

**TITLE:** Advancing Faculty Diversity and Epistemologies in Black Study, Health & Environmental Inequities

**YEAR:** 2021-2022 Academic Year

**INVESTIGATORS:**

João Costa Vargas, Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Black Studies Initiative

**ABSTRACT:**

This project proposes a multidisciplinary cluster hire to promote inclusion of Black Study faculty at UCR and to advance Afro diasporic epistemologies in the study of health and environmental inequities. The interconnected long-term forms of inequality made evident by the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis, and racialized state violence render urgent this proposed cluster hire. This interdisciplinary collaboration engages the various facets of anti-blackness and the overlapping mutual ability to respond to these contemporary challenges. Building on earlier related efforts to support faculty retention, this cluster hire will support (a) two existing departments (Political Science; Religious Studies) and (b) exciting initiatives working to form two new departments – The Department of Black Study (DBS) and The Department of Environment, Sustainability, and Health Equity (ESHQ).

The proposed cluster hire will promote interdisciplinary collaboration in developing new curriculum, advancing creative and community-engaged activities, and promoting hiring and retention of Black Study faculty.