of the personnel review of joint appointees,” states THE CALL 2021-2022 AY, p. 31, “one of the departments will be considered the home department.
Ordinarily this will be the department with the largest percentage of FTE. For joint appointments in which the FTE is 50-50, the candidate’s home department will be designated in the appointment letter.” Both departments will independently evaluate the candidate, but there will be only one file that will be shared by both units. The Chairs of both units will be coordinated with each other, their respective departments, and the candidate.

Based on our experience, we find that having two units reviewing a candidate strengthens their academic file, rather than weakens it. The Department of Black Study’s emphasis on collaboration will bode well with general interactions with various units on campus, and in particular when reviewing personnel files of faculty who have joint appointments. Such files will be enriched by and benefit from the multi- trans- and extra-disciplinary dialogues that must be had when inhabiting two or more departments.

Regarding service expectations from each department, which becomes potentially problematic for pre-tenure faculty who are more vulnerable, the same formula applies: given the Department of Black Study’s emphasis on dialogue and cooperation, at the start of a joint appointment, Chairs from both units and the newly-hired faculty member will agree on a written document about the amount and type of service they are expected in each unit.

9. Won’t the Department of Black Study further challenge the current CHASS administrative structure?

Regarding the already challenged and understaffed CHASS administrative structure, the Dean’s office, as described in Dean’s McMullin letter of support, developed a proposal that creates a new administrative unit. This new administrative unit -- which, given the current severe shortage and overburdening of staff, would have been necessary regardless of the new Department of Black Study -- serves the Departments of Black Study, ESHQ, Ethnic Studies, and newly funded research centers. Dean McMullin’s office calculated that such a new administrative unit costs $200,000 per year.

As noted above, the added value that the new Department of Black Study will generate -- increased undergraduate and graduate enrollments, extramural funding, national and international projection, and an overall improvement in campus climate and dynamism -- justifies such relatively modest investment. Indeed, as it has occurred in other campuses across the United States, while the establishment of a department of Black
Study engenders a gamut of concrete and measurable benefits, the immeasurables are just as important. How does one measure a collective sense of historical responsibility and accountability, an unapologetic embracing of future possibilities, a reckoning of Black epistemologies and practitioners, a concerted push for unexplored possibilities in the worlds we inhabit?

10. Isn’t the push for the departmentalization of Black Study rushed? Don’t the campus and the surrounding community need more time to discuss the proposal? Isn’t this the worst possible fiscal time to start a new department?

We are uniquely poised to make UCR a leader in the area of Black Study. As Dean McMullin stated in her letter of support, “Waiting until there are ‘better times’ would only serve to lose the momentum and disenfranchise faculty who are motivated and inspired to meet the needs of our students, communities, and the broader society.” The 2020 mass transnational protests for Black Lives, which in the U.S. alone mobilized an estimated 25 million people or more, making it the largest ever, demanded immediate accountability and action. The Black Student Union statement, attached, which was widely circulated and quite effective in calling the attention of administrators, faculty, and students, made concrete and urgent demands regarding the well-being and respect for Black Students. Blackness Unbound’s statement, in conversation with BSU undergraduate students, demanded a Department to the then Dean Milagros Peña. Graduate Students in Anthropology, as well as the Black faculty of that department also wrote a statement demanding changes in the department curricular and decision-making structure, many of which, including admitting three graduate students for the next five admission cycles focusing on the Black Diaspora. It seems that every department across UCR, as in much of the national academic landscape, wrote a statement in support of the protests. To slow down the departmentalization process would go against such widespread urgent demands.

Furthermore, Black Studies, as our proposal demonstrates, has a long presence at UCR. To demand a department that continues and expands on the vital necessity of such institutional presence is to draw from such a long embattled trajectory dating back to at least 1968. Indeed, since 2018, Blackness Unbound has brought senior scholars to campus (Edmund T. Gordon, Omi Osun Joni Jones) in an attempt to debate the challenges and possibilities of Black Studies in times of permanent challenges both for Black peoples. The Black Studies Initiative Committee continues this long tradition and engages diverse stakeholders across campus and the surrounding communities. The proposal that BSI has put forward not only recognizes and expands on this rich and
embattled 50-year-plus history on campus, but also, as described in various FAQs above, engages a variety of individuals and groups of people who have demonstrated interest in the departmentalization project. Indeed, in preparation for the final vote on the DSB at the Senate, projected to happen in the fall 2021, we plan to collaborate with CIS on a series of events on the significance, substance, challenges, and promises of Black Study. “It is time,” states Dean McMullin in her attached letter, “for CHASS and campus to clearly demonstrate our innovation and relevance to larger societal concerns not only through the work of individual researchers, but also through the infrastructure of departments that can foster that innovation particularly for Black students, staff, and faculty.” Such sentiment is shared by many faculty, staff, students, community members, and administrators. We are ready!

11. What is a realistic timeline for a Graduate Program in the Department of Black Study?

As soon as the Department of Black Study is approved by the Senate, its members will start working on the graduate program. As explained in the proposal, the graduate program is an integral part of the department for it enhances and anchors curriculum, research, and programming. The graduate program will attract undergraduate and graduate students, as well as make it more appealing for faculty as it will engender a rich atmosphere of inquiry, workshops, events, book talks, and a gamut of related activities.

Unlike the UCR-contained protocol for the establishment of a new department, the establishment of a new graduate program goes through the Graduate Council, charged with making recommendations to the systemwide Academic Senate’s Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA). Following the Graduate Council’s recommendation, we will submit our proposal at least one and a half years before the desired effective term. As we intend to have an effective date of Fall Quarter 2023, the Department of Black Study will submit its proposal in the Spring Quarter 2022. We will of course follow all the protocols for the submission.
July 29, 2021

To: Lucille Chia  
   Chair, CHASS Faculty Executive Committee

From: Jason Stajich  
   Chair, Riverside Division

CC: Gabrielle Brewer  
   Student Affairs Officer

RE: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Dear Lucille,

I write to provide the consultative feedback memos from the Academic Senate review regarding the pre-proposal for the establishment of a Department of Black Study. I ask that this attached packet be passed to the proponents.

In addition, as you know, Executive Council, who is fully supportive of the proposal, discussed it during their meeting on July 26, 2021, and below are summarized comments from the discussion that, along with the attached committee memos, I trust will be helpful in the next proposal draft:

- UCR, the country, and world are at a fragile and critical moment and UCR would be rising to the challenge of the time by establishing and fully supporting a Department of Black Study.
- UCR Administration must put tangible and sustained support – financial and otherwise – behind this department.
- It is clear that there is significant community support and that such a proposal has resonance beyond the walls of campus.
- Executive Council agreed that this department is necessary at UCR.
- It will be helpful for the proposal to clarify issues around resources in funding the unit’s faculty and administrative staff as noted in some of the memos.
- It is important that in the next version of the proposal that the names of the proponents be included.
- A member mentioned that it may be helpful to clarify the difference between African American studies and Black studies; and the difference between what is offered with the current African American studies major in the Department of Ethnic Studies.

Sincerely,

/s/Jason
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

June 24, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
   Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Yinsheng Wang, Chair
      Committee on Academic Personnel

Re: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

At its meeting on June 21, 2021, CAP discussed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and, by a vote of +9-0-0, CAP unanimously supported the pre-proposal. In particular, CAP considered the establishment of the new department timely. In addition, CAP would like to note that, similar as existing departments on campus, the academic personnel review process for senate faculty in the newly proposed department should be aligned with APM and the Call.
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

July 6, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Stefano Vidussi, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

RE: Pre-Proposal for a Department of Black Study

The Committee on Educational Policy reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study at their July 2, 2021 meeting and look forward to receiving the full proposal for the department for review. The Committee recommends that the program consult the Committee on Educational Policy’s Guidelines for the Establishment of New Academic Programs for the proposed development of the undergraduate major and minor.
To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Xuan Liu, Chair
Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reviewed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and was in supportive of the proposal.
COMMITTEE ON COURSES

June 30, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Ming Lee Tang, Chair
   Committee on Courses

Re: Pre-Proposal for a Department of Black Study

The Committee on Courses reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study and are supportive of the proposal for the new department. The Committee does recommend that the proposal be updated to document what currently approved courses will be included in the proposed four tracks for the major and what advising support will be available to students to assist them with identifying courses. Additionally, the Committee recommends that the proposal be updated to note what the requirements will be for the Ph.D. program that the proposed department intends to develop. The Committee also recommends that the proposal document how the administration and College will support the proposed new department. Lastly, the Committee recommends that the program consult with the Registrar’s Office regarding the availability of the proposed new subject code BLAC and compatibility with the Course Request System (CRS).
GRADUATE COUNCIL

June 15, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Riverside Division

From: Amanda Lucia, Chair
      Graduate Council

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Graduate Council reviewed the proposal for a new Department of Black Study at their June 10, 2021 meeting. The Council was supportive of the proposal wholeheartedly and found it very timely. This department will likely attract more Black graduate students. There may be impacts on the Ethnic Studies department that should be addressed in the proposal. The Council noted that separate proposals for the department, undergraduate program, and graduate program need to be submitted as final proposals.
Hi Cherysa,

The School of Ed FEC was very supportive of this moving forward.

Thanks!

joe

On Thu, Jun 3, 2021 at 3:25 PM Cherysa P Cortez <cherysa.cortez@ucr.edu> wrote:

Dear Prof. Kahne – Please see the attached and below for the attention of the GSOE FEC.

Best,

__________________________

Cherysa Cortez

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail communication and any attachments may contain confidential and privileged information for the use of the designated recipients named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error and that any review, disclosure, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the Academic Senate Office immediately by telephone at (951) 827-6154 or email at cherysa.cortez@ucr.edu and permanently delete all copies of this communication and any attachments.
On behalf of Senate Division Chair Jason Stajich, I forward a pre-proposal for the establishment of a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. As a pre-proposal, comments received in this round of review would be incorporated in a subsequent proposal. Please provide your committee's comments via IMS or senate@ucr.edu (you may cc cherysac@ucr.edu) by July 19, 2021. Thank you.

Tasked Committees:

- Academic Personnel
- Courses
- Educational Policy
- Executive Committee - College of Engineering
- Executive Committee - College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
- Executive Committee - Graduate School of Education
- Executive Committee - School of Business
- Executive Committee - School of Medicine
- Executive Committee - School of Public Policy
- Faculty Welfare
- Graduate Council
- Library and Information Technology
- Planning and Budget
- Research
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

--

Joseph Kahne  
Dutton Presidential Chair for Education Policy and Politics  
Co-Director, Civic Engagement Research Group  
University of California, Riverside  
[www.civicsurvey.org](http://www.civicsurvey.org)  
@jkahne  
Pronouns: he, him, his
June 29, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Alejandra Dubcovsky, Chair
Committee on Library and Information Technology

RE: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The LIT Committee enthusiastically supports the development of this program. The main concern raised is that, as it stands, the pre-proposal read more like a proposal for a program rather than a department. This department needs permanent lines, so that the faculty in the Black Study department will not be spread too thin or saddled with twice the department service. We recommend that UCR should commit a defined number of FTE lines spread over the first years of the Department and the proposal should be written accordingly.
PLANNING & BUDGET

June 18, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Katherine Kinney, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

RE: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The committee supports the proposal to create a department of Black Study. Members of the committee affirmed the importance of this initiative as defining a vital field of research dedicated to countering antiblackness. As the proposal states, formation and support of this department are logical steps to address the serious difficulties UCR has had in retaining back faculty members by creating new structures of support for research, collaboration, and pedagogy. One member of the committee who supports the intellectual vision of the department expressed concern that forming a department could have the unintended consequence of marginalizing black faculty members. Other members expressed excitement about the ways the new department would strengthen interdisciplinary connections across the arts, humanities, and sciences.

In a spirit of support, the committee asks for clarification on the following points.

1) Who is presenting this proposal? There was no cover letter naming the faculty proposing the department.

2) There is no letter of support from the CHASS Dean. A clear commitment of resources, including space and staff FTE, by the Dean is especially important given the history of underfunding or defunding black studies on the UCR campus. The proposal cites the Dean’s “vision” for staffing on page 15, but a letter stating the college’s commitment is needed.
3) How many faculty FTE are required for the Department of Black Study to function viably and ultimately thrive as a strong academic unit? The discussion on page 15 needs to be clarified. Will new FTE be allocated?

4) The proposal states that twenty current faculty members have already expressed interest in transferring a percentage of their lines to the department. This would be a significant reallocation of resources. What will be the impact on CHASS and on specific departments?
June 24, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

From: Declan McCole, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine

Subject: SOM FEC Response to the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Dear Jason,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed the pre-proposal to establish a new Department of Black Study. This pre-proposal is a little beyond our remit with respect to evaluating the merits of this proposed new academic department and undergraduate curriculum. Thus, we defer to committees responsible for oversight of new curricula. We are in agreement with the overall concept and need on campus for a Department of Black Study and how it can contribute to addressing disparities and disenfranchisement by acting as a supportive hub for Black students, faculty, and critical discussions of racial justice and racism, while also playing a critical role in fostering awareness, understanding, and support among non-Black faculty and students. We look forward to reviewing a full proposal that offers a more developed structure and substantially more detail on addressing budget requirements, including how faculty lines are proposed to be transferred from other departments, as well as a more detailed curriculum.

Yours sincerely,

Declan F. McCole, Ph.D.
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee
School of Medicine
COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

June 18, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Sheldon Tan, Chair
      Committee on Undergraduate Admissions

RE: CR. New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The Committee on Undergraduate Admissions reviewed the Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and voted to support the proposal. UCR prides itself on its diversity and inclusion. While applications by and admissions of black students are generally increasing, the enrollment of black students has decreased. Having a Department of Black Study will likely improve our prospect of recruiting, enrolling, and retaining black students at UCR. One Committee member abstained from the vote and one committee member did not support the proposal.
COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

July 21, 2021

To: Jason Stajich
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Patricia Morton, Chair
Committee on Faculty Welfare

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

At its remote meeting on July 13, 2021, the Committee on Faculty Welfare discussed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study.

The Committee strongly supports the pre-proposal for the formation of a Department of Black Study, which will restore a program that was cut in the 1980s and will address the long history and contemporary reality of antiblackness at UCR as experienced by Black students, staff and faculty. Responding to widespread calls for such a department across UCR and beyond, this pre-proposal outlines a department that will meet many institutional needs and has a strong rationale. UCR has the highest number of Black undergraduate students in the UC system, 1265, but our Black enrollment is declining due to lack of institutional and intellectual support. UCR has a dismal record of retaining Black faculty, who consistently leave our campus for other institutions. Black staff report a hostile and unwelcoming campus climate. This pre-proposal addresses these issues and makes a compelling case for creating the infrastructure to begin their redress.

CFW endorses the comments, questions and suggestions contained in the letter from the CHASS Executive Committee and encourage the Black Study Initiative Group to develop the proposal more fully along those lines. In particular, the relationships between Black Study and the Ethnic Studies Department and the Graduate School of Education should be clarified. A committee member from the GSOE noted that she was not aware of any discussions between her school and the Black Study Initiative Group. The Committee believes the pre-proposal will benefit greatly from broader consultation with allied departments and programs. Like the CHASS Executive Committee, we believe the proposal should include a business plan that details the human, physical and financial resources required for its establishment and a plan for sustaining the Department for the long term.
TO: Jason Stajich, Chair  
Riverside Division

FR: Richard M. Carpiano, Chair  
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Date: July 26, 2021

The School of Public Policy (SPP) Executive Committee read and discussed the document “[Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study.” Below are the comments from the discussion.

Overall, our committee was very supportive of the pre-proposal’s idea of this Department and its major and minor programs. However, in discussing the pre-proposal, committee members raised several questions and concerns about specifics in the document that could benefit from further clarification or formulation from the authors. I detail those here:

1. **Uniqueness versus potential redundancy.** Ethnic Studies already has an African American Studies concentration (cited extensively throughout this proposal) that could, potentially, be expanded and formed into its own department. Yet, there is no significant discussion in the proposal of why there is a need to build a *brand new* major/minor program and separate department versus building off of or growing the existing African American Studies program. As such, this pre-proposal for a new department reads as a petition to create another unit with very similar intellectual interests and then co-existing with Ethnic Studies for the same—currently rather small—number of majors/minors (as detailed in the pre-proposal).

   Given this lack of discussion in the pre-proposal, a question was raised as to whether there is a backstory/history of some disagreement behind the faculty authors of this pre-proposal and the faculty in Ethnic Studies. Without such further explanation, the pre-proposal has an undertone of this initiative being a campus “land grab” from an existing program and/or a department pre-proposal motivated in part due to prior/current conflict among faculty. Hence, overall, more detail is needed about distinctions/potential redundancies.

2. **Enrollment projections.** Given that the current African American Studies concentration in Ethnic Studies has low enrollment, it is hard to understand why, as discussed in the pre-proposal, the new proposed department will fare better. Related to the preceding point, why not just invest more resources and faculty lines into the African American Studies program to grow it? More justification of such enrollment statistics would be helpful.
3. **Faculty resources.** Concern was raised that this initiative will not succeed with just three faculty and promises of others who want to partly affiliate. A crucial issue is whether the university is willing to devote substantial resources to hiring in this area. The campus needs more faculty with specialization in Black Studies, but the university has not made much investment in this direction. If there is no such investment (at least at a substantial level), even if this department is approved, its program will struggle significantly.

Related to this issue, two hiring suggestions arose:

a. Lobby for the university hire five faculty over next two to three years. Then, the university can either decide to form a department or the university can form a department, but have that action be tied to truly hiring 5 more faculty in this area.

b. It seems it would be ideal to develop a broader plan calling for the university to allocate several hiring lines to recruit (ideally mid-career and senior, perhaps even “Targets of Excellence”) scholars of African American issues who would then be appointed in existing units. They could all be part of a Black Studies major/minor (not a separate administrative unit, but a course of study with various Black Studies required courses). However, being additional hires to campus, they would also contribute to the DEI climate of campus and the departments of which they are part—after all, there are many legitimate complaints regarding the extent of faculty diversity, so this could be one good step forward. It also would not restrict the benefits of such a new program to mostly the Humanities and Arts units within CHASS. Faculty could be appointed in/do scholarship relevant to SOC, POSC, PSYC, and ECON, as well as SPP, GSOE, SOM, etc. Such an idea may make detractors of the recent cluster hire initiative worry or recoil, but it would be a chance for applying lessons learned from last time to do it better this time.

4. **Recruiting Affiliate Faculty to Staff this Program.** Given the low enrollment numbers mentioned in the pre-proposal (current and anticipated in the coming years, especially relative to other CHASS majors/minors), this statement seems curious: “In its early phase, we anticipate that Black Study will have a core of about ten 50% faculty members, and a few 100% appointments.” Related to these issues, the following items were noted as unclear:

a. How the Department will solicit applications from current UCR faculty to affiliate at 0% or 50%, and then potentially 100% in the future

b. How many faculty will come join this Department

c. Why was this affiliate faculty effort not done already with Ethnic Studies for their African American Studies concentration?

d. How diverse the range of represented disciplines will be (and what that will mean for covering courses, training students, etc.). Notably, why are none of the social sciences except Anthropology represented in the pre-proposal’s list. This omission is curious considering how much relevant scholarship is being done in psychology and the social sciences (including in SPP).

e. A list of interested faculty. As detailed, the pre-proposal states, “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.”

f. What this recruitment of affiliate faculty may mean for current departments/programs (many resource-constrained), where faculty are already expected to cover a certain workload for their unit? Without hires and dedicated resources, this seems a lot like just rearranging faculty in already under-resourced units and colleges.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Richard M. Carapiano, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Professor of Public Policy
July 24, 2021

TO: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Academic Senate

FROM: Philip Brisk, Chair
      BCOE Executive Committee

RE: Pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study

Dear Jason,

The BCOE Executive Committee reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study, which, if approved, will be housed in CHASS. The Executive Committee identified two key areas in which BCOE is a stakeholder: (1) BCOE undergraduates could choose to double-major or minor in Black Study in addition to their chosen BCOE major; (2) BCOE could approve new undergraduate courses proposed and taught by Black Study faculty to satisfy BCOE General Education requirements.

One weakness of the pre-proposal is that it did not clearly delineate the membership of the Black Study Initiative and which individuals were putting this proposal forward; this information will be essential when a subsequent proposal is submitted for Senate review.

Several Committee members requested clarification about how the program will be funded. If the program is to be funded exclusively by CHASS, then the Committee has no comment, as it is not this Committee’s purview to impose priorities on another College; if central funds are to be used, then the Committee is concerned that these funds could be diverted from other units in dire need, such as ITS.

One Committee member stated that the Department of Black Study would not serve to further understand the plight of Blacks in America.
I. OVERVIEW AND WHY A DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

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 Américas, 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

![Graph 1](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Source: [https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Graph 2. Black Student Enrollment by UCR College

![Graph 2](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Source: [https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs](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

- 41.5% Black or African American
- 33.8% Asian
- 11.0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 5.6% Two or More Races
- 3.4% International
- 0.2% Unknown

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

Graduate Student Enrollment, Ethnicity

- 32.4% Black or African American
- 28.4% Native American or Alaskan
- 15.8% Asian
- 9.9% Hispanic or Latino
- 5.9% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 4.9% Two or More Races
- 0.0% White
- 0.2% Unknown
- 2.3% International

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

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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 \textit{quantitative} estimates of the 
   costs for 
   \begin{itemize} 
     \item instructors and administrative staff to be assigned to work for this new 
       department. 
     \item infrastructural needs, including space for offices, classrooms, meeting rooms; 
       office and other operating supplies. 
   \end{itemize} 
   
   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
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  

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,

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 feudalist 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 STEMM 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 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 STEMM 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 [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 racist 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 feudalist 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

+++ 
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.

-- 
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 STEMM 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

Monica J Carson, PhD
Professor and Chair of Biomedical Sciences
S. Sue Johnson Presidential Endowed Chair in Glial-Neuronal Interactions
Director, Center for Glial-Neuronal Interactions
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Neuroinflammation
900 University Ave, 1130 MRB
Riverside, CA 92521
monica.carson@ucr.edu
A Proposal for
Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in
Black Study

October 15, 2021

Submitted by:

Aaron Brown, PhD Candidate, Department of English
Ayana Omilade Flewellen, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
Donatella Galella, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Imani Kai Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Dance
Íxkári Noé Estelle, PhD Student, Department of English
joão costa vargas, Full Professor, Department of Anthropology
Kim Yi Dionne, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
Marilyn Grell-Brisk, Researcher, Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT)
Ni’Ja Whitson, Associate Professor, Department of Dance
Vorris Nunley, Associate Professor, Department of English
This proposal follows the guidelines of the Committee on Education Policy.

1. **Name of the academic program and the department(s) or unit(s) that will administer the program.**

Name of the academic program: B.A. in Black Study

Department that will administer the program: Black Study (proposed with this major)

2. **A thorough justification, including the motivation for the creation of the program in terms of student interest and professional or academic importance.**

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 transgender 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). 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 programs, departments, colleges, and their representatives, such as Christopher Lynch, Dean of the Bourns College of Engineering; and an ever-growing number of faculty, students, and staff. 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 deny 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.

The Department of Black Study emphasizes the verb “study” and stresses the engaged and embodied practice of teaching and research that is simultaneously diasporic, local, communal, planetary, historical, contemporary, and future-oriented. It is therefore, necessarily transdisciplinary in scope, straddling various disciplines in the Social Sciences, Humanities, STEMM, and the Arts. Black Study trans-disciplinarity is anchored in an intersectional lens, maintaining both symmetry and dissonance to seriously engage Black epistemologies, Black metaphysics, Black temporality, and Black social, cultural, and spiritual life.
Rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, Transformative Justice, and Abolition, the Department of Black Study is a collective experimental methodology of liberation in action, study, and future-making. Accordingly, the major and minor in Black Study requires both an engagement with (a) broad perspectives on possibilities and challenges Black people experience in the African continent and its diasporas across timescapes; and (b) specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience offers transdisciplinarity as a value and intentional methodology, excavates multi-directionally in scope, and yet is specific, specialized, and rigorous. Through thorough research, analysis, creative practice, applied scholarship and close partnership with transformative grassroots organizations, Black Study students and community critically address and seek to overcome all forms of antiblackness while imagining and prefiguring an altogether new world.

**Multi-disciplinarity draws** on knowledge from different disciplines but stays *within* and tethered to their *methodological and epistemic boundaries*. **Interdisciplinarity** analyzes, synthesizes, and harmonizes links between disciplines into a coordinated and coherent whole. Tensions between disciplines are flattened out or smoothed over as much as possible. **Trans-disciplinarity integrates** knowledge from different disciplines (typically the natural, social, and health sciences) in a humanities context and transcends their traditional boundaries, maintaining as much as possible disciplinary tensions. **Black Study** trans-disciplinarity is anchored in an *intersectional* lens attentive to the interlocking dimensions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability, among others, while maintaining both symmetry and dissonance to seriously engage Black epistemologies, Black metaphysics, Black temporality, and Black social, cultural, and spiritual life.

The Department of Black Study is rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, Transformative Justice, and Abolition, and is a collective experimental methodology of liberation as practiced in the past and present, as well as oriented towards the future. 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.
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) specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience is thus wide and deep in scope and yet specific, specialized, and rigorous.

3. Relationship of the new program to existing programs.

Willfully collaborative from the onset, the Department of Black Study will work with and not against existing programs and departments. While stressing its relative autonomy regarding programming, curriculum, hiring priorities, and horizontal decision-making practices, the Department of Black Study will also recognize and support the autonomy of other units. Such collaborative approach and co-existence models already exist at UCR: for example, the Departments of English and of Comparative Literature; the Department of Hispanic Studies, Chicano Studies minor, and the new Latino and Latin American Studies Research Center. Too often, a scarcity mindset pits university stakeholders against each other when in fact they can enrich one another. With a unique Department of Black Study, UCR can recruit and retain not only excellent faculty doing cutting-edge research and creative activity but also recruit and retain undergraduate and graduate students eager to learn Black epistemologies. This growth would bolster areas such as Ethnic Studies and African Studies, among others, as we agree on the shared importance of Black studies from Africa to the diaspora. At the same time, we recognize that these fields are not the same. To presume otherwise erases their different intellectual histories, constituents, and objectives. To overgeneralize Black people, Black thought, and Blackness is to reify antiblackness.

4. The proposed curriculum. Great care should be given in this area, correct rubrics should be listed for courses, all cross listings should be listed, unit total considerations should be taken into account and totals should be verified by program staff, faculty, and appropriate Executive Committee personnel. A copy of the proposed program change should be provided for inclusion in the Catalog.

See below for the full proposed program change for inclusion in the UCR Catalog and a complete description of the courses included in the proposed major and minor.

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) specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience is thus wide and deep in scope and yet specific, specialized, and rigorous.
The B.A. major consists of lower-division and upper-division course requirements and includes required methods, capstone, and community-engaged courses. Total required units for the major are **52 units**.

**Lower-division** requirements (12 units) include three required introductory BLAC courses taught by core faculty members.

**Methods** requirement (4 units) consists of one of two courses exposing students to the methodologies used to pursue transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects.

**Upper-division** requirements (40 units) draw on five thematic areas and consist of six electives, a community-engaged course, and a two-quarter capstone sequence. Except for a fraction of the courses taught in other departments, all courses will be taught by core or affiliated faculty.

The B.A. degree requires coursework focused on the major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas, as well as courses along the following themes: 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, and STEMM; v) Social Activism and Policy. We describe each of these thematic tracks below:

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 imaginitative 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, and STEMM” 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.

v. “Social Activism and Policy” engages the multidisciplinarity of activism, community mobilization, and service that cultivates an approach to movement and social justice works as: 1) embodied praxis; 2) an archive of global liberation efforts and future-making strategies; 3) an inquiry into the theories and practices of policy. The required course “Community Internship” will not only reinforce the department’s rootedness in social movements, but also enhance the student’s understanding of the theories and practices of community organizing.

The learning outcomes for Black Study courses consist of an accumulation of theoretical and practical skills enabling students to:

1. Apply transdisciplinarity as theory and practice to address the social, cultural, and political in the making of Black futures;
2. Describe/Explain the tracks of Black Study as a holistic and epistemic discipline that studies the breadth of Global Black histories, presents, and futures;
3. Apply transformative and anticolonial ethics in engaging in research, practice, and with communities;
4. Demonstrate proficiency in artistic and embodied praxis;
5. Develop and Demonstrate critical thinking and analysis in reading and reviewing theory, art, and embodied praxis;
6. Co-cultivate and apply collaboration equitably and as a principle in engagement, organizing, mobilization, research, and creative efforts;
7. Construct informed research arguments; and
8. Develop and Demonstrate proficiency in writing, and in the language and grammar of Black Study.

BLAC 001, 002, and 003 should satisfy the university’s Ethnicity Breadth Requirement.

Students who seek a deeper engagement in research and praxis can choose the "With Distinction" option. Those who wish to be recognised as completing the BA in Black Study with distinction normally complete the full suite of upper division research methods and
capstone courses (e.g., BLAC 191A or BLAC 191B, BLAC 192A and BLAC 192B, BLAC 193, BLAC 194).

5. A list of faculty who will be involved in the program, including those teaching, advising, and administering.

BSI Committee Members will be involved in the program and we denote here with an asterisk (*) all those that will -- in addition to contributing to the advising and administration -- teach courses in the proposed major:

- Aaron Brown, PhD Candidate, Department of English
- Ayana A Flewellen*, faculty, Department of Anthropology
- Dennis Frederick McIver, University Honors and Past President of the Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFASA)
- Donatella Galella*, faculty, Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
- Imani Kai Johnson*, faculty, Department of Dance
- Ïxkári Noé Estelle, PhD Student, Department of English
- Jalani Bakari, community member
- Jamal J Myrick, Director, African Student Programs (ASP)
- João costa vargas*, faculty, Department of Anthropology
- John Epps, Minister and community member
- Kim Yi Dionne*, faculty, Department of Political Science
- Marilyn Grell-Brisk, researcher; Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT)
- Ni'Ja Whitson*, faculty, Department of Dance
- Rickerby Hinds*, faculty, Department of Theater, Film, and Digital Production
- Toi Thibodeaux, Assistant Director LGBT Resource Center
- Vorris Nunley*, faculty, Department of English.

Other faculty and staff across UCR that have expressed interest in the development of the proposed department and may propose new courses and teach cross-listed courses in the future include: Professors Anthony Jerry and Yolanda Moses of the Department of Anthropology; Professors Mariam Lam and Jeff Sacks of the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages; Professors Courtney Baker, André Carrington, and David Lloyd of the Department of English; Professor Keith Miyake of the Department of Ethnic Studies; Professors Natasha McPherson, Ademide Adelusi-Adeluyi, and Jody Benjamin of the Department of History; Professors Jodi Kim and Dylan Rodríguez of the Department of Media and Cultural Studies.

6. For interdisciplinary programs, the degree of participation and the role of each department must be explicitly described. The chairs of all participating departments must provide written approval for the creation of the program and indicate their commitment to provide necessary resources including faculty release.
This program will be administered by the Department of Black Study (proposed with this undergraduate program).

7. Projected enrollment in the program.

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, attractive, and inviting. In conjunction with ASP, Black Alumni, and interested groups on campus, an aggressive undergraduate and graduate recruitment strategy will be put in place that utilizes already existing national and international networks and develops new ones.

8. Name of degree, if applicable, and the anticipated number of degrees to be granted when the program reaches steady state.

Bachelor of Arts in Black Study

Anticipated number of degrees to be granted when the program is firmly established: Approximately 75 per year.

9. Potential impact of the new program on existing programs. If the proposed program includes required courses from a department other than the administering department, the proposal must include a statement from the department indicating that it has been consulted and that it will provide access to the required courses.

Regarding potential impacts of the new program on existing programs, there were discussions about crosslisting courses across several departments including Ethnic Studies, Anthropology, History, and Political Science, as well as collaborating in programming and community projects, and providing support for faculty in both units.

\(^1\) Campuses publish enrollment data using metrics that are seldom comparable. Currently [UC Santa Barbara](https://www.ucsb.edu) has a total of 27 enrolled majors in Black Studies; [UC Berkeley](https://www.berkeley.edu) has 30 degree recipients in African American Studies in the last two years, currently [UT Austin](https://www.utexas.edu) has 22 enrolled majors in African and African American Studies.
Cross-listing courses could increase enrollment in both units involved: as students become familiarized with the instructors whose courses are cross-listed, they may research related classes, epistemological orientations, and faculty in both units. We consider cross-listed courses potential gateways for students to explore the departments that support such courses. This process of exploration, as it multiplies among students, can lead to increased course enrollments, thus benefiting all departments involved.

As the Department of Black Study continues to build its major in Black Study, it will invite Ethnic Studies faculty to not only crosslist their courses in the major, but also collaborate in the very crafting of the curriculum, thus signaling and putting into practice intentional dialogue and intersections from the beginning. Indeed, in August 2021, members of the BSI committee met with members of the departments of Ethnic Studies, Comparative Literature, and Media and Cultural Studies, as well as faculty in the Developing African Studies group to discuss such possibilities, among other topics.

Thus, rather than envisioning a zero sum scenario in which the success of the Department of Black Study leads to or depends on the decline of the African American program in Ethnic Studies -- or any other UCR unit for that matter -- via crosslisting courses, collaborating on programming, and offering mutual support, we affirm our intention to improve our campus climate, enhance our overall research efforts, and deepen our community engagement. We consider the Department of Black Study a benefit for our entire campus and surrounding communities.

Additionally, the “Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Program Pathway” is an example of the collaborative approach that marks the Department of Black Study. In partnership with the GSOE, the Department of Black Study will orient and encourage its interested undergraduates to pursue this exciting pathway to graduate school and to professionalization through UCR Teaching Education and Credential Programs. We consider such partnership one of the points of attraction for new undergraduates who will contribute to the vibrancy not only of the Department of Black Study and the GSOE, but the entire campus. Indeed, this partnership, which is explicitly structured to facilitate our student’s entry into teaching professions, furthers UCR’s mission as the premier campus for social mobility.

10. A full listing of resources required for start-up and for operations. In cases where no additional resources will be needed, this must be explicitly stated. This listing may include: personnel (faculty FTE or temporary positions, Teaching Assistants or Readers, administrative staff, technical support); support services including computer facilities and library resources; space requirements. A plan indicating how the resources will be obtained would also be helpful to the
committee in reviewing the proposal. A letter of support from the College Dean and/or Executive Vice Chancellor-Provost indicating endorsement as well as a promise of support for the proposal also would be extremely helpful.

A. Faculty

The Black Study major will benefit from the hire of faculty supported by the recently awarded UCOP Advancing Faculty Diversity award (PIs: joão costa vargas, Kim Yi Dionne, Marilyn Grell-Brisk, Jennifer Syvertsen, and Melissa Wilcox; Award: $496,570), which supports the recruitment of four new faculty, three of which will be appointed or joint-appointed in the Department of Black Study. These hires will be essential in ensuring consistent coverage of courses specific to and required for the Black Study major.

Additionally, there are faculty already holding faculty appointments in CHASS that expect to transfer part of their faculty lines into the proposed department, using a phase-in approach based on the accrual of Black Study majors and Black Study course enrollment. These existing CHASS faculty will assist with teaching courses in the Black Study major, and work with their respective home departments in the early years of the major to cross-list courses as appropriate, thus allowing these courses to be taught without any additional cost.

B. TAs

An additional three TA positions are desirable in order to support the new gateway course sequence for Introduction to Black Study (BLAC 001, BLAC 002, and BLAC 003). We anticipate these introductory courses will easily attract 75 students or more, including non-majors. As introductory courses, discussion sections would be important. If TAs are not approved, the course will have to be smaller and taught without discussion sections.

C. Staff (One shared FAO and one shared Financial Analyst)

The MDU staff seems already stretched to maximum capacity. BLAC would not be unique among the programs served by the MDU in advocating for an increase in staffing. We recommend that a new CHASS unit be created to be shared by some of the existing departments and the Department of Black Study as well as the proposed Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Health Equity. In this case, we require one shared FAO and one shared Financial Analyst.
The MDU advisers are experienced in supporting Ethnic Studies majors and they are highly capable of supporting BLAC. We commit to work alongside the undergraduate advisors to run the major smoothly.

D. Computers

No additional computer facilities are required for the new curriculum.

E. Library

No additional library resources are required for the new curriculum.

F. Space

Since BLAC founding core faculty are all current faculty members, we anticipate that the new department will not create additional need for office space. However, it may be necessary to move some offices over time in order to consolidate BLAC faculty in the same building. BLAC would also require access to a meeting space, which could be shared with other programs or units.

G. Plans for obtaining resources

The collective involved in the departmentalization process will continue to collaborate in identifying and seeking external funding to support the department’s creative and research activities, as well as its curriculum. We will engage university resources such as the Academic Senate, the Office of Research and Economic Development (RED), and CHASS grants support. We will also work with the UCR Foundation to develop a departmental fund into which donations can be made over time by alumni of Black Study as well as by other donors interested in supporting the department.

As demand for BLAC 001, BLAC 002, and BLAC 003 grows, we will teach these courses during the summer, which will bring in 52% of the revenue to the department.

The committee is proactively seeking additional funding to add regular lines to the department. The University of California Office of the President (UCOP) sponsored the Blackness Unbound Faculty Commons group via UCR’s Center for Ideas and Society. BU members have had an important role in the crafting of the Department of Black Study proposal. On July 21, 2021, UCOP provided further support for the Department of Black Study by awarding $496,570 through its Advancing Faculty Diversity Program. One of these faculty will be tenured and hold their appointment in the Department of Black Study; one junior faculty will be jointly appointed between the departments of Black Study and Political Science; one junior faculty will be jointly appointed between the departments of Black Study and Religious studies; and one tenured faculty will
appointed in the Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Health Equity (ESHQ). UCOP demonstrates financial support not only for the hiring of faculty specializing in Black Study, but also for the Department of Black Study.

Another likely financial source for faculty recruitment is the UCOP President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (PPFP). Having recently been awarded a 15 million dollar grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the program provides the hiring incentive in the form of five years of salary for postdoctoral fellows hired to UC campuses. The Department of Black Study will not only be highly attractive to a number of such fellows, but will also partner with CHASS to intentionally and aggressively recruit them.

Finally, with Cassie Riger (Senior Director, Foundation Development), Clyde Derrick (Assistant Dean for Development), and support from Chancellor Kim Wilcox, BSI committee members have been exploring funding possibilities with the Mellon Foundation for additional programming and departmentalization efforts.

11. Both internal and external letters of support should be provided with the proposal. Internal letters of support are often from UCR department chairs and faculty of related programs. The external letters should be from other UC campuses or other peer institutions. Letters from off-campus help to establish the quality of the program and its fit within the context of related programs at other universities. Upon consultation with the CEP the demand for external letters may be waived.

Letters of support have been requested for the Department of Black Study, which includes this proposal for the new undergraduate program.

We have received letters from following Deans and Chairs (partial list, letters are still arriving), as well as from several academics, administrators, civil society organizations, and individuals.

Charles R. Hale
SAGE Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences
College of Letters & Science
University of California, Santa Barbara

Christopher S. Lynch
Dean Bourns College of Engineering
William R. Johnson Jr. Family Endowed Chair
University of California, Riverside

Derick A. Fay, Ph.D.
Professor and Acting Chair
Department of Anthropology
University of California, Riverside

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

Joel Smith
Professor and Chair
Department of Dance
University of California, Riverside

Jeff Sacks
Professor and Chair
Department of Comparative Literature and Languages
University of California, Riverside

Jim Isermann
Professor and Chair
Department of Art
University of California, Riverside

Josh Emmons
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Creative Writing
University of California, Riverside

David Lloyd
Distinguished Professor and Chair (until June 2021)
Department of English
University of California, Riverside

Melissa M. Wilcox
Professor, Holstein Family and Community Chair in Religious Studies, and Department Chair
12. Approvals from program faculty, College faculty (if the new proposal affects a college regulation), and the appropriate Executive Committee should be obtained before forwarding the new program to the attention of the Senate Analyst for CEP.

Approvals:

A. Program faculty

The following faculty approve this proposal:

Ayana Omilade Flewellen, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
Donatella Galella, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Imani Kai Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Dance
joão costa vargas, Full Professor, Department of Anthropology
Kim Yi Dionne, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
Marilyn Grell-Brisk, Researcher, Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT)
Ni’Ja Whitson, Associate Professor, Department of Dance
Rickerby Hinds, Full Professor, Department of Theater, Film, and Digital Production
Vorris Nunley, Associate Professor, Department of English
B. Chairs associated with the courses included in the new curriculum

joão costa vargas, Chair, Anthropology [approved]
Jennifer Merolla, Chair, Political Science [approved]
Robin Russin, Interim Chair, Theatre, Film, and Digital Production [approved]

C. CHASS Executive Committee

(Pending approval)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

REPORT TO THE RIVERSIDE DIVISION

(insert date)

To be adopted:

Proposed Changes to Black Study

PRESENT:

PROPOSED:

Program Description

The Department of Black Study emphasizes the verb “study” and stresses the engaged and embodied practice of teaching and research that is simultaneously diasporic, local, communal, planetary, historical, contemporary, and future-oriented. It is therefore, necessarily transdisciplinary in scope, straddling various disciplines in the Social Sciences, Humanities, STEMM, and the Arts. Black Study transdisciplinarity is anchored in an intersectional lens, maintaining both symmetry and dissonance to seriously engage Black epistemologies, Black metaphysics, Black temporality, and Black social, cultural, and spiritual life.

Rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, Transformative Justice, and Abolition, the Department of Black Study is a collective experimental methodology of liberation in action, study, and future-making.
Accordingly, the major and minor in Black Study require both an engagement with (a) broad perspectives on possibilities and challenges Black people experience in the African continent and its diasporas across timescapes; and (b) specialization tracks that will deepen one’s understanding of such challenges and possibilities. The Black Study undergraduate experience offers transdisciplinarity as a value and intentional methodology, multidirectionality in scope, and yet is specific, specialized, and rigorous.

Through thorough research, analysis, creative practice, applied scholarship and close partnership with transformative grassroots organizations, Black Study students and community critically address and seek to overcome all forms of antiblackness while imagining and prefiguring an altogether new world.

The B.A. degree consists of 52 units with requirements focused on the major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas, as well as courses along the following themes: 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, and STEMM; v) Social Activism and Policy.

The program also offers a 32 unit Minor with requirements focused on the major social factors and movements impacting
Black peoples in the African continent and its diasporas.

**Major Requirements (B.A.)**

The major requirements for the general B.A. degree in Black Study are as follows (52 units total):

1) **Lower-Division Requirements** (3 courses, 12 units)
   a) BLAC 001
   b) BLAC 002
   c) BLAC 003

   Lower-division courses taken elsewhere may be counted toward the lower-division requirement; up to four advanced placement units earned in high school may count toward its fulfillment as well. Please consult with the academic advisors for further details.

2) **Upper-Division Requirements** (10 courses, 40 units)

   a) Students must select (6) six courses in at least two thematic tracks.

   **Critical Theories, Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Blackness**

   BLAC 111, BLAC 112, BLAC 113, BLAC 114
Performance, Arts, and Literature
BLAC 121, BLAC 122, TFDP 161

His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences
ANTH 140G, ANTH 142J, BLAC 131, BLAC 132, BLAC 133, BLAC 134, POSC 151, POSC 151S

Law, Education, Health, Environment, and STEMM
BLAC 141, BLAC 142, BLAC 143, BLAC 144

Social Activism and Policy
BLAC 151, BLAC 152, BLAC 153, BLAC 154

b) One research methods course from among BLAC 191A, BLAC 191B
c) Two capstone courses: BLAC 192A, BLAC 192B
d) One community-engaged course: BLAC 193

Minor Requirements (32 units)

1) Lower-Division Requirements (3 courses, 12 units)

a) BLAC 001
b) BLAC 002  
c) BLAC 003

Lower-division courses taken elsewhere may be counted toward the lower-division requirement; up to four advanced placement units earned in high school may count toward its fulfillment as well. Please consult with the academic advisors for further details.

2) **Upper-Division Requirements** (5 courses, 20 units)

   a) Students must select (2) two courses in at least two thematic tracks.

   **Critical Theories, Practices of Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Blackness**

   BLAC 111, BLAC 112, BLAC 113, BLAC 114, BLAC 194

   **Performance, Arts, and Literature**

   BLAC 121, BLAC 122, BLAC 194, TFDP 161

   **His/herstory, Behavioral and Social Sciences**

   ANTH 140G, ANTH 142J, BLAC 131, BLAC 132, BLAC 133, BLAC 134, BLAC 194, POSC 151, POSC 151S
Law, Education, Health, Environment, and STEMM

BLAC 141, BLAC 142, BLAC 143, BLAC 144, BLAC 194

Social Activism and Policy

BLAC 151, BLAC 152, BLAC 153, BLAC 154, BLAC 194

b) Two capstone courses:
   BLAC 192A, BLAC 192B

c) One community-engaged course: BLAC 193
Approvals:

Approved by the faculty of the Department of ________________: (insert date).
Approved by the faculty of the College of ________________: (insert date). Approved by the Executive Committee of the College of ________________: (insert date).
Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy: (insert date).
Course Descriptions for BLAC Curriculum

1a)
BLAC 001: Introduction to Black Study I: Black People Domestically and Globally Now. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Introduces major social factors and movements impacting Black peoples on the African continent and its diasporas currently. Topics include the creation of movements/spaces of possibilities to navigate issues around AIDS/HIV and Covid-19 pandemics, food and nutrition insecurity, state terror and industrial incarceration, residential segregation, exposure to environmental toxins, and blocked access to quality health care and education, to create vibrant futures.

1b)
BLAC 002: Introduction to Black Study II: Imagined and Embodied Futures. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Engages critical appraisal of artistic forms, political organizing efforts, embodied praxis and resistance formations, and theoretical prisms that imagine and propose alternatives to antiblackness. Examines Black interventions through time and technologies with a focus on trans, queer, and feminist perspectives that build on what Cedric Robinson terms the Black Radical Tradition.

1c)
BLAC 003: Introduction to Black Study III: Black Ways of Knowing, Doing, and (B)eing Otherwise. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): None. Central to any critical notion of Black Study and Black becoming requires an explicit engagement with Black fungibility, knowledges, and the linguistic, racial and gendered order of things. As such, Radical Black Study requires epistemic disobedience. This class disrupts a fundamental cultural assumption: the study of Black culture and black life is the study of mere difference.

2a)
ANTH 140G: Anthropological Perspectives in Africa 4 Lecture, 3 hours; research, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): upper-division standing or consent of instructor. A number of African cultures are carefully examined in terms of three or four anthropological topics, such as: subsistence patterns, social organization, and religious systems. The treatment of these cultures follows a brief overview of the geography, history, and linguistic patterns of Africa.

ANTH 142J: Political Economy of South Africa 4 Lecture, 3 hours; written work, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): ANTH 001 or ANTH 001H or ANTH 001W or consent of instructor.
Examines contemporary societies of southern Africa. Focuses on changes and continuities since the end of apartheid. Topics include transformations in ethnic and racial identity and classification; postapartheid class formation and neoliberalism; labor migration and immigration; HIV/AIDS; land reform, resettlement, and spatial transformation; tourism; and conservation.

**BLAC 111: Envisioning Black Futures, Social Order and Utopianism through the works of Octavia Butler.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Knowing and understanding the world through a uniquely Black perspective allows for new and different visions of human possibilities. Black futures, social order and utopianism are examined through the works of visionary sci-fi author Octavia Butler’s Xenogenesis, Patternist, and Parable book series.

**BLAC 112: Trans Embodied-Ologies.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. A gathering place for the radical Queer imaginaries of Black Trans and Nonbinary Artists. Here, we centralize a Futurity that requires the lives and leadership of Black Trans and Nonbinary peoples. We propose dangerous making to combat dangerously violent anti-trans cultures, while traversing the Spiritual, empowered, speculative and mysterious of embodied intelligences and aligned creative practices.

**BLAC 113: The Medicine Sessions: Futurist Cypher Technologies.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. We step into Black and Queer improvisatory social and spiritual practices to study the Diasporic technologies of the circle. Unique to this exploration, the ring shout will be foundational to unlocking the structures, the sacred, the corporeal liturgies embedded within Black trance-inducing social dance forms. House will be our musical and technical grounding, a Black Queer form within this spiritual lineage that will unite, lift, shift. Each week we are visited by a live DJ and guests who speak to class themes.

**BLAC 114: Blackness and American Sexual Economies.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. A comprehensive examination of the formation of race and United States sexual economies, with a particular emphasis on dynamics of gender as they intersect with and are impacted by normative quotidian and institutional dynamics. Comprehensive course covers the time period from slavery to the present.

**BLAC 121: The Racial Politics of Performance: Blackface to #OscarsSoWhite.** 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Introduction to a history of how media technology,
cultural production, and critical reception have shaped racial representation. Considers theories of Black performativity as well as films and plays by Black artists.

BLAC 122: Transforming Blackness?: Gender Betrayal, Spirituality, and Re-visioning the Dark Feminine in the Novels of Toni Morrison. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Class will explore the transformation of Black personal/communal life through Black Study, literature, and a pedagogy of unlearning. We will examine the stories we tell ourselves and the narratives society tells Black folks through the fiction and theorizing of Toni Morrison as she re-visions Blackness and Black life.

BLAC 131: Sites of Memory: Imagination, Archaeology, and the African---American Past. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. In “Site of Memory” Toni Morrison writes that truth is intricately linked to memory and the imaginative. How do we as a society make, memorialize and imagine our past? How do we speak about difficult pasts, such as that of enslavement, in the present? In an attempt to explore these questions, we will examine the different ways that archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, storytellers, and artists attempt to make sense of the past, breaking the binary of fact versus fiction. We will look at evidentiary sources (artifacts, archives, paintings, literature, and performances) that are used to both illuminate and silence the past. In this course, students will read and discuss historical narratives, novels, and archaeological and anthropological case studies to examine the different ways we might examine pasts that have been made invisible or elided in mainstream histories; specifically those relating to African Diaspora experience in the United States and the Circum Caribbean. As a seminar course, this is intended to introduce students to the core concepts of close reading, as well as critique and composition through an anthropological lens.

BLAC 132: Politics of Race and Ethnicity in Africa. 4 Lecture, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Covers the politics of ethnicity and race, surveying theory and evidence utilizing a wide range of cases from the African continent, with a focus on the contemporary period. An inquiry-based course where students will consider social science theories of identity politics and gain knowledge on measurement of ethnic and racial identity and skills in uncovering and analyzing patterns of identification as well as politicization of ethnic and racial identities.

BLAC 133: Political Behavior in African Societies. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Examines participation in everyday and contentious politics in contemporary African societies through examining decades of data collected by Afrobarometer, a Pan-African
research network. A research-based course where students will gain skills in data analysis, data visualization, and storytelling.

BLAC 134: Embodied modes and methods in research of marginalized populations. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Examine systems of knowledge and how they influence research methods; examine research processes; theory generation and the ethics of engaging research within marginalized populations. Emphasizes mixed methods through a research project.

BLAC 141: Black People in the Inland Empire: Creating Resilient Communities. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. In this course, we trace contemporary demographic changes in the Black population of Southern California, particularly the shift from Los Angeles county to the Inland Empire. We examine how Black folx continue to create vibrant communities in the face of red lining, white flight, gentrification, further economic marginalization and environmental racism.

BLAC 142: Blackness, Rape, and Mass Incarceration. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. The rate of incarceration in the United States is the largest in the world: about 751 people are in prison for every 100,000 in the population. Russia comes in 2nd, with 627 prisoners for every 100,000 in population. In the US today, more than 2.5 million people are behind bars. In absolute numbers, the People's Republic of China comes in second place with 1.6 million, despite its population being over four times that of the United States. What explains this phenomenon? What historical developments, criminal justice policies, and shared beliefs help us understand this unprecedented scale of incarceration?

BLAC 143: Artist Healers: Trans Indigenous Medicine and Art Intersections. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Centered in trans-indigeneity students will learn about and directly from a range of contemporary live performance makers and healers who call us to question the construction of norms, binaries, borders, Being. Classes will be centered on healing modalities, positioning wellness and political, critical engagement as partners in accessing a radical imaginary.

BLAC 144: HIV/AIDS in Africa and Beyond. 4 Lecture, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001 or instructor consent. Critical examination of the AIDS pandemic and responses by citizens and states. Introduces epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and explores politics and policies of pandemic response shaped by global inequalities. Focuses on the local realities of the international intervention against AIDS.
BLAC 151: Futurities in Bebop and Black Power. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. An exploration of the origins, developments, imbrications, performance, and visions of society in jazz and the origins of Black Power.

BLAC 152: Organizing for Black Lives in the 21st Century. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Using engaged praxis, we explore creative ways U.S. Black movement organizers have re-configured old ideas and the new ones that have emerged in the 21st Century. The course is designed around three themes: What is to be done; How is it to be done; The possibilities of what can be done.

BLAC 153: Black Diaspora social movements, utopia, and the building of a new world. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Exploring diasporic collaborations and epistemes in the past and present, this course explores transnational political and imaginative efforts focused on common concrete social problems affecting Black people.

BLAC 154: Methods of Activist Research. 4 Lecture, 3 hours; activity, 2 hours; extra reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): upper division standing or consent of instructor. Focusing on the theory, politics, and methods of activist research, this course introduces students to an emerging field of knowledge and practical intervention. While Anthropology and Sociology are centrally implicated in this emerging field, activist research draws from and is applicable to the broader social sciences, humanities, and the arts. As well, activist research is an effective collaborative tool with which communities experiencing injustice and distress attempt to conceptualize and overcome their challenges.

BLAC 194: Directed Research or Creative Activity in Black Study. 1-4 Research, Variable hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, BLAC003, and consent of instructor. This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in concentrated, in-depth, study with a particular faculty member for a quarter. This seminar is designed to enable students to conduct interdisciplinary research in one or two of the upper division track concentrations. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

POSC 151: African Politics 4 Lecture, 3 hours; extra reading, 1 hour; individual study, 1 hour; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): Restricted to class level standing of Junior, or Senior; Or the consent of instructor. Examines politics in African countries, with a focus on the contemporary period. Covers both political institutions and political behavior. Topics include role of the state, democracy vs. dictatorship, political
participation, public goods provision, and development. Credit is awarded for only one of POSC 151 or POSC 151S.

POSC 151S: African Politics 5 Lecture, 3 hours; discussion, 1 hour; extra reading, 1 hour; individual study, 1 hour; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): Restricted to class level standing of Junior, or Senior; or the consent of instructor. Examines politics in African countries, with a focus on the contemporary period. Covers both political institutions and political behavior. Topics include role of the state, democracy vs. dictatorship, political participation, public goods provision, and development. Credit is awarded for only one of POSC 151S or POSC 151.

TFDP 161: African American Drama. 4 Lecture, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): upper-division standing or consent of instructor. Examines the major African American plays and playwrights from the 1800s to the present.

2b)

BLAC 191A - Black Study Research Methods I: Gateways to Inquiry - 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, and BLAC003. Introduces traditional and experimental methodologies used to pursue transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects required for a Bachelor's degree. Examines contemporary research practices and methods deriving from various Black diasporic epistemologies. This course prepares students for extended research projects in BLAC 193, College Honors, and other undergraduate research programs through research- and practice-based skill building. This course is for the beginning stages of research for the students' senior project.

BLAC 191B - Black Study Research Methods II: Practicing Inquiry - 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC191A. Engages practical use of research practices, methods, and epistemologies introduced in BLAC191A. Facilitates student design of research questions and projects for Black Study Major Senior Capstone as well as further exploration of themselves as researchers. This course focuses on research development skills and field-based concentrations to help students identify relevant theoretical frameworks and bibliographies.

2c)

BLAC 192A: Senior Capstone. 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001, BLAC002, and BLAC003 & BLAC191A and B. In this two-quarter, co-taught course students will develop a transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research project. Capstone projects demonstrate and employ research as an intersection of critical writing methods, performance and embodied praxis, visual cultures, and media. This course will provide
students with mentorship in envisioning and designing their projects. Students will also learn about the ways in which their work is in conversation with ongoing work in their field(s).

BLAC 192B: Senior Capstone. 4 units; Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC 001, BLAC002, and BLAC003 & BLAC191A and B. In this two-quarter, co-taught course students will develop a transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research project. Capstone projects demonstrate and employ research as an intersection of critical writing methods, performance and embodied praxis, visual cultures, and media. This course will provide students with mentorship throughout the revision processes of their projects initiated in BLAC 192A.

2d)

BLAC 193: Black Study Inland Empire Community Initiative 4 units; Practicum/Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): BLAC001, BLAC002, and BLAC003. Introduces students to guiding principles and orienting concepts of Black Study as applied community engagement, namely, the prevention of social problems and the promotion of well-being among individuals within diverse contexts, such as families, schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Students will engage in critical examination of how to define and propose solutions to social and institutional problems. Students will be concerned with the ideas of empowerment, resilience, diversity, cultural competence, and social action, among others. In order to gain a better sense of how organizations develop efforts that encompass these ideas, students will engage in community service learning in Inland Empire communities working alongside community organizations. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.
Description
This seminar examines critical theories on the intersections of gender, race, and blackness. It explores the analytical and political implications of such theories, and interrogates how they relate to traditional disciplinary canons and existing forms of political organizing. Specifically, it probes lines of continuity and rupture between our planetary contemporary political moment and the cognitive apparatus that transatlantic slavery realized. Structuring questions include: What are the origins, and theoretical and pragmatic consequences, of concepts such as the afterlife of slavery, neo-slavery, and neo-colonialism? What is the relationship between antiblackness, racism, and white supremacy? What is the conceptual and political relevance of the concept of genocide vis-à-vis antiblackness? How do Black feminist and Black Queer critiques inflect, transform, reaffirm the (mostly unresolved) questions of the Black presence/absence in contemporary formations of subjectivity, society, and state? What are the theoretical consequences of an engagement with Black diasporic aesthetics and politics? How is the centrality of revolt (or objection to subjection) in Black politics and aesthetics a symptom of worldwide antiblackness? And finally, how, if at all, are gendered Black diasporic experiences commensurable with those of nonblack social groups?

Course requirements
We are of course in an exceptional time. The requirements are flexible and open to suggestions. Below are guidelines that we will adapt when necessary.

This is an intensive collective theoretical conversation. It requires consistency in reading, reflection, and participation over the entire quarter. Students must be prepared to actively engage in seminar discussions at every session. Attendance and active participation are mandatory, and are a considerable portion of your evaluation.

The seminar space must be respected. Please take care of your health and rest needs so that you are not tempted to nap or doze off during our sessions. If agreed, we will have a 10-minute break at the halfway point of our seminar.

Preparation for seminar meetings
Every participant should come to seminar ready to lead the discussion. On the day of the seminar, two persons will be selected, by draw, to facilitate it. This involves a 45-minute presentation that will initiate and structure the seminar. Intended to develop and sharpen students’ analytical and pedagogical skills, these presentations are a central part of the course. When presenting, lead discussants have to engage the following items:

1. **Problems and architecture.** An overview of the author’s central concerns. These concerns can be analytical, theoretical, ethical, political, and are often a combination of those. Your first task
is to define (a) the overarching problems the author is engaging. How does the author develop their narrative, and what are the findings? You also need to consider (b) the writing strategy, reflect on (c) what each chapter accomplishes, and (d) the ways in which each chapter contributes to the overall argument. How is the text organized? Why is it organized in this way? This summation should take about 10 minutes.

2. **Methodology.** This portion of your presentation must be detailed and precise. Here you must reflect on (a) the author's database, and how they define it, gather it, and make sense of it. Your summary of the author's methodological approach should include propositions such as “this author employs a combination of [critical ethnography, archival work, and cultural studies] to examine…” You also need to provide (b) details about how the author actually practices this approach in the text itself: highlight and explain specific passages where the author's methodology is employed and what it accomplishes. Here again, it is important to convey to the seminar participants how the organization of the chapters reflects the methodological strategy. This part of the presentation should take about 10 minutes.

3. **Major theoretical argument.** Each facilitator should take up one highly specific aspect of the text that is both central to the author's project and is of particular relevance to the facilitator's own intellectual concerns. This portion of the presentation is meant to (a) identify and elaborate key theoretical arguments and (b) discuss how those arguments contribute to pertinent fields of study. While facilitators are encouraged to draw connections to their own developing research and theoretical reasoning, they should stay focused primarily on the text. Each facilitator should offer focused commentaries no longer than 10 minutes.

4. **Emerging questions.** Facilitators should close by offering 3-5 questions that allow all participants to engage with the text on its own terms, and within its own parameters. We are not concerned with outlining what the text “doesn’t do,” or fails to do, but rather with understanding its logic and how it attempts to fulfill its own ambitions. Our focus is on comprehension rather than a priori criticism. Good questions focus on specific aspects of the text’s argument, and incite reflection, rather than a defined answer. Examples of bad questions include: “Does the author use the concept of race?” “What is race for author X?” An example of a good question: “Author X employs the concept of race to make sense of the ways in which Black transgendered individuals suffer types of degradation and violence not commensurate to the experiences of nonblack transgender people. How does the author arrive at these findings? Are they generalizable to contexts other than the research?”

5. Points 1-4, above, should be laid out in writing and delivered to all seminar participants on the day of the presentation. The text is not to exceed 5 single spaced pages (they are usually 3 pages). All participants distribute their review to everyone on iLearn.

**Weekly writing exercise**
All seminar participants have to write one page or less in dialogue with a theoretical question posed at the end of the seminar. We will collectively elaborate this question. Participants should upload their responses to Blackboard no later than 11:59 pm on the immediately following Friday.

The purpose of this short writing exercise is for students to develop their theoretical and creative voices, and to build an effective routine for working on, and polishing up, complex ideas in a short
but compelling prose. *This exercise should be done without any textual source other than the work under discussion.* Keep your quotations to a minimum. The writing is to be rigorous and exploratory, creative and precise, daring and critical. It should be approached as work in progress and therefore revised a few times before submission. Before you write your first response, focus on a line of reflection that is related to your research interests: think strategically ahead so as to develop, as you move through this course, analytical problems pertinent to your exams, thesis and/or dissertation proposal, and research. Ideally, each weekly response will build on the previous one.

**Seminar paper**
The final paper should engage one theoretical question that emerges out of the seminar. Use your weekly pieces and your and your colleagues’ class presentations as bases from which to build your paper. You should focus on two authors contained in the syllabus.

Consultation with me during office hours, at least once during the quarter, is mandatory, preferably as you reflect on your final paper.

Final papers must be uploaded to Blackboard no later than March 19, 11:59 p.m. Papers should be up to 10 pages, double spaced, including a consistent citation standard and bibliography.

**Grading**
Research Paper (up to 10 pages): 35%
Seminar participation: 30%
Weekly book reviews and reflection pieces 35%

**Learning outcomes**
At the end of the quarter, you will be familiarized with important debates and authors on the advent of the modern world. The modern world fundamentally depends on excluding Black people and blackness from its realm. The seminar's reading, discussing, and writing practice requires an engagement with the texts that is attentive to our own place in this world, and how we all benefit and are negatively impacted by antiblackness and its attending hierarchies. Such debates and authors reveal fundamental elements of the Human and the Social which not only structure the Humanities and the Social Sciences respectively, but also format the planetary death and lifeworlds. As well, you will gain insight and practice into addressing these questions via oral presentations, debates, and experimental and formal academic writing.

**Reading materials and schedule of topics (subject to change)**
Readings marked with “selections,” and recommended readings, emerging out of seminar discussions, will be added to weekly folders on Blackboard

**Week 1** (January 6) Introduction; main themes; expectations and protocols; time management

Recommended:
Faye Harrison (ed.), *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology for Liberation*. Association of Black Anthropologists, 1991 (188 pages.)


**Week 2** (January 13) The afterlives of slavery I


Recommended:

**Week 3** (January 20) The afterlives of slavery II


Recommended:

**Week 4** (January 27) Fanon, colonialism, antiblackness, and the modern world


Recommended:

**Week 5** (February 3) The Black Radical Tradition


Recommended:
Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetic of the Black Radical Tradition.* (selections, 50 pages.)

**Week 6** (February 10) Black Feminist Thought


Recommended:


**Week 7** (February 17) Black Feminisms


Recommended:


**Week 8** (February 24) Queer and Trans Blackness


Recommended:


Joy James, *Resisting State Violence: Radicalism, Gender, and Race in U.S. Culture.* Minneapolis: University
Week 9 (March 3) Contemporary Black politics in the U.S.
Available at https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/74986
Recommended:

Week 10 (March 10) Global antiblackness and Afropessimism
Recommended:
Black People in the IE: Creating Resilient Communities *Draft Syllabus*

Course Description
In this course, we trace contemporary demographic changes in the Black population of Southern California, particularly the shift from Los Angeles county to the Inland Empire. We examine how Black folx continue to create vibrant communities in the face of red lining, white flight, gentrification, further economic marginalization and environmental racism.

4 Units; Seminar
Prerequisite: BLAC 001 and BLAC 002 or BLAC 003.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Goal 1. Identify structural constraints to social group mobility and success. Identify and understand how these constraints unfold in the quotidian lives of Black folx in the IE.

Broad Learning Outcomes: General knowledge of theories of social stratification, and structural inequality. Knowledge of key concepts such as environmental justice, environmental racism, economic marginalization, red lining, white flight, gentrification. Knowledge of how these concepts are connected. Be able to identify these types of structures as they currently exist in the IE.

Skills: critical reading and thinking, understand patterns and trends, clear and effective written and verbal communication, digital competencies, socio-interpersonal communication

Assessment: Substack posts; self-reflection notes; weekly group activity; low-risk assignment grading

Goal 2. Understand how people create community in the face of marginalization and structural constraints.

Broad Learning Outcomes: Knowledge of community creation as part of social movement organizing; community as resistance to marginalization; community as Black futurity. Knowledge of the Black communities in the IE. Knowledge of how Black people create support structures within the broader IE community. Knowledge of Black art in the IE.

Skills: critical reading and thinking, understand patterns and trends, clear and effective written and verbal communication, digital competencies, socio-interpersonal communication

Assessment: Substack posts; self-reflection notes; weekly group activity; community interviews; project management; low-risk assignment grading

Goal 3. Understand what makes communities thrive. Understanding the communities we live and work in, and engage with.

Broad Learning Outcomes: Knowledge of key concepts of resiliency, adaptation, resistance. Knowledge of how we might measure the success of a social movement. Knowledge of creative ways communities resist marginalization.

Skills: critical reading and thinking, understand patterns and trends, clear and effective written and verbal communication, digital competencies, socio-interpersonal communication; project management.

Assessment: Substack posts; self-reflection notes; weekly group activity; project management; low-risk assignment grading;
ASSIGNED COURSE ACTIVITIES

This is a course on the contemporary movement of people. As such, much of the course activities utilize newer modes of assignments and assessments. We will develop all the skills of a traditional course, such as critical thinking and clear verbal and written communication skills, but we will demonstrate and assess them in non-traditional forms. Class lectures and any slides used during class sessions will be made digitally available to students after class meetings.

3 Substack Blog Posts ~700-1000 words.
Substack is a blog-posting/newsletter platform. Video on how to create a Substack account and how to post on Substack. You can either make your Substack private and share with myself and the classroom, private and share with myself and the individual student assigned for peer responses, or public.
The Substack posts will be in response to a prompt based on either a video or short read and include:
   a) An informed and direct response to the prompt (maps onto Course Goals 1, 2 & 3)
   b) Should demonstrate an understanding of concepts, and ideas analyzed and discussed in the classroom (maps onto Course Goals 1, 2 & 3)
   c) Should include some visuals, like gifs or memes, charts, graphs (maps onto Course Goals 1, 2 &3)
(Rubric provided) 200 points each
**Total points available: 600**

2 Peer Responses to Classmate Substack Posts ~300-500 words
Peer responses will be randomly assigned.
Peer Responses, posted on Substack, will include:
   a) A link to the original post and
   b) A reasoned response demonstrating a clear understanding of the concepts, and ideas discussed in the classroom (maps onto Course Goals 1&2)
(Rubric provided) 65 points each
**Total points available: 130**

Weekly group activity
Students will be assigned into small groups and will meet to discuss readings on a weekly basis. This is designed to foster a classroom community, solidarity amongst students and group learning competencies.
Participation: 120 points total
Post meeting, each student will write a short individual reflection on the reading assignments. 100-150 words. Posted on Substack. (maps onto Course Goals 1&2)
150 points [25 points each (6 posts)]
Groups will present the highlights of the readings. Presentations will be at beginning of class. They will be 15 minutes long. Each group will present once during the semester. A rubric will be provided. (maps onto Course Goals 1&2)
100 points for each.
**Total points available: 370**
Meeting the Community Project
This is your **Final Project** and will be done together as a class.
This practicum portion of the class involves meeting and presenting our IE Black communities. We will create a website that highlights various aspects of Black IE community. Together, we will create a list of tasks and assign groups of 2-4 students to each task. This will include creating the website visuals, writing up the content, interviewing community members, highlighting the community in new and interesting ways.
Launch the project on the digital platform.

You are required to provide 3 written updates of your tasks throughout the quarter. These updates are designed to be inclusive, combine project management and low risk assessment mechanisms to allow you to provide your best work.

*Write-Up 1.* 1-2 paragraph explaining your task and how you intend to pursue and complete it. You will receive feedback. 100 points (low risk grading)

*Write up 2.* 1 page incorporating feedback received from your first write up and discusses any updates. You will receive feedback. 200 points (low risk grading)

*Write up 3.* 2-3 pages of where you stand with your assigned task. You will receive feedback. 300 points (low risk grading)

Final Launch of Website. 300 points

**Total points available: 900**

**GRADING**
Total Available Points = 2000
A = 1750-2000
B+ = 1665-1749
B = 1664
B- = 1580-1664
C+ = 1480 – 1579
C = 1479
C- = 1380-1478
D = 1000-1379
Course Materials

* PDFs of all articles and book sections assigned will be provided
We will only use sections of the following books:

- Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California (De Graaf, Mulroy, Taylor 2001)
- Black Origins in the Inland Empire (Skinner 1983)
- The Quest for Environmental Justice (Bullard 2005)
- Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color (Bullard 1994)
- Segregation by Design (Trounstine 2018)
- A Terrible Thing to Waste (Washington 2019)
- Toxic Communities (Taylor 2014)
- Smogtown: The Lung Burning History of Air Pollution in Los Angeles (Jacobs and Kelly 2008)

Articles

- Bigger Than a Hamburger (Baker 1960)
- Environmental Racism (Taylor 2018)
- Prefigurative self-governance and self organization: the influence of antiauthoritarian (pro)feminist, radical queer and antiracist networks in Quebec (Breton et al. 2011)
- Air Pollution in the Inland Empire (Roach 2020)
- Migrants From L.A. Flow to Affordable Suburbs Such as Inland Empire (Texeira 2001)
- Blaxit: An Exodus in Los Angeles (Spencer 2019)
- Environment and Morality Confronting Environmental Racism in the United States (Bullard 2004)
- Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race Still Matters (Bullard 2018)
- Making the environmental justice grade: The relative burden of air pollution exposure in the United States (Miranda, Edwards, Keating, and Paul 2011)

Websites

- Inside the Lines
  (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c876878db8c647cc85b9ccb9ff5debca)
- New Data Collection Available: COVID-19 Health, Racial, and Economic Equity
- Environmental Health and Justice in Southern California
  (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/db8eddd37c79d4f49803c208c3a1e96d2)
Course Schedule

Week 1
Introductions
Black Origins in the Inland Empire (Skinner 1983; Foreward and Chapter 1)
Migrants From L.A. Flow to Affordable Suburbs Such as Inland Empire (Texeira 2001)
Blaxit: An Exodus in Los Angeles (Spencer 2019)

Week 2
Black Origins in the Inland Empire (Skinner 1983; Chapter 3 and 4)
Toxic Communities (Taylor 2014; Introduction and Chapter 2)
Due: Final Project Write-Up 1

Week 3
Environmental Racism (Taylor 2018)
Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race Still Matters (Bullard 2018)
Introduction and Environmental Justice in the Twenty-first Century in The Quest for Environmental Justice (Bullard 2005)
Due: Substack 1

Week 4
Segregation by Design (Trounstine 2018; Introduction and Chapter 2)
Due: Final Project Write-Up 2

Week 5
Bigger Than a Hamburger (Baker 1960)
Prefigurative self-governance and self organization: the influence of antiauthoritarian (pro)feminist, radical queer and antiracist networks in Quebec (Breton et al. 2011)
African Americana Suburbanization in California
Due: Substack 2

Week 6
Segregation by Design (Trounstine 2018; Chapter 3 and 7)
Air Pollution in the Inland Empire (Roach 2020)
African American Resiliency: Examining Racial Socialization and Social Support as Protective Factors (Danice L. Brown 2008)
Due: Final Project Write-Up 3
Week 7
Making the environmental justice grade: The relative burden of air pollution exposure in the United States (Miranda, Edwards, Keating, and Paul 2011)

Week 8
A Terrible Thing to Waste (Washington 2019; Introduction and Chapter 2)
Smogtown: The Lung Burning History of Air Pollution in Los Angeles (Jacobs and Kelly 2008; Chapter 1, 8, 13)
**Due: Final Project Write-Up 4**

Week 9
A Terrible Thing to Waste (Washington 2019; Chapter 3 and 7)
*Environmental Inequity in Metropolitan Los Angeles* in *The Quest for Environmental Justice* (Bullard 2005)
*Women Warriors of Color on the Front Line* in *The Quest for Environmental Justice* (Bullard 2005)
**Due: Substack 3**

Week 10
*Racializing Blight* in *Toxic Communities* (Taylor 2014)
Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color (Bullard 1994)

Exam Time: **Due: Final Presentation of Meeting the Community Project**
Course description
Focusing on the theory, politics, and methods of activist research, this course introduces students to an emerging field of knowledge and practical intervention. While Anthropology is centrally implicated in this emerging field, activist research draws from and is applicable to the social sciences, humanities, and the arts. As well, activist research is an effective collaborative tool with which communities experiencing injustice and distress attempt to conceptualize and overcome their challenges.

The main contention informing the readings and the student-led ethnography is that, vis-à-vis traditional and “objective” approaches, activist research gains in rigor, depth, and accountability precisely because it is developed in collaboration with, rather than independently of, groups of people who are attempting to improve their social conditions.

Developing a quarter-long hands-on ethnographic research project, students will, in groups, explore the composition, routine, complexities, and goals and challenges of a community organization of their choosing. The organization can be a campus or an off-campus collective. It is recommended that the organization you select engages in social justice efforts. Possible issues addressed by the organizations include but are not restricted to the following: education, justice, housing, nutrition, health care, environment, and the arts.

It is critical that the name of the organization and the people you work with during the quarter remain anonymous. Readings and discussions in class will provide instructions on how to render fieldwork information unidentifiable. In no circumstance should the material collected in your research be used for any purpose outside of our class.

Rules and expectations
Every class meeting will require active participation from individuals and groups. Your participation grade will depend on how well you demonstrate engagement with the readings and the class discussions. Your interventions must draw from your fieldwork and the readings.

You will conduct ethnographic research with your group. With your group, you will determine what organization to study, and how you are going to approach the persons who are part of the organization. Make sure all in your group are involved, and agree about the research approach and how the labor is divided. Your fieldnotes need to indicate how each person of your group contributed to collecting the information and writing the fieldnotes. It is your responsibility to alert me about issues in your group that hinder the work.

I encourage you to study, conduct fieldwork, write your fieldnotes, and complete the quizzes with the persons of your group.
Each group is responsible for uploading fieldnotes when they are due.

Make sure to submit your individual responses for the quizzes.

Late assignments will not be accepted. Plan ahead, work collectively!

**Course Dynamics**

This course requires consistent participation based on engaged reading, contribution to class discussions, and careful collaboration and attention to weekly field work and submission of fieldnotes.

Students will be randomly assigned to a group on iLearn.

This will be the typical week:

- **Tuesday:** Discussion of fieldwork and, time allowing, assigned readings
- **Thursday:** Discussion of assigned readings.
- **Other days of the week (at least 4 hours/week/per group):** Fieldwork
- **Saturday:** Submission of group fieldnotes; quiz on readings and class discussions

Your fieldnotes are required to strictly follow the template available on iLearn, and need to be uploaded on iLearn each week. They should never exceed 4 pages.

You will receive comments and suggestions on your fieldnotes each time you turn them in. You will be graded on the entire set of fieldnotes each group produces during the quarter, not on each separate weekly fieldnotes.

Your group presentation will account for 20% of your final grade. It must accomplish the following:

- a) Present your research questions (explain why is your research relevant);
- b) Detail your method (explain how you obtained your ethnographic information);
- c) A description of your research site and organization. What is the organization’s goals (what is it striving to accomplish)? How does it go about trying to accomplish its goals, what are its concepts and strategies?
- d) Also important to consider: How is the organization set up? What is its administrative structure? Who does what? How is the work divided? What is the organization’s overall mood? Is it inviting?
- e) How, where, and when did you dialogue and collaborate with your “informants”? How were you received, and why?
- f) What is your analysis of the organization and its people? For example: What keeps the organization together? Why are they, or are they not, successful? Why do they attract, or do not attract, new members? Why do members stay, or leave?
- g) What would be your recommendations for the organization’s success? You can/should discuss your description and analysis with members of the organization. This discussion would be a way to put into practice activist research, or at least render the research process more dialogical and participatory.

Your final presentation should not be longer than 20 minutes; plan on leaving time for questions and answers. You will be evaluated on how well organized your presentation is; you should be creative
and dynamic. You need not be an experienced public speaker, but you need to demonstrate you are familiar with the material. Ideally, all group members present.

**Your presentation should be uploaded on iLearn prior to your final class presentation**

Quizzes will be based on the readings but also on the class discussions, so it’s important for you to be actively involved in class discussions and take notes.

**Attendance policy:** 3 absences will lead to a final grade deduction of half a grade (e.g. A- to B+); the rule is cumulative. Attendance is a vital part of the course: Discussions in class provide important moments of reflection that cannot be attained otherwise.

**Grading (see grading scale in Course Materials)**
Quizzes: 30%
Field notes: 30%
Participation: 20%
Group presentation: 20%

**Assignments and tests dates**
Quizzes: Oct 19, Nov 2, Nov 16, Nov 30
Presentations:
Groups 1, 2, 3: Dec 3
Groups 4, 5, 6: Dec 5
Groups upload their presentations on iLearn before they present

**Reading and course activity schedule**
All readings are on iLearn; the volume *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Research*, edited by Charles R. Hale, is an electronic source found at [Engaging Contradictions](https://example.com/contradictions).

**Readings and schedule are subject to change depending on the pace and direction of the ethnographic research, and the instructor's and/or the students' interests.**

**Week 0**
**Thursday, September 26**
Introduction: course structure, expectations, assignments;
Discuss syllabus;
Familiarize yourself with groups members. Time allowing, discuss possible research sites.

**Week 1**
**Tuesday, October 1**
Groups briefly discuss initial ideas; preference of field site.
Strategize first contact: who and how to contact person at organization; how, when, and where to initiate conversation.
Visit organization; in follow up meeting, groups decide if organization is a good research site.
Questions about syllabus.
Discuss readings:
a) Hale, “What is Activist Research?” 3p;  
b) Hale, “Introduction,” Engaging Contradictions, pp. 1-28

Thursday, October 3  
In groups: Definition of research site and research preliminary questions (why this research site? What do you expect to find?); Discuss readings from Week 1 and, time allowing, Week 2  
Follow up visit this week or weekend

Week 2  
Tuesday, October 8  
No class: Please use your time wisely and complete assignments below

Groups discuss fieldwork so far: difficulties, insights, possibilities
Discuss readings:
a) “Writing Fieldnotes,” 4p;  
b) Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, “Chapter One. Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research,” and “Chapter Two. In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes,” in Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, 23p;  
c) “Template for Fieldnotes” 2p.

Thursday, October 10  
Groups bring questions and insights from Tuesday meeting: readings and fieldwork progress  
Discuss readings from Tuesday and the following:  

Saturday, October 12  
Fieldnotes 1 (Upload on iLearn; 3-4 pages)

Week 3  
Tuesday, October 15  
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work: findings, difficulties, next steps; all groups comment  

Thursday, October 17  
Discuss reading: Briggs, Learning How to Ask, pp. 1-28 (up to, but not including, “Plan of the book”)

Saturday, October 19  
Quiz 1, Fieldnotes 2 (iLearn)

Week 4
Tuesday, October 22
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work (7 mins. max); all groups comment
Discuss readings:
a) Schrock, “The Methodological Imperative of Feminist Ethnography,” pp. 48-60

Thursday, October 24

Saturday, October 26
Fieldnotes 3 (upload to iLearn)

**Week 5**

Tuesday, October 29
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work; other groups comment

Thursday, October 31

Saturday, November 2
Quiz 2, Fieldnotes 4 (iLearn)

**Week 6**

Tuesday, November 5
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work; other groups comment

Thursday, November 7

Saturday, November 9
Fieldnotes 5 (upload to iLearn)

**Week 7**

Tuesday, November 12
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work; other groups comment
Discuss readings:
b) Graeber, “Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology,” pp. 1-37

Thursday, November 14
Discuss reading: Mendez, “Globalizing Scholar Activism: Opportunities and Dilemmas through a Feminist Lens,” in Engaging Contradictions, pp. 136-163

Saturday, November 16
Quiz 3, Fieldnotes 6 (iLearn)

Week 8
Tuesday, November 19
Discuss fieldwork: each group provides a synopsis of its work; all groups comment
Discuss readings:

Thursday, November 21

Week 9
Tuesday, November 26
Discuss fieldwork and presentations: each group provides a synopsis of its work and how it plans on presenting; all groups comment
Discuss readings:
a) Graeber, “Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology,” pp. 95-105
b) Pulido, “FAQs: Frequently (Un)Asked Questions about Being a Scholar Activist,” in Engaging Contradictions, pp. 341-363

Thursday, November 28
No class, Thanksgiving

Saturday, November 30
Quiz 4, Fieldnotes 7 (iLearn). Fieldnotes 6 should include observations on weeks 8 and 9.

Week 10
Group presentations; groups upload their presentation on iLearn before they present.

Tuesday, December 3
Groups 1, 2, and 3

Thursday, December 5
Groups 4, 5, and 6
Black Study Initiative Selected Bibliography

In our proposal to create the Department of Black Study—a space of knowledge production around and through Black life—we refer to Black academics, artists, and activists as the foundation of the Black, abolitionist, queer-loving, trans-affirming learning community we envision for UCR. Included below is one of many Black-affirming practices that we engage in accordance with our core principles: citation. Citational practices are both an affirmation of gesture and a political act that explicitly name the authors and curators of materials outlining the struggle towards freedom within and outside of academia. This partial bibliography is a recognition of Black people who have created a blueprint ensuring the success of the vision we see in a Department of Black Study here at UCR.

**SOME KEY FIGURES**


**BLACK FEMINIST & QUEER STUDIES**


**PERFORMANCE, EMBODIMENT, AND AESTHETICS**

**SPIRITUALITY, RELIGION, AND PHILOSOPHY**


**POLITICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE**


THEORY AND PRAXIS


Kaba, Mariame. *We Do This ‘Til We Free Us*. Haymarket Books, 2021


**PEDAGOGY**
Research Statement for the Department of Black Study (Draft)

The Department of Black Study emphasizes the verb “study” and stresses the engaged and embodied practice of teaching and research that is simultaneously local, communal, planetary, historical, contemporary, and future-oriented. It is therefore, necessarily transdisciplinary in scope, straddling various disciplines in the Social Sciences, Humanities, STEM, and the Arts.

Multi-disciplinarity draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stays within and tethered to their methodological and epistemic boundaries. Interdisciplinarity analyzes, synthesizes, and harmonizes links between disciplines into a coordinated and coherent whole. Tensions between disciplines are flattened out or smoothed over as much as possible. Trans-disciplinarity integrates knowledge from different disciplines (typically the natural, social, and health sciences) in a humanities context and transcends their traditional boundaries, maintaining as much as possible disciplinary tensions. Black Study trans-disciplinarity is anchored in an intersectional lens, maintaining both symmetry and dissonance to seriously engage Black epistemologies, Black metaphysics, Black temporality, and Black social, cultural, and spiritual life.

The Department of Black Study is rooted in articulated Black Radical Traditions, such as Cooperative Zones, Marronage Enclaves, Mutual Aid, Transformative Justice, and Abolition, and is a collective experimental methodology of liberation as practiced in the past, and present as well as conceived of for the future. 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.

Reflecting the Trans-disciplinarity constitution of the proposed department, and the often collaborative nature of research that will be carried out by future faculty, we imagine producing and evaluating excellence in knowledge production according to the following metrics, formats, and venues:

a) Peer-reviewed articles in reputable and relevant journals
   i) Given the interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of our work as scholars and practitioners, besides publishing in reputable Black Studies journals, faculty members will publish in equally valuable Anthropology, Performance Studies, Sociology, History, Political Science, Public Health, English, Ethnic Studies,
Literary Critique, and Earth and Environmental Science journals, among others. Additionally faculty, will publish in multi-, extra- and transdisciplinary journals whose audience recognizes the value of collaborative community engaged research and hybrid and innovative methodological and theoretical approaches.

ii) Research by faculty in the proposed department will likely be carried out in various parts of the planet and in collaboration with local communities and researchers. Thus, even though we anticipate publishing primarily in English, books, research reports, grant proposals, and peer-reviewed journals may be published in Amharic, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, among others.

iii) Centering the value of mentoring and collaboration, the proposed department will uplift work that features future students and junior colleagues as first authors in multi-authored essays. As a department we will uplift that, not appearing as first author of a multi-author essay, does not reflect a diminished role in the research leading to the publication. In addition, as much of our research involves international and multi-investigator projects, multi-author publications in our field will be seen as a sign of robust collaborations, research promise, and commitment to equity in knowledge production.

b) Creative Projects

i) Given the transdisciplinarity of scholars and practitioners that will comprise the future department’s faculty, we will value creative projects (creative writing, chapbooks, visual arts, performance pieces, museum exhibitions, documentary productions, etc.) as much as articles in peer-reviewed journals. Creative projects often take the same amount of time if not longer to produce than peer-reviewed journals.

ii) Audio visual and photographic media and the arts have long been important to how Black Study scholars and practitioners carry out research and present it to diverse publics.

iii) Grants supporting creative projects and research associated with those project are an important component of our discipline, and we will recognize the value that they generate not only in terms of the resources they bring (travel, equipment, facilities, events, meetings, labor), but also the added reputation they lend to the line of research and the department.

iv) The department will value creative projects built through community collaborations that produce hybrid and innovative works that reach diverse and wide publics.

c) Peer-reviewed books and edited books

i) We anticipate that future faculty will publish books and edited books in reputable university presses as well as in trade presses, both in the United States and abroad. As a department we will value books that target specialized audiences as well as those made for accessible to a broader public.
ii) Given the value placed on community-engaged research, the future department will uplift autonomous/independent presses, and evaluate such publications in terms of their methodological and theoretical merits and their inclusive and expansive nature.

iii) The proposed department will value edited books as a form of intellectual and organizational labor that is often overlooked. Edited books can take longer to produce than single-authored books as they involve several authors, require many rounds of revision, and necessitate familiarity and engagement with a much broader theoretical and methodological palette than that of a monograph.

d) Chapters and articles in books
   i) The proposed department will value chapters and articles in edited peer-reviewed books as much as articles in peer-reviewed journals -- they take the same time to produce, and sometimes go through stricter and longer review processes. Such volumes also have great potential to be used in graduate seminars and therefore to be influential on future generations of scholars.

e) Editor-reviewed scholarship, including a growing trend of prestigious online outlets that allow for timely dissemination of research and theoretical insights into current issues, will also be valued in the future department. This form of public scholarship involves feedback from editors, who are often established and respected scholars in the field, and creates a deliberate space for cutting-edge dialogue.

f) Reports and testimony to policy-making, legislative and activist institutions, and reports developed in collaboration with community stakeholders and our research collaborators will also be valued as research labor output. Outreach and public engagement, including articles for the general public, are strongly valued in our discipline.

g) Grant-supported research is an important component of the future department’s trans-disciplinary vision; as such, we will recognize the value that it generates not only in terms of the resources it brings (travel, equipment, facilities, events, meetings, labor), but also the added reputation it lends to the line of research and the future department.

h) Student mentoring will be a critical aspect of the department’s vision of professional development among its students. Not only will we take seriously our role in preparing the next generations of researchers and engaged citizens of the world, but we will also recognize that our own research vitality depends on the dialogues and insights that emerge from the continued dialogue with our graduate students.
   i) The same is true for postdoctoral, community and international visiting scholars. The future department sees the value in the intellectual dynamism and the plurality of experiences and perspectives such examples of mentoring bring to the department and campus.

   ii) Likewise, the department will be committed to undergraduate education and will take an active role in mentoring, involving students in faculty research, and
preparing students for graduate education and professional positions in the community.
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

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 feudalist 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 STEMM 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 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 STEMM 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
August 1, 2021

UCR Academic Senate
Elizabeth Watkins, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

Re: Proposal for the Department of Black Study

It is my pleasure to write with enthusiastic support for the establishment of the Department of Black Study. The development of this proposal is in response to student demand as well as campus and national strategic plans. The proposal has also garnered support across campus, students, staff, and faculty in CHASS, including the unanimous support of CHASS’s Executive Committee in May 19, 2021. Importantly, it has also received unprecedented support from the broader Riverside community. I unequivocally agree with the Executive Committee and the multitude of other endorsements and encourage its support by the Academic Senate and the campus leadership.

The inspiration for the new department proposal is a combination of the highly successful UCOP sponsored Blackness Unbound Faculty Commons Group and a necessary reckoning of social and institutional antiblackness. The proposal was developed through an inclusive process initiated by the Black Studies Initiative which included over a year of engaging and listening to students, staff, and faculty. It should also be noted, that UCOP continues to support the initiation of this new department as evidenced by UCOP’s Advancing Faculty Diversity Program award of $500,000. This award will support the hiring of four new faculty who would share joint appointments and individual appointments in the Department of Black Study.

The completed proposal is well developed and provides a strong curriculum from which our students would benefit. As the authors of the proposal note, Black Study, is not a noun but rather a verb that reveals the inclusive, collective, relational, and inter/trans disciplinary research and educational pedagogies. The proposal builds on CHASS’s existing strengths in Black, African, and African American Studies through coursework in departments such as Ethnic Studies, History, Political Science, Anthropology, and English. The proposal development committee is also in conversation with Engineering and other STEM fields. These collaborations will continue to foster transdisciplinary research and potentially increase the number of diverse students in the STEM fields. To extend the opportunities for collaboration the committee is also developing new courses that embody the innovative vision of Black Study. The proposal and its FAQs sheet addresses many of the questions regarding its enhancement of existing departments and why this is the time to initiate the Department of Black Study.

I’d like to briefly address the budgetary impact question. The Department of Black Study would be a grounding department in a new administrative unit that would increase enrollment and bring in extramural research funds through collaborations in the Humanities and STEM fields. In anticipation of this proposal, CHASS Dean’s Office has developed a plan to reorganize our administrative units. We have calculated that a new administrative unit would cost approximately $200,000 per year (FAO, Financial Analyst, and Student Support Staff). Note, that in any condition, CHASS would have to create this new unit in the next year or two to address severe understaffing. Our plan is that the Departments of Black Study, Environment,
Sustainability, and Health Equity, Ethnic Studies, and newly extramurally funded research centers would be served by the new administrative unit. Another question with regards to budget is the impact of having faculty with split departmental appointments in CHASS. The design of the Department of Black Study with one perhaps two full time faculty and several split appointment faculty is a successful model that we have seen before, specifically in 2012 with the School of Public Policy. The combination of new courses and cross-listed courses will ensure the integrity of the new department’s curriculum and continued support for existing departments. In the short term, existing departments might request an additional lecturer if more than two faculty move 50% of their appointment. Given the proposed curriculum, approximately five lecturers may be required in existing departments which would cost approximately $50,000 per year. In the long term, new hires will occur in departments where faculty have transferred from as well as in the Department in Black Study. As noted above, UCOP has already supported the hiring of new faculty and split appointment faculty for the new departments. Importantly, Department of Black Study will be highly attractive to UCOP President’s Postdoctoral Fellows (PPFP). With the hiring incentive of five years of salary coverage and CHASS’s intentional recruitment of PPFP will only strengthen our ability to support our existing and new departments. The new Black Study department, with its anticipated increased enrollments and potential for extramural funding, more than justifies the expense of creating a new unit and split faculty appointments for the first few years and in the long term.

The proposal is innovative in its ability to bring together existing and new strengths into a cohesive departmental plan that centers the active learning and research that reaches across boundaries and provides the knowledge, critical thinking, and collaborative practices that faculty, staff, and students, particularly Black faculty, staff, and students need to be innovators of a society that refuses antiblackness. We are uniquely poised to make UCR a leader in the area of Black Study. Waiting until there are “better times” would only serve to lose the momentum and disenfranchise faculty who are motivated and inspired to meet the needs of our students, communities, and the broader society. I enthusiastically support the creation of a Department of Black Study. It is time for CHASS and campus to clearly demonstrate our innovation and relevance to larger societal concerns not only through the work of individual researchers, but also through the infrastructure of departments that can foster that innovation particularly for Black students, staff, and faculty.

On behalf of the College, thank you for your consideration of this exceptional and timely proposal.

Juliet McMullin, PhD
Interim Dean, College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
Professor, Department of Anthropology
Co-Director Center for Health Disparities Research
October 24, 2020

Dear Chancellor Wilcox and Interim Dean McMullin,

We are members of the Performing Difference Faculty Commons group who embody and study minoritized difference from performances on stage and screen to performances of everyday life. Founded in 2018, our working group fosters research and relationships across campus so as to sustain and retain our community of scholars and artists.

We write to be in solidarity with the Blackness Unbound Faculty Commons group and to echo their statement dated June 5, 2020: “We call upon the university to invest in the bodily safety, psychic integrity, and empowered futurity of black students through immediate and actionable policy changes.” We urge campus leadership to divest from policing, given the documented harm of these state- and university-authorized violence workers. To create a safer environment, the campus must redirect funding to support Black students, staff, and faculty directly. Finally, we affirm the need for formalizing Black Studies at UC Riverside, and we appreciate Dean McMullin’s dedication to this effort.

Changing campus cops’ costumes is not enough. Creating a campus task force with no experts in police violence is not enough. Liberation requires real transformation.

In solidarity,
Members of Performing Difference

Donatella Galella, Associate Professor, Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Crystal Baik, Associate Professor, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Maria Regina Firmino-Castillo, Assistant Professor, Dance
Kimberly Guerrero, Assistant Professor, Theatre, Film, and Digital Production
Tamara Ho, Associate Professor, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Emily Hue, Assistant Professor, Ethnic Studies
Imani Kai Johnson, Assistant Professor, Dance
Anusha Kedhar, Assistant Professor, Dance
Anthea Kraut, Professor, Dance
Liz Przybylski, Assistant Professor, Music
Judith Rodenbeck, Associate Professor, Media and Cultural Studies
Setsu Shigematsu, Associate Professor, Media and Cultural Studies
Melissa M. Wilcox, Professor, Religious Studies
Deborah Wong, Professor, Music
October 13, 2021

Dear Dean Williams and Academic Senate,

I write to express the enthusiastic support of the Department of English for the proposed formation of a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. We anticipate that this proposed new program will offer important opportunities for collaboration that will enrich our existing programs in English, and that it will enhance the intellectual experience of students across CHASS. 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 will enable us to extend this work across cross-disciplinary collaborations and will augment the work that we seek to do across diverse periods, distinct and intersecting racial histories, and bodies of literature.

The proposal for this initiative eloquently demonstrates why such a program of study is urgently needed at this historical moment. At the same time, the proposal also explains why establishing such a program is long overdue, the culmination of decades of work and commitment that has been insufficiently recognized and sustained by administrative structures and budgeting priorities. Our campus prides itself on serving a diverse and under-represented student body, and our institutional shortcomings in relation to Black students and faculty are starkly revealed by the distressing statistics in the proposal that document failed efforts to recruit and retain Black faculty and sustain a thriving Black student population. The English Department regularly recruits graduate students working across diverse fields of enquiry related to Black epistemologies, speculative aesthetics, archives and performances studies, and literary modes, and our efforts to build in this essential area of study have been hampered by the loss of two faculty specializing in Black culture, who separated after failed retention efforts. Thus, the proposed program in Black Study will not only offer us opportunities to form new collaborations with colleagues across disciplines, but it will enhance our own efforts to research and teach issues of racial formation from the early modern period to the present.

Establishing this program in Black Study will also demonstrate the University’s commitment to the larger public good and its responsiveness to contemporary social movements that are demanding concrete action to redress the systemic injustice of structural conditions of racism that shape American (and global) life. An effective public university has a responsibility to dedicate itself to producing knowledge that serves the needs of the wider community, and the proposed program in Black Study does not simply add another alternative to existing university curricula, but asks indispensable questions about the epistemologies and practices that guide us in our research overall, calling on us to reimagine them from the point of view of centering Black experience as we reconsider our histories, aesthetic categories, and philosophical commitments. Such knowledge is precisely what is required to produce engaged and informed citizens capable of taking leadership roles in a changing world, and what is needed to ensure that UC Riverside is positioned at the forefront of cutting-edge developments in the humanities and social sciences. It is all the more
important that we do this work on our campus because—as the proposal notes—UC Riverside enrolls the highest number of students who identify as Black/African American across the UC system.

The English Department strongly endorses this proposal not only due to these institutional and cultural contexts, but also because we see immense value in the planned curriculum and governance structure for the program. The curriculum sets a bar and embodies a model for other scholars to engage with and offers methods and theories that provide a sharper conceptualization of the field of race and other intersecting histories of differentiation and racial injustice. Drawing on diasporic queer, trans, and feminist transdisciplinary approaches to a global framing of Black experiences, it envisions and creates an infrastructure for connecting students and the off-campus community; it promises to integrate the content of Black Study with training to become teachers or lawyers or doctors and thus to reshape those fields via anti-racist praxis; and it continually emphasizes the connections between scholarship and practice in the training that it will provide its students. We concur with the proposal that this initiative to train the next generation of leaders promises to benefit the wider community in myriad ways as it contributes to the vital project of combatting anti-Blackness and inventing civil society anew.

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,

Sherryl Vint
Professor and Chair
October 14, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I write to express the Creative Writing Department’s support for the creation of a Department of Black Study at the University of California, Riverside. As chair of this department, I am honored to add our voices to the chorus celebrating and endorsing the proposed department’s stated aim to “seek dialogue across and beyond institutional boundaries, pursue collaborations and bridges rather than division; embrace cross pollination instead of isolation and exclusivity; engender synthesis instead of antithesis.” This comprehensive approach to scholarship that foregrounds the embodiment of Black intellectual traditions, and to furthering our campus’s—and the country’s—antiracist goals, is welcome and exciting and long overdue, not just when considering the recent nationwide Black Lives Matter movement, but also when considering the country’s centuries-long practice of racially motivated violence and discrimination, both overt and covert, explicit and implicit.

We in the Creative Writing Department at UCR look forward to the swift formation of a Department of Black Study, as we are eager to collaborate with and support it as soon as possible. Given its thoroughly and persuasively formulated pre-proposal and FAQ, we believe that it will strengthen and broaden the academic environment of our campus, giving students, faculty and others the opportunity to learn and effect meaningful change here and in the communities of which we are a part.

Sincerely Yours,

Josh Emmons
Chair, Creative Writing Department
Dear Black Study Advisory Committee:

I am writing a letter in support of the establishment of a department of Black Study at UC Riverside for several reasons. 1) It is time to revisit the Ethnic Studies Department structure; 2) It is important to create a stand-alone space for Black faculty, staff and students within UCR, and 3) It is important to bring together interdisciplinary Black faculty across the university to make sure that the university and community will benefit from the research, curriculum and scholarly engagements already being carried out in various parts of the university.

I remember reading about the demise of the Black Studies program back in 1985 or so. It was a pattern that was seen all over the United States. In the 1980s, 1990s and into the 21st centuries, ethnic studies programs and departments have been underfunded and marginalized. Started initially as the academic answer to political social justice movements, there was never a centering of Black epistemologies, for example in the academy. This is an opportunity for a transformative department that speaks to the 21st century needs of Black students, faculty and staff along with community members.

Second, this department could provide a stabilizing space, for the deepening of existing Black epistemic ideas and practices as well as the creation of new global ones. Given the deep history of racism in the African diaspora, it is important that there is an institutional Center from which both evolving academic and policy work can be created and disseminated.

Third, it is critical that time and energy will be spent bringing together Black and other faculty to plan together how an interdisciplinary Black Studies curriculum can build synergies with other existing and proposed Africana programs. For example, as an anthropologist, our faculty have committed to supporting an African Diaspora option for undergraduate and graduate students in our department. In addition, there is a work group of faculty who have been working on an African Studies program. Those faculty should be invited at this stage to decide how they may want to be involved moving forward. I am excited about the possibility of cross listing courses with this new department; and perhaps developing new ones with other partners.

Please feel free to involve me as chair of the curriculum Committee of the Anthropology Department in any way that you see fit.
Best,

Yolanda T. Moses
Professor of Anthropology
Former Associate Vice Chancellor
Diversity and Inclusion
October 13, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as my personal support for the formation of a Department of Black Studies at UCR. Our country’s history has a particular and foundational relationship to race, and specifically to the history of Black people. Our systems of governance, economics, education, and culture are all intrinsically tied to this historical context, and so it is an educational benefit - and perhaps imperative - to offer a Department of Black Studies dedicated to exploring and expanding those intrinsic ties. Writers like Ta-Nehisi Coates, Michelle Alexander, and Isabel Wilkerson have given recent voice to just how wide-reaching the tenets of Black Studies are. A comprehensive and contemporary education around economics, or performing arts, or history, or political science in the U.S. demands a dexterity around these tenets.

We are moving toward a more common cultural literacy around critical race theory, and as our students come to campus better prepared to study concepts of culture and identity through this very lens, it is our responsibility as an institution to provide thinkers and researchers engaged with disciplines in Black Studies. The Department of Black Studies will provide dedicated professors and course work which will benefit students across many disciplines, and bring a potential for cultural community experiences like visiting lectures or performances. While splintering the Department of Ethnic Studies poses its own long-term institutional questions about who gets represented and how, one might consider the nurturing of the Department of Black Studies as a possibility model, a pilot for what this sort of specialized discipline might look like within the system in this new decade. Perhaps it will be instructive for other such departments in the future.

Sincerely,

Professor Jim Isermann
Art Department
October 5, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to write in support of the Department of Black Study at the University of California, Riverside. UC Riverside is the ideal home for the Department of Black Study as the purposefully broad scope of the department encapsulates the main tenants of a world class research university such as UCR. Further, given the global political, social, and economic dynamics of Southern California (and Riverside County in particular), there is a natural coalescence of intellectual and strategic goals between the Department of Black Study and that of UC Riverside as an institutional leader within the region. Perhaps more so than any University of California campus, UC Riverside is a prime location to house and develop such an important and vital undertaking. Over the past 30 years, Riverside County and the surrounding communities including San Bernardino County have become home to a diverse Black population who have family, political and community ties ranging from West Africa to South and Central America to the US South. This relatively recent development is complimented by the strong scholarly record of current UC Riverside faculty who have been at the forefront of pushing the theoretical and methodological paradigmatic boundaries of Black Studies. Such a coupling provides for a strong foundation for the Department of Black Study and without a doubt the department will be one of the preeminent sites of Black Study in the world. Please take this letter as my unconditional support for the Department of Black Study and I look forward to engaging with colleagues within the new space in the near future.

Sincerely,

Damien M. Sojoyner
Associate Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of California, Irvine
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)
July 21, 2021

To: João Costa Vargas, Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Black Studies Initiative, UC Riverside

From: Susan Carlson, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Programs

Subject: Advancing Faculty Diversity, Recruitment, 2021-22 and 2022-23

I am very pleased to inform you that your proposal, “Advancing Faculty Diversity and Epistemologies in Black Study, Health & Environmental Inequities,” has been selected for an award of $496,570. Thank you for your very innovative proposal and clear commitment to increasing the excellence and diversity of the faculty at UC Riverside. Thank you for the additional materials that outline the strong support from Provost Watkins, Interim Dean McMullin, and Dean Designate Williams, in particular their confirmation of the funding for four faculty lines. The proposal review committee believes you are poised to use the funds in a way that will demonstrate clear results over the next two academic years, building on the successful interventions from the first five years of the systemwide Advancing Faculty Diversity (AFD) program.

As you know, the stakes are high for the funded projects, as these targeted expenditures will help UC demonstrate effective ways in which funding can increase the diversity of the faculty and enrich our teaching, research, and service missions. As a funded unit, you will partner with other funded programs, and the systemwide advisory group, to share lessons learned and to form an engaged community of practice dedicated to building inclusive and equitable departments throughout the university. To facilitate this dialogue, we have designed several grant-related activities, including individual and multi-project calls with UCOP staff and the Advancing Faculty Diversity advisory group, and in-person convenings, the first of which will take place in fall 2021.

As a reminder, as a condition of accepting this award your campus is required to continue participation in the Search Committee Chair Survey in UC Recruit.

Please note that your allocation of funds for the two-year award must be expended or committed by June 30, 2023. Please also note that all project activities must be Proposition 209 compliant.

Additionally, there are reporting requirements attached to this award. We request that you provide us six-month budget updates for the duration of the project. A budget template for these updates will be sent in a separate email. Below is a rough outline of the deadlines for budget reporting.
• Year 1, Mid-year report: End of January 2022
• Year 1, End-of-year report: Mid-late July 2022 (this includes a project update)
• Year 2, Mid-year report: End of January 2023
• Year 2, Final report: Mid-late July 2023

Please confirm the name and contact information of the primary contact we can get in touch with regarding your project budget. This is the individual we will work with to coordinate the funding allocation details and project reporting details. We will send you a reminder one month prior to the deadline for submitting these updates.

There will be quarterly check-in calls scheduled with UCOP to discuss your project’s status. In advance of the call, we will request a brief project update that will respond to the following questions:

• What progress has been made on your project?
• What challenges have you faced in making progress?
• How can UCOP or others be of assistance moving forward?
• What modifications need to be made to the project scope or goals, if any?

The summary submitted in advance of each call will help us build the agenda to support you with your project.

Director Patricia Osorio-O’Dea will be coordinating budget details associated with the award. She can be reached at Patricia.Osorio-Odea@ucop.edu. She will serve as the point of contact for all other questions regarding your grant award.

I will be in contact with you soon, to set up a meeting with you and your colleagues to give you specific feedback on your proposal and to work through next steps in the process.

Congratulations on your award.

cc: President Drake
    Chancellor Wilcox
    Provost and Executive Vice President Brown
    Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Watkins
    Vice President and Vice Provost Gullatt
    Vice Chancellor Lam
    Vice Provost Jeske
    Associate Vice Provost Halimah
    Associate Vice Provost Lee
    Director Osorio-O’Dea
Black Study and UCR Teacher Education Program Pathway 2021-2022

Required To Meet with TEP Advisor Prior to Taking Courses: Alex Arriaga, Frances Valdovinos, Lina H Canawati (TEPAdvisors)

Complete All Courses to Help in TEP Matriculation: Required Courses for Preliminary Credential

- Take Health Education Principles of Healthful Living: EDUC 044
- Take **ONE** US Constitution Course: PoliSci 10 or History 017A or HISA 110B

Suggested Courses to Complete:

- EDUC 147
- EDUC 132
- EDUC 162

Complete These Exams and Clearance Forms Prior to Applying to TEP

- CSETS [Based on Authorization Area there will be different exams, consult TEP advisor]
- CBEST or SAT/ACT/AP scores
- Certification of Clearance

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Required TEP Credential Lower Division Courses</th>
<th>Suggested Not Required TEP Upper Division Courses (Take only 3)</th>
<th>Important Credential Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 044: Health Education Principles of Healthful Living (required for Preliminary Credential)</td>
<td>These courses below will help reduce the number of courses in TEP (3 can be recognized by TEP, suggested courses not required*):</td>
<td>Credential courses are required for each authorization area: MS, SS, EDSPEC</td>
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<td><strong>ONE</strong> US Constitution Course: (for Preliminary Cred Requirements): Poli Sci 10 History 017A HISA 110B</td>
<td>*EDUC 132 Exceptional Child</td>
<td>TEP can recognize up to 3 -100 level courses but will not count toward M.Ed unless they take it concurrently.</td>
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<td><strong>EDUC 147: Education in a Diverse Society;</strong></td>
<td>Credential courses are mapped to California Teacher Credential requirements.</td>
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<td><strong>EDUC 162 Learning Theory &amp; Psychology in Education - for credential only students</strong></td>
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<td>EDUC 178 Reading &amp; Writing in the Content Area (Single Subject)</td>
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<td>EDUC 171 Reading &amp; Writing in the Content Area (Multiple Subjects)</td>
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<td>EDUC 179A Language Development in a content area</td>
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* UCR undergraduates majoring in Black Study who follow the pathway above will better prepare them to apply and matriculate into the GSOE TEP program. UCR undergraduates will need to apply to the GSOE TEP program through the regular application process during their senior year.
VII. 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 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 Undergraduates

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<tr>
<th>Name (First and Last)</th>
<th>Affiliation (Organization, Institution, Department; independent scholars and community members are welcome to write &quot;NA&quot;)</th>
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<td>MATTHEW SANDERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Valdez</td>
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<td>orlando pareja</td>
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<td>Kamillah Pollard</td>
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<td>Marivel Palone</td>
<td>University of California, Riverside</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jessica Madrigal</td>
<td>Gender and Sexuality Studies/ NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roye Ben-Menahem</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan Smith</td>
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<td>Rohan Subramanian</td>
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<td>Rossandra Martinez</td>
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<td>Felisa Vasquez Gonzalez</td>
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<td>Jaquelinne Rodriguez</td>
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<td>Precious Fasakin</td>
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<td>Jaden De La Cruz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jazmin Garcia</td>
<td>Riverside, CAT 911, Underground Scholars, and Ethnic Studies dept.</td>
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<td>Stephanie Gutierrez</td>
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<td>Fernanda Mendoza</td>
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<td>Eddie Ortega</td>
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<td>Lizbeth Marquez Torres</td>
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<td>Sydney Perez</td>
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<td>Vikki Roberts</td>
<td>I was a Black Studies major 1969-73</td>
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**UCR Prospective Students**

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Kevin Seyedin
Lindsey Whitmore
Ross Clowser
Jay G.
Grace Del Aguila
Sara Macwan
Kofi Ofosu-Yeboah
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**UCR Alumni**

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**Community Member (staff/faculty at another college)**

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<td>Assistant Professor, African American Studies and Gender Studies, UCLA</td>
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<td>Clarissa Cervantes</td>
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<td>Géssica Priscila Arcanjo da Silva</td>
<td>Grupo Asa Branca de Criminologia Crítica</td>
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Organizations In Support

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<tr>
<td>Somchate Wasantwisut</td>
<td>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'.)</td>
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<td>CRIOLA, a black women's organization based in Brazil, supports the creation of a Department of Black Studies at the UCR</td>
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<td>MARIA SYLVIA APARECIDA DE OLIVEIRA</td>
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<td>Professor, Department of Comparative Studies, The Ohio State University</td>
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<td>MARIA SYLVIA APARECIDA DE OLIVEIRA</td>
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<td>Charlene Carruthers</td>
<td>Northwestern University, PhD Student</td>
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<td>Nana Amoah-Ramey</td>
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<td>Uri McMillan</td>
<td>UCLA, Associate Professor, English &amp; Gender Studies</td>
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<td>Myles Ali</td>
<td>Department of History and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, UC Merced</td>
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<td>William Bowden</td>
<td>University of Rhode Island</td>
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<td>ANA LUIZA GUIMARAES PEREIRA</td>
<td>Estudante de Filosofia na UnB</td>
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<td>Paloma Jesus</td>
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July 29, 2021

To: Lucille Chia  
Chair, CHASS Faculty Executive Committee

From: Jason Stajich  
Chair, Riverside Division

CC: Gabrielle Brewer  
Student Affairs Officer

RE: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Dear Lucille,

I write to provide the consultative feedback memos from the Academic Senate review regarding the pre-proposal for the establishment of a Department of Black Study. I ask that this attached packet be passed to the proponents.

In addition, as you know, Executive Council, who is fully supportive of the proposal, discussed it during their meeting on July 26, 2021, and below are summarized comments from the discussion that, along with the attached committee memos, I trust will be helpful in the next proposal draft:

- UCR, the country, and world are at a fragile and critical moment and UCR would be rising to the challenge of the time by establishing and fully supporting a Department of Black Study.
- UCR Administration must put tangible and sustained support – financial and otherwise – behind this department.
- It is clear that there is significant community support and that such a proposal has resonance beyond the walls of campus.
- Executive Council agreed that this department is necessary at UCR.
- It will be helpful for the proposal to clarify issues around resources in funding the unit’s faculty and administrative staff as noted in some of the memos.
- It is important that in the next version of the proposal that the names of the proponents be included.
- A member mentioned that it may be helpful to clarify the difference between African American studies and Black studies; and the difference between what is offered with the current African American studies major in the Department of Ethnic Studies.

Sincerely,

/s/Jason
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

June 24, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Yinsheng Wang, Chair
Committee on Academic Personnel

Re: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

At its meeting on June 21, 2021, CAP discussed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and, by a vote of +9-0-0, CAP unanimously supported the pre-proposal. In particular, CAP considered the establishment of the new department timely. In addition, CAP would like to note that, similar as existing departments on campus, the academic personnel review process for senate faculty in the newly proposed department should be aligned with APM and the Call.
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

July 6, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Riverside Division

From: Stefano Vidussi, Chair
      Committee on Educational Policy

RE: Pre-Proposal for a Department of Black Study

The Committee on Educational Policy reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study at their July 2, 2021 meeting and look forward to receiving the full proposal for the department for review. The Committee recommends that the program consult the Committee on Educational Policy’s Guidelines for the Establishment of New Academic Programs for the proposed development of the undergraduate major and minor.
COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

June 9, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Xuan Liu, Chair
Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reviewed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and was in supportive of the proposal.
COMMITTEE ON COURSES

June 30, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Ming Lee Tang, Chair
       Committee on Courses

Re: Pre-Proposal for a Department of Black Study

The Committee on Courses reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study and are supportive of the proposal for the new department. The Committee does recommend that the proposal be updated to document what currently approved courses will be included in the proposed four tracks for the major and what advising support will be available to students to assist them with identifying courses. Additionally, the Committee recommends that the proposal be updated to note what the requirements will be for the Ph.D. program that the proposed department intends to develop. The Committee also recommends that the proposal document how the administration and College will support the proposed new department. Lastly, the Committee recommends that the program consult with the Registrar’s Office regarding the availability of the proposed new subject code BLAC and compatibility with the Course Request System (CRS).
GRADUATE COUNCIL

June 15, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Amanda Lucia, Chair
       Graduate Council

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Graduate Council reviewed the proposal for a new Department of Black Study at their June 10, 2021 meeting. The Council was supportive of the proposal wholeheartedly and found it very timely. This department will likely attract more Black graduate students. There may be impacts on the Ethnic Studies department that should be addressed in the proposal. The Council noted that separate proposals for the department, undergraduate program, and graduate program need to be submitted as final proposals.
Hi Cherysa,

The School of Ed FEC was very supportive of this moving forward.

Thanks!

joe

On Thu, Jun 3, 2021 at 3:25 PM Cherysa P Cortez wrote:

Dear Prof. Kahne – Please see the attached and below for the attention of the GSOE FEC.

Best,

__________________________
Cherysa Cortez
On behalf of Senate Division Chair Jason Stajich, I forward a pre-proposal for the establishment of a Department of Black Study at UC Riverside. As a pre-proposal, comments received in this round of review would be incorporated in a subsequent proposal. Please provide your committee's comments via IMS or senate@ucr.edu (you may cc cherysac@ucr.edu) by July 19, 2021. Thank you.

Tasked Committees:

- Academic Personnel
- Courses
- Educational Policy
- Executive Committee - College of Engineering
- Executive Committee - College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
- Executive Committee - Graduate School of Education
- Executive Committee - School of Business
- Executive Committee - School of Medicine
- Executive Committee - School of Public Policy
- Faculty Welfare
- Graduate Council
- Library and Information Technology
- Planning and Budget
- Research
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Joseph Kahne
Dutton Presidential Chair for Education Policy and Politics
Co-Director, Civic Engagement Research Group
University of California, Riverside
www.civicsurvey.org
@jkahne
Pronouns: he, him, his
June 29, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Riverside Division

From: Alejandra Dubcovsky, Chair
      Committee on Library and Information Technology

RE: New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The LIT Committee enthusiastically supports the development of this program. The main concern raised is that, as it stands, the pre-proposal read more like a proposal for a program rather than a department. This department needs permanent lines, so that the faculty in the Black Study department will not be spread too thin or saddled with twice the department service. We recommend that UCR should commit a defined number of FTE lines spread over the first years of the Department and the proposal should be written accordingly.
PLANNING & BUDGET

June 18, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Katherine Kinney, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

RE:  [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The committee supports the proposal to create a department of Black Study. Members of the committee affirmed the importance of this initiative as defining a vital field of research dedicated to countering antiblackness. As the proposal states, formation and support of this department are logical steps to address the serious difficulties UCR has had in retaining back faculty members by creating new structures of support for research, collaboration, and pedagogy. One member of the committee who supports the intellectual vision of the department expressed concern that forming a department could have the unintended consequence of marginalizing black faculty members. Other members expressed excitement about the ways the new department would strengthen interdisciplinary connections across the arts, humanities, and sciences.

In a spirit of support, the committee asks for clarification on the following points.

1) Who is presenting this proposal? There was no cover letter naming the faculty proposing the department.

2) There is no letter of support from the CHASS Dean. A clear commitment of resources, including space and staff FTE, by the Dean is especially important given the history of underfunding or defunding black studies on the UCR campus. The proposal cites the Dean’s “vision” for staffing on page 15, but a letter stating the college’s commitment is needed.
3) How many faculty FTE are required for the Department of Black Study to function viably and ultimately thrive as a strong academic unit? The discussion on page 15 needs to be clarified. Will new FTE be allocated?

4) The proposal states that twenty current faculty members have already expressed interest in transferring a percentage of their lines to the department. This would be a significant reallocation of resources. What will be the impact on CHASS and on specific departments?
June 24, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

From: Declan McCole, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine

Subject: SOM FEC Response to the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Dear Jason,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed the pre-proposal to establish a new Department of Black Study. This pre-proposal is a little beyond our remit with respect to evaluating the merits of this proposed new academic department and undergraduate curriculum. Thus, we defer to committees responsible for oversight of new curricula. We are in agreement with the overall concept and need on campus for a Department of Black Study and how it can contribute to addressing disparities and disenfranchisement by acting as a supportive hub for Black students, faculty, and critical discussions of racial justice and racism, while also playing a critical role in fostering awareness, understanding, and support among non-Black faculty and students. We look forward to reviewing a full proposal that offers a more developed structure and substantially more detail on addressing budget requirements, including how faculty lines are proposed to be transferred from other departments, as well as a more detailed curriculum.

Yours sincerely,

Declan F. McCole, Ph.D.
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee
School of Medicine
COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

June 18, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Riverside Division

From: Sheldon Tan, Chair
      Committee on Undergraduate Admissions

RE: CR. New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

The Committee on Undergraduate Admissions reviewed the Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study and voted to support the proposal. UCR prides itself on its diversity and inclusion. While applications by and admissions of black students are generally increasing, the enrollment of black students has decreased. Having a Department of Black Study will likely improve our prospect of recruiting, enrolling, and retaining black students at UCR. One Committee member abstained from the vote and one committee member did not support the proposal.
COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

July 21, 2021

To: Jason Stajich
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Patricia Morton, Chair
Committee on Faculty Welfare

Re: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

At its remote meeting on July 13, 2021, the Committee on Faculty Welfare discussed the New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study.

The Committee strongly supports the pre-proposal for the formation of a Department of Black Study, which will restore a program that was cut in the 1980s and will address the long history and contemporary reality of antiblackness at UCR as experienced by Black students, staff and faculty. Responding to widespread calls for such a department across UCR and beyond, this pre-proposal outlines a department that will meet many institutional needs and has a strong rationale. UCR has the highest number of Black undergraduate students in the UC system, 1265, but our Black enrollment is declining due to lack of institutional and intellectual support. UCR has a dismal record of retaining Black faculty, who consistently leave our campus for other institutions. Black staff report a hostile and unwelcoming campus climate. This pre-proposal addresses these issues and makes a compelling case for creating the infrastructure to begin their redress.

CFW endorses the comments, questions and suggestions contained in the letter from the CHASS Executive Committee and encourage the Black Study Initiative Group to develop the proposal more fully along those lines. In particular, the relationships between Black Study and the Ethnic Studies Department and the Graduate School of Education should be clarified. A committee member from the GSOE noted that she was not aware of any discussions between her school and the Black Study Initiative Group. The Committee believes the pre-proposal will benefit greatly from broader consultation with allied departments and programs. Like the CHASS Executive Committee, we believe the proposal should include a business plan that details the human, physical and financial resources required for its establishment and a plan for sustaining the Department for the long term.
TO: Jason Stajich, Chair  
Riverside Division

FR: Richard M. Carpiano, Chair  
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: [Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study

Date: July 26, 2021

The School of Public Policy (SPP) Executive Committee read and discussed the document “[Campus Review] New Department Pre-Proposal: Department of Black Study.” Below are the comments from the discussion.

Overall, our committee was very supportive of the pre-proposal’s idea of this Department and its major and minor programs. However, in discussing the pre-proposal, committee members raised several questions and concerns about specifics in the document that could benefit from further clarification or formulation from the authors. I detail those here:

1. **Uniqueness versus potential redundancy.** Ethnic Studies already has an African American Studies concentration (cited extensively throughout this proposal) that could, potentially, be expanded and formed into its own department. Yet, there is no significant discussion in the proposal of why there is a need to build a *brand new* major/minor program and separate department versus building off of or growing the existing African American Studies program. As such, this pre-proposal for a new department reads as a petition to create another unit with very similar intellectual interests and then co-existing with Ethnic Studies for the same—currently rather small—number of majors/minors (as detailed in the pre-proposal).

   Given this lack of discussion in the pre-proposal, a question was raised as to whether there is a backstory/history of some disagreement behind the faculty authors of this pre-proposal and the faculty in Ethnic Studies. Without such further explanation, the pre-proposal has an undertone of this initiative being a campus “land grab” from an existing program and/or a department pre-proposal motivated in part due to prior/current conflict among faculty. Hence, overall, more detail is needed about distinctions/potential redundancies.

2. **Enrollment projections.** Given that the current African American Studies concentration in Ethnic Studies has low enrollment, it is hard to understand why, as discussed in the pre-proposal, the new proposed department will fare better. Related to the preceding point, why not just invest more resources and faculty lines into the African American Studies program to grow it? More justification of such enrollment statistics would be helpful.
3. **Faculty resources.** Concern was raised that this initiative will not succeed with just three faculty and promises of others who want to partly affiliate. A crucial issue is whether the university is willing to devote substantial resources to hiring in this area. The campus needs more faculty with specialization in Black Studies, but the university has not made much investment in this direction. If there is no such investment (at least at a substantial level), even if this department is approved, its program will struggle significantly.

Related to this issue, two hiring suggestions arose:

a. Lobby for the university hire five faculty over next two to three years. Then, the university can either decide to form a department or the university can form a department, but have that action be tied to truly hiring 5 more faculty in this area.

b. It seems it would be ideal to develop a broader plan calling for the university to allocate several hiring lines to recruit (ideally mid-career and senior, perhaps even “Targets of Excellence”) scholars of African American issues who would then be appointed in existing units. They could all be part of a Black Studies major/minor (not a separate administrative unit, but a course of study with various Black Studies required courses). However, being additional hires to campus, they would also contribute to the DEI climate of campus and the departments of which they are part—after all, there are many legitimate complaints regarding the extent of faculty diversity, so this could be one good step forward. It also would not restrict the benefits of such a new program to mostly the Humanities and Arts units within CHASS. Faculty could be appointed in/do scholarship relevant to SOC, POSC, PSYC, and ECON, as well as SPP, GSOE, SOM, etc. Such an idea may make detractors of the recent cluster hire initiative worry or recoil, but it would be a chance for applying lessons learned from last time to do it better this time.

4. **Recruiting Affiliate Faculty to Staff this Program.** Given the low enrollment numbers mentioned in the pre-proposal (current and anticipated in the coming years, especially relative to other CHASS majors/minors), this statement seems curious: “In its early phase, we anticipate that Black Study will have a core of about ten 50% faculty members, and a few 100% appointments.” Related to these issues, the following items were noted as unclear:

a. How the Department will solicit applications from current UCR faculty to affiliate at 0% or 50%, and then potentially 100% in the future

b. How many faculty will come join this Department

c. Why was this affiliate faculty effort not done already with Ethnic Studies for their African American Studies concentration?

d. How diverse the range of represented disciplines will be (and what that will mean for covering courses, training students, etc.). Notably, why are none of the social sciences except Anthropology represented in the pre-proposal’s list. This omission is curious considering how much relevant scholarship is being done in psychology and the social sciences (including in SPP).

e. A list of interested faculty. As detailed, the pre-proposal states, “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.”

f. What this recruitment of affiliate faculty may mean for current departments/programs (many resource-constrained), where faculty are already expected to cover a certain workload for their unit? Without hires and dedicated resources, this seems a lot like just rearranging faculty in already under-resourced units and colleges.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Carriano

Richard M. Carriano, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Professor of Public Policy
July 24, 2021

TO: Jason Stajich, Chair
    Academic Senate

FROM: Philip Brisk, Chair
      BCOE Executive Committee

RE: Pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study

Dear Jason,

The BCOE Executive Committee reviewed the pre-proposal for a Department of Black Study, which, if approved, will be housed in CHASS. The Executive Committee identified two key areas in which BCOE is a stakeholder: (1) BCOE undergraduates could choose to double-major or minor in Black Study in addition to their chosen BCOE major; (2) BCOE could approve new undergraduate courses proposed and taught by Black Study faculty to satisfy BCOE General Education requirements.

One weakness of the pre-proposal is that it did not clearly delineate the membership of the Black Study Initiative and which individuals were putting this proposal forward; this information will be essential when a subsequent proposal is submitted for Senate review.

Several Committee members requested clarification about how the program will be funded. If the program is to be funded exclusively by CHASS, then the Committee has no comment, as it is not this Committee’s purview to impose priorities on another College; if central funds are to be used, then the Committee is concerned that these funds could be diverted from other units in dire need, such as ITS.

One Committee member stated that the Department of Black Study would not serve to further understand the plight of Blacks in America.
PRE-PROPOSAL FOR A DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

I. OVERVIEW AND WHY A DEPARTMENT OF BLACK STUDY

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 Brasília, 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

![Graph 1](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Source: [https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Graph 2. Black Student Enrollment by UCR College

![Graph 2](https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs)

Source: [https://ir.ucr.edu/enrollments-programs](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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percent of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://diversity.ucr.edu/student-diversity-statistics](https://diversity.ucr.edu/student-diversity-statistics)

Graduate Student Enrollment, Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percent of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American or Alaskan</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://diversity.ucr.edu/student-diversity-statistics](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/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
Karen Rojas
La Familia
Karla Raiz-Anaya
Katherine Callejas
Keisha Forsythe
   Sustainability Studies
Kelly Garcia
Kendrick Davis
   National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), UCR, Bioengineering
Kevin Rivas
   QTPOC
Khadijeh Sudqi
Kiana Wong
Kimberly Aguilar
   Political Science department
Laura Carreon-Alonso
Lauren Francisco
Lauryn Dingle
layla jones-pacheco
Layvin Manghane
Leah Duque
Lena Fatimi
Leslie Moreno
Liam Carrasco
linda cardona
Linda Sanchez
Lizbeth Horta
Chass

Lizbeth Marquez Torres
ASUCR CHASS Senator

Lúcia Maria Ribeiro de Lima
No onde.

Madeleine Bunting
Public Policy

Maeve-Darly Domond

Manasi Soni

Mariafernanda Arroyo

Maribel Gonzalez

Marisol De Los Santos Lopez

Marivel Palone
University of California, Riverside

Maryam Azizadah

Matthew Lutz

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Black Student Union at SUNY Cortland

Shani Shay  
Black Underground Scholars

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UC Berkeley Alumni

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

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Sora Han
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Stephanie Jones

Stephanie Narrow

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Sydney Ji

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Michigan State U

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Fordham University

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CRIOLA

CRIOLA, a black women’s organization based in Brazil, supports the creation of a Department of  
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Cynthia

Cynthia Huerta
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Daniel Cruz
Daniel Cumming
Daniel Gonzalez

Family member of current student

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Victoria Gonzales
   Community Member
Viri García
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   Starting Over, Inc.
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Takunda Darwish
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Wan-Chuan Kao
Washington and Lee University

Zach Sell
Drexel University

Zifeng Liu
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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
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,

Derick A. Fay, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Acting Chair
Department of Anthropology
University of California, Riverside, USA
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 feudalist 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 STEMM 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 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.

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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

Monica J Carson, PhD  
Professor and Chair of Biomedical Sciences  
S. Sue Johnson Presidential Endowed Chair in Glial-Neuronal Interactions  
Director, Center for Glial-Neuronal Interactions  
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Neuroinflammation  
900 University Ave, 1130 MRB  
Riverside, CA 92521  
monica.carson@ucr.edu
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 presuppositions [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 feudalist 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

+++ 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 STEMM 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