Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies Cluster
PROPOSAL

Introduction
This proposed faculty cluster in Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies marks the place where a tradition of excellence at UMass-Amherst meets one of the world’s most pressing questions: how to best address the legacies and promises of a transnational globe? How to make globalization’s traffic across national boundaries part of the solution rather than a new version of the age-old problems of violation, colonization, and impoverishment? In particular, can humans intentionally make the multiple legacies of ethnic or religious diaspora and the fact of transnational socio-economic networks the basis of new conversations across ethnic and national boundaries, and in turn the seedbed of new ideas and solutions?

UMass Amherst is poised to lead the way in this crucial, timely project. The University’s historical leadership in ethnic, postcolonial, and diaspora studies, as well as in international management and global health initiatives, strategically positions us to forge groundbreaking interdisciplinary answers to this set of questions. Building on this tradition and investing in this cluster initiative, we can furthermore cultivate our students’ ability to think transnationally and to become part of the solution. (See Appendix A for external funding plans including for curricular development; and see Appendix C for an outline of the campus’s existing strengths in diaspora and transnational studies.)

Through positions in the Isenberg School of Management, Public Health, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities, we propose an interdisciplinary cluster that will rally and realize the full potential of our campus’s impressive contributions to these fields. With the support of the four deans and all relevant department chairs, we request ten positions across four colleges as listed in the next section and described in detail in Appendix B. In light of the current economic crisis, we have prioritized four positions for next year, one in each of the four participating schools/colleges. Ideally the others would be ramped in over the next two years.

Were these positions to be listed in the Chronicle of Higher Ed and elsewhere as part of a UMass-Amherst cluster in “Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies,” the University would signal its commitment to its faculty’s long-standing reputation for “thinking globally”--especially about issues of race, economics, colonialism, migration, and transnational labor, media, rights, and health. Indeed, in job postings as well as in grant proposals, the University could frame this initiative as one that builds on its recent, well-supported, and nationally admired African American Studies cluster in CHFA and its recent investment in the Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino/a Studies (CLACLS) in SBS. In other words it could build on the message recently sent to our intellectual peers and our job candidates: that this flagship campus is the future lifeline of an old Massachusetts tradition—that is, the long legacy of social justice leadership for which the state and its university are known.

Brief List of Positions (See Appendix B for fuller descriptions and rationale)
FIRST-YEAR PRIORITY POSITIONS:
Dept of Management: Transnational organization studies and transmigration
Afro-American Studies: African American cultural production since 1945, emphasis on reciprocal international relationships with African and diasporic artists/social movements
Anthropology: Cultural anthropologist of diaspora and migration of peoples in the new economy
Public Health: Ethnic relations and global disease intervention
SECOND AND THIRD YEAR POSITIONS [if not otherwise funded through depts]:

Near Eastern and Judaic Studies: Islamic Studies and its diasporas
LLC: Black European cultural production
English: Afro-Caribbean dramatic literature and Americas diasporic drama
Women’s Studies: Women and gender in Latin American studies, emphasis on diaspora
Legal Studies: Migration and attendant legal formations in local, national, and international contexts
Communication: New transnational media and diasporic communities and culture

Intellectual Rationale and Vision

Our campus’s strengths in diaspora and transnational studies are well-known, and we describe them in more detail in Appendix C, although they are also at risk without further investment. First of all, three distinguished programs on our campus focus on specific diasporas: African-American Studies, Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, and Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino/a Studies. Meanwhile, many of our faculty in SBS, HFA, the Institute for Global Health, and the Department of Management are among the recognized leaders in the fields of race, transnationalism, and diaspora studies, which in turn has attracted to our ranks new junior faculty working in these fields. Yet, to date, no structure exists to bring those programs and individuals together. The cluster would thus become the magnet for what are now many separate programs devoted to these transnational issues, creating a synergy for cutting-edge work that has heretofore been hidden or segregated in pockets and at the same time bolstering programs weakened through faculty departures and hiring freezes, such as Judaic and Near Eastern Studies.

In doing so, we would expect this cluster initiative to place UMass-Amherst more squarely on the map nationally and internationally as a site where such innovative scholarship can be undertaken. Our programs (as detailed below under “Cluster Activities”) would be distinguished intellectually not only by their genuinely interdisciplinary structures but also by their comparative, cross-diasporic focus. In this section we describe their intellectual underpinnings.

On the one hand, the faculty involved in cluster initiatives who study and teach distinctive diasporas would continue to do so. Likewise, those who work on broad transnational formations would continue to do so. Yet on the other hand, faculty involved in cluster initiatives would learn about each others’ theoretical and methodological approaches developing comparative frameworks and models of cultural co-formation as either the focus of or the backdrop for their research. Conversations among faculty and in classrooms would be inter-cultural and inter-diasporic. They would explore, for instance, similarities and differences between historic/traditional diasporas (e.g., African, Jewish, German, Irish, Polish, Armenian) and more contemporary ones (e.g., Vietnamese, Latin American, subcontinental Indian, Iranian). And—leading the way on some of the most cutting-edge work in the field-- they would focus directly on the interactional formation of such communities, including in the realms of health, economic practices, institutional structures, religion, literature, architecture, family structure, and so on. In short, seminars or events would give special attention not only to comparison of diasporic experiences but also to the interactive and dialectical co-formations of these communities, as for example among the Chinese, Indian, Native American, and African diasporas in the Caribbean, the U.S., or the U.K.

From both disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives, faculty would herein address theoretical and methodological questions that emerge from Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies. How can we conceptualize multiple and intersecting diasporas in a way that remains true to the historical specificity of each while also acknowledging their mutual entanglement? How can a diaspora an “imagined community” linked to nation-building yet dispersed across nations? How can
nationally-funded social structures legitimately support transnational families created by migration for labor? How can national or international laws address the land and economic claims of indigenous populations as well as the newer claims of displaced or involuntary immigrant communities? How are transnational corporations implicated in all these? How might obstacles met by NGOs, such as Doctors Without Borders, be overcome by studying solutions implicitly modeled, for example, in unofficial transnational feminist networks, or in postcolonial art and literature? How do processes of transmigration contribute to the economic success of transnational communities?

These are as-yet barely asked questions in the context of transnational and diasporic studies, and UMass-Amherst has the intellectual power to address them. Indeed we could be the first U.S. institution to create a formal transdisciplinary structure for analyzing them. Other countries have founded institutions to encourage this kind of comparative study and cross-cultural networking, such as the European Union’s “Intercultural Dialogue” programs, or a handful of centers for comparative diaspora and transnational studies, of which there is one each in Canada, the UK, Ireland, and France. Ultimately, UMass Amherst could break important ground by launching the first Institute of Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies in the United States. Given that the U.S. is home to the most diverse set of diasporic populations, our students and researchers are particularly well-positioned to think broadly about these questions. We could readily make the case to funders that we are mounting a long overdue project and that this campus has the cross-disciplinary strengths to do so.

In classrooms, in faculty think tanks and seminars, and in grant proposals, we thus propose to bring together the campus’s multiple diasporic communities of students and scholars in order to foster a sharing of intellectual strengths. This focus promises to have transformative effects on transnational and diasporic studies. And it is nicely aligned with the reputation for forward-thinking, social justice efforts within the state of Massachusetts and at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. What could be more fitting than to face the global economic crisis that has called for hard choices in the world and on our campus with a renewed commitment to Massachusetts’ historical leadership on the world stage through a concentrated investment in our prize-winning researchers in diaspora and transnational studies?

As detailed below under “Cluster Activities,” this initiative furthermore aims to enhance student access, retention, and career success in a symbiotic relation with the above structures for faculty development and collaborative research. We envision new projects in teaching focused on diaspora and transnationalism which would hold wide appeal for potential and current graduate and undergraduate students as well as parents, and alums. Training in diaspora and transnational studies would send our graduate students out into the job market with new interdisciplinary skills, attuned to the current state of the world, that would draw the favorable attention of other academic institutions and likewise equip our graduate students for success in other professional positions. Moreover, given that practically all families in the U.S. have some sort of diasporic or transnational legacy, all undergraduate students would find themselves represented within this initiative’s courses. In particular, for ethnic and religious minorities who have been negatively affected by diaspora - often among the most under-served communities with the highest numbers of first-generation college students - this initiative can form an innovative basis for outreach to students and alum in these communities. The cluster’s interdisciplinary curricula in diaspora and transnational studies would enable students to make an empowering range of new connections: to each other; to their histories and home communities; between their communities and their disciplinary studies at the university; and between all of these and their aspirations for viable work in a transnational world.
Finally, because this cluster has extraordinary potential to integrate high-level research and curricular innovation, it also has strong potential for drawing external funding, including for disciplines with otherwise limited opportunities for sponsored research. Large grants for social scientists and humanists favor programs related to curricula or to under-served populations, including first-generation student access, retention, and success. Because of its inclusion of these student dimensions as well as intellectual dimensions, the work of this cluster may be fundable by the Ford, Carnegie, Kellogg, Gates, McCarthur, Mellon, and Davis Foundations as well as the Social Science Research Council, the NIH, and FIPSE. See the section on “Potential to Attract Funding” for more detail and Appendix A for a list of potential funders based on an initial search.

**Cluster Activities: Phases One and Two**

The leaders of this cluster, comprised of new and current faculty, would build on our base of excellence in two phases. In phase one, as detailed below, we would launch a faculty seminar and undertake collaborative course design. To do so, we would tap on-campus and local sources of support, including CHFA Dean’s Initiative Grants, General Education Diversity Grants, Five College Faculty Seminars, Mellon Mutual Mentoring Grants, and ISHA—programs that epitomize the UMass “brand” in their devotion to matters of equity, diversity, and global justice. If phase one were successful, in phase two cluster participants would have both sponsored and state funding that would support more robust and permanent programs.

In **phase one**, with campus support from the sources named above, cluster participants would:

1) Target and seek external funding, as laid out in the next section of this document-- and including for institutionalization of programs described in this section.

2) Build intellectual networks through an interdisciplinary faculty and graduate-student seminar. Early in the first year of the seminar, participants would offer a series of presentations distilling their disciplinary theoretical and methodological approaches for each other—in effect, developing interdisciplinary knowledge. Concurrently, they would read cutting-edge materials organized around specific topics and including a range of disciplinary/interdisciplinary approaches. Participants would ultimately consider questions and models for research and teaching about multiple diasporas within a transnational world.

3) Host outside visitors, to learn from and cultivate further relationships with off-campus experts on these topics, while also showcasing the range of UMass-Amherst faculty working on these issues.

4) Design new courses and research opportunities for both prospective and current undergraduate students, while also creating strong teaching opportunities for grad students. In the first year, cluster faculty would design two to four courses, on and off campus, and in the second year they would implement them, perhaps linked by some thematic phrase or word (e.g. “Worlding”). We imagine 1 or 2 freshman seminars on campus and an outreach seminar in Springfield and/or Holyoke in high schools and/or community colleges. Freshman seminars would be testing grounds for larger Gen Ed courses.

The off-campus seminars might be one-week events designed to involve high-performing students in underserved communities. The conceptual goal would be to create a mutual widening of transnational/diasporic/immigrant perspectives, wherein UMass faculty, UMass students, and high school students learn from each other’s viewpoints, while faculty give students a sample of ways to think more transnationally and historically about their experiences. The practical goal would be to attract students to college, to disciplines they
might not have considered, and to UMass-Amherst in particular, where they would be invited to continue relationships with the professors and graduate students who taught the seminar.

The conceptual framework for cluster-related courses, on and off campus, would emphasize **interactivity** among groups, diasporas, and histories. Curricular initiatives would cultivate productive relations among students of diverse diasporic or immigrant backgrounds, yet the goal for these relations would not simply be understanding, identification, or tolerance. Rather, we would aim to cultivate students’ grasp of the fact that all of their communities have *together* made the world and each other-- in troubled, tactical, or transformative historical inter-relation. Courses would be designed to include classroom practices and assignments in which interactivity among peoples, histories, and nations *would be lived within the classroom as well as studied there.*

5) Revisit and refine the original hiring plan, and participate in the 2nd year of hiring.

If the above efforts are successful, cluster participants would implement **phase two**. It is too early to predict the shape of more permanent programs, but we would expect them to include:

--a continuing faculty/grad student seminar and a lecture series, including two-three annual visiting scholars, who remain on campus for an extended stay, ranging from a week to a year

--a continuing outreach seminar off campus, aiming especially to serve and attract high-performing students of diasporic, immigrant, and underserved commmunities

--an undergraduate certificate program, building on the piloted courses and ideally culminating in a 1-credit undergrad career seminar, which would teach students to mobilize their interdisciplinary and transnational perspectives as they conceive of careers and pursue jobs. Possibly coordinated with Five Colleges, including through blended courses.

--collaboration with the Springfield Initiative, perhaps ultimately partnering with our campus’s award-winning programs and faculty in “green science,” for instance by productively framing the problems of environmental racism and classism

--most ambitiously, the founding of an Institute of Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies, a niche as yet unfilled in the United States. In all of North America, the only center combining diaspora and transnational studies is at the University of Toronto, with a focus on humanities and social sciences. This institute would showcase the cluster programs and provide an umbrella organization for the centers listed in Appendix C.

**Potential to Attract Funding and Increase Reputation**

As mentioned, this cluster has extraordinary potential to integrate high-level research and student success, and therefore to draw external funding and cultivate an international reputation for UMass-Amherst. Our research indicates that our proposal precisely fits the profile for recent six-digit awards from the Ford Foundation, the Davis Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and FIPSE. See Appendix A for a list of potential funders based on an initial search.

One of the cluster’s first actions in Phase One would be to convene a small funding committee to research these possibilities more fully. Members of this committee would be charged with the task of building relationships with funding officers at granting institutions, and of writing funding proposals for sponsored support, with the support of OFCR and OGCA. This committee would also be aiming more broadly to establish a stronger UMass presence in the funding worlds of the humanities and social sciences. Finally we would also capitalize on the fact that our faculty and programs in diaspora and transnational studies have existing relationships with relevant funders.
Conclusion
The cluster in “Comparative Diasporas and Transnationalism” would catalyze long overdue dialogues among the professional schools, humanists, and social scientists on our campus. With a consolidated focus on the global movements, cultures, and inequities of diasporic populations, this campus could create a highly generative interaction among these units and, in turn, between practice and theory, political ideals and local institutions, lessons from the past and visions for the future. Thus the synergy of a cluster in Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies would make the sum greater than the already-impressive parts on our campus. In turn it would allow UMass-Amherst to claim its proper “market share” as an institution known for high-level theoretical and pragmatic work on fundamental social problems.

APPENDIX A: Funding Sources
We would seek both more focused grants in specific problems or populations related to diaspora and transnationalism, and broader grants to fund new institutional initiatives. The former might include grants from NSF, NIH, and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). For instance, we might submit a proposal for the SSRC’s “Academia in the Public Sphere: Islam and Muslims in World Contexts,” which “seeks to promote public engagement and public scholarship among university faculty and area studies centers on the topic of Islam and Muslims in world contexts.” To support scholar- visitors to the faculty seminar, we are looking at the SSRC’s “Collaborative Visiting Fellowships,” for scholars from the Americas to visit and engage in collaborative activities with members of ESRC-supported projects in Britain, or for British scholars at ESRC-supported projects to visit collaborators in the Americas.

The cluster would also be a point of support for our faculty’s individual applications or applications for renewal of current funding, such as [Public health].

Other, broader possibilities include the Mellon Foundation’s "Scholarly Communications," which supports program building and interdisciplinary work; and also their Sawyer Seminars Fund, which was established to "provide support for comparative research on the historical and cultural sources of contemporary developments." The latter is by invitation only; our committee would seek to position UMass for an invitation. Another possible source for support for activities in this cluster is NSF’s Law and Social Science Program which specifically calls for proposals that “extend beyond any single nation as well as how local and national legal institutions, systems, and cultures affect or are affected by transnational and international phenomena.” In addition, NSF’s Science, Technology and Society Program is a logical source for support for research in the impact of new media and technology on diasporic communities and transnationalism.

We could also imagine an eventual partnership with UMass’s programs in “green science,” perhaps through the Springfield Initiative, would open up another field of grant possibilities.

Finally, there are a number of sources for large grants that would fund curricular innovations, including with support for faculty development, including the following.

FIPSE: This Fund “supports and disseminates innovative reform projects that promise to be models for improving the quality of postsecondary education and increasing student access.”
They fund projects addressing: postsecondary education access; retention and completion; student preparation for college; and curricula reform. They also “encourage bold thinking and innovative projects” (their emphasis). Possible 6-digit grants.

**Ford Foundation**: This Foundation is a perfect fit for our proposed initiative. They “support interdisciplinary scholarship in the social sciences and humanities on the premise that complex problems are best approached from multiple perspectives, including a focus on gender, race, ethnicity, identity, religion and culture.” They particularly “look for ways to build knowledge that deepens understanding of diversity and helps inform civic discourse in a continually diversifying nation and world.” Possible 6-digit grants. They specify the following priorities:

- Building and sharing knowledge about educational policies and practices that promote high-quality education for all students, with particular emphasis on the experience of marginalized groups in primary, secondary and higher education
- Fostering community engagement and participation that promote improved and more equitable educational policies and practices
- Strengthening the quality of teaching and learning within school systems, particularly for underserved groups, through the development of innovative models
- Funding scholarship that can inform the public discourse about issues of identity, difference and equity in globalizing societies
- Funding fellowship programs for individuals, model programs at institutions and research to inform the policy discourse

**Davis Educational Foundation**: The Davis Educational Foundation “seeks to strengthen the undergraduate programs of public and private, regionally accredited, baccalaureate degree granting colleges and universities in New England.” Favors programs that have “expansive impact on curriculum and learning” and that “strengthen the general education core of the undergraduate experience.” Also support collaborations within consortia that seek to cut costs, so involvement of Five Colleges could be designed with this in mind. Possible 6-digit grants.

**APPENDIX B: Requested positions: fuller descriptions and rationale**

**Isenberg School (methodology/open geographic focus):**

*Professor of Transnational Organization Studies and Transmigration*

Expertise in transnational and transmigration processes and movements interrogating the structure of the nation-state, such as formation of identities, cultural and postcolonial forms, economic and political ties, and social organization, with specific focus on transnational business organizations, including transnational entrepreneurship, as central actors in these processes. Key areas of interest, among others, are transnational modes of governance; transnational actors, spaces, and institutions; international competition networks; global commodity chains; global
sustainability; labor transnationalism; Corporate Social Responsibility as transnational movement; Bottom of the Pyramid movement. The ideal candidate would have **prior experience in a business school environment but with strong collaborative ties to social sciences and/or humanities departments.** Her/his work should show demonstrated excellence in interdisciplinary scholarship.

**Afro-American Studies Department (African Diaspora):**

*Cultural/Diaspora Studies*. This is a position on the assistant or associate professor level in African American Cultural Studies with a special interest in the reciprocal relationship between African American artists and artistic movements and mass social and political movements since 1945 and their relation to similar movements of Africans and African descendants internationally. We are particularly interested in candidates with a strong background in African American literature, art, and culture in the second half of the twentieth century, shoring up our department's position as the premier scholarly center of such scholarship and teaching."

**Anthropology (methodology/open geographic focus):**
The Department of Anthropology seeks to hire a cultural anthropologist with research specialization in the study of diaspora and migration of peoples in the new economy. Geographical area is open. We seek a scholar with expertise in the theoretical and empirical study of transnationalism, globalization as well as the shifting frameworks through which cultural diversity, race, citizenship and diaspora itself are understood across distinct national boundaries. We seek candidates who can contribute skills in ethnography and emergent research methodologies suitable to the indepth analysis of lived experience and creative cultural adaptation for which anthropology is known. Ability to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue and a proven track record in securing external funding is required. This hire is part of an initiative at the University to build research excellence in the study of diaspora and transnationalism. Candidates will complement our Departmental research strengths in the study of power and inequality in Europe, the Americas, and the African American diaspora, building synergistic linkages across these.

**Communication (methodology/open geographic focus):**

*Media, Diaspora and Transnationalism.* Position at the level of Assistant Professor. Expertise in transnational media and diasporic communities and culture, emphasizing the role of new media and technologies. Research interests may include the study of diasporic media, race, ethnicity and (trans)national identity, as well as the study of diasporic culture as everyday life in the context of transnational migration, relocation and displacement.

**English (Diasporic and/or Minority drama and performance)**

Contemporary Drama and Performance. Assistant Professor focusing on diasporic and/or minority drama in one or more of the following ethnic fields: Latino, Afro-Caribbean, African American, Asian American, Native American. Methodology open: gender studies, performance studies, and cultural studies preferred. Successful candidate will develop courses in dramatic literature and theory, redesign and teach a large general education course, and collaborate with interdisciplinary initiatives including a graduate certificate program. The department seeks a faculty member who can build upon current strengths in American Studies, gender studies, and
postcolonial studies. Interdisciplinary research that explores relationships between modern and contemporary performance across different cultures particularly welcome.

**Judaic and Near Eastern Studies (Muslim diaspora)**
The Dept. of Judaic and Near Eastern Languages seeks a specialist in Islamic Studies with interest in diaspora studies and especially welcomes candidates in Persian and/or Turkish Studies. Near native-level fluency in one or more languages required. The ideal candidate will focus on the relationship of Iran and/or Turkey to the Arab and/or Islamic world, as well as to its diasporic expressions, such as people of Iranian and/or Turkish origin living outside of Iran and Turkey. A commitment to interdisciplinary research and dialogue is essential; expertise in gender studies is welcome. Discipline is open.

**LLC (African Diaspora)**
The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures seeks to hire a scholar of twentieth- and twenty-first century Black European cultural studies, preferably with a focus on literature or film. We are looking for a candidate with a background in transnational, postcolonial, diaspora, migration, and/or race/ethnic theory. We would also welcome expertise in gender studies, film studies, media studies, queer studies, Africana studies, European Studies, and Atlantic studies. The successful candidate will have a demonstrable record of research across disciplinary boundaries and a willingness to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue. A candidate with knowledge about the cultural productions of more than one Black European population would be especially desirable. We expect that our new colleague will contribute to graduate certificate programs in Modern European Studies and African Diaspora Studies and will help to build a new research cluster in Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies. Fluency in at least one European language and record of excellence in teaching required. The candidate will join the unit of LLC that best corresponds to his/her scholarship and teaching.

**Legal Studies (methodology/open geographic region)**
The Department of Legal Studies is seeking a new colleague who focuses on migration and its attendant legal, cultural, economic, and political formations in local, national, and international contexts. The ideal candidate in Legal Studies would build on the department's a record of success in teaching, research and grant activity related to: immigration law and policy; legal and cultural citizenship and forms of inclusion and exclusion within and across national boundaries; social justice and conflict transformation across political, territorial, and jurisdictional borders; comparative law and society; trans-border structures of legality, governance, and power.

**School of Public Health (methodology/open geographic region)**
Within the Institute for Global Health, we propose to establish a new Center for the Study of Ethnic Relations that will conduct basic research on the origins of violence among ethnic groups, and develop a wide range of intervention programs that will reduce the high levels of morbidity and mortality associated with violent outbreaks. This position will head up a program of research that aims to understand why group relations become hostile and violent and how to promote peaceful relations between groups. Successful candidates will draw on various theoretical approaches, research methodologies, and practices to understand the factors (e.g., poverty and unequal access to resources across groups) that lead to ethnic tensions, as well as the consequences of ethnic tensions and violence for wellbeing and health. S/he will employ a
variety of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies at different levels of analysis ranging from the individual, to cultural, to societal structures and institutions. Potential areas of emphasis include a focus on both preventing destructive conflict and violence and addressing their negative impact on populations.

**Women's Studies (Latin American diaspora)**

Women's studies is seeking an assistant professor with expertise in women and gender in Latin American studies with an emphasis on diaspora. This vital area will complement the department’s focus on women and gender in African American, Asian American, and other ethnic diasporas. As an interdisciplinary program we welcome candidates from a variety of disciplines, but candidates’ research and teaching must contextualize women and gender within the interlocking systems of race/nationality/ethnicity, class, and sexuality. Candidates must have some teaching experience, preferably in women and gender studies or in issues of women and gender within another department. The program offers a major, minor, and a graduate certificate.

**Appendix C: Excellence Awaiting Leadership—Our Current Strengths**

As detailed below, UMass-Amherst has a remarkably strong foundation for building the programs described above. In addition, these campus strengths have been enhanced by and are strikingly consonant with the most successful initiatives of the Five Colleges. Above all, CISA (Crossroads in the Study of the Americas) -- one of the oldest, best-known, historically best-funded, and most interdisciplinary programs of Five Colleges, Inc -- has made the Pioneer Valley a visible matrix of research in diaspora and transnational studies, even as it has developed networks and habits of collaboration among five college faculty in these fields. Our institution has especially close ties to the program insofar as both directors of the CISA program have been UMass faculty. This cluster is an opportunity to capitalize on that investment in CISA, to sustain an excellent program with which UMass-Amherst is strongly identified.

The Five Colleges, furthermore, offer several certificates for undergraduates that will amplify their understanding of comparative diaspora and transnational studies, including the Five College African Studies Certificate and the Five College International Relations Certificate. UMass faculty have also convened specific Five College faculty seminars in transnational studies, and thus have laid the ground for this cluster vision. Faculty from CLACLS lead the Five College faculty seminar in Transnational Latinidad Studies, and faculty in Afro-American Studies and English lead the Five College faculty seminar in Atlantic Studies, both of which have brought preeminent scholars to campus and built connections among scholars working in different nations, languages, and disciplines. Our faculty are similarly involved in building transnational relations with African scholars through the African Studies Council of Five Colleges. Again, these seminars and programs have become vital traditions that merit continued investment. And these relationships provide the basis for coordination with Five Colleges for an undergraduate certificate program and other possible collaborations.

As we hope the full list below establishes, UMass-Amherst has deep traditions as well as broad research prominence in a range of social and scientific fields concerned with Diaspora and Transnational Studies.
**W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies:** Our Afro-American Studies Department is recognized as one of the oldest and best Afro-American Studies Departments in the U.S., and one of only three with a Ph.D. program. It has just this year gained approval for a Five College Certificate Program in African Diaspora studies. Our campus is internationally known for archival material on one of the foundational scholars for diasporic studies and great African American thinker—W.E.B. DuBois, whose very life, scholarship and globe-spanning political work set key paradigms for transnational research. Having recently received a large grant to digitalize the DuBois materials, the University already offers tremendous resource for scholars and important opportunities to engage students and the general public in the history of the African Diaspora and diasporan scholarship. Scholars in the department whose distinguished work on the African diaspora is important for this cluster include Ernest Allen, John Bracey, Yemisi Jimoh, Kim Morrison, Amilcar Shabazz, Manisha Sinha, James Smethurst, William Strickland, and Stephen Tracey.

**Judaic and Near Eastern Studies Program:** The University of Massachusetts Amherst is the only public institution of higher learning in New England – and one of the few nationwide – with a department wholly dedicated to cultivating an appreciation of the historic role played by Jewish culture in the development of human civilization. It offers a curriculum constantly invigorated by interdisciplinary perspectives and a focus on the worldwide Jewish diaspora as well as the political landscape of the contemporary Middle East, its people, cultures, and languages. Since 1990, its Center for Jewish Studies has coordinated scholarly research, educational programs and cultural affairs, seeking to generate greater interest in Jewish history, literature and culture. It has recently received a grant from the Posen Foundation for the Study of Secular Judaism. Its distinguished director James Young is a renowned literary and cultural historian of the Holocaust and the only Jewish and American member of Germany’s National Holocaust Memorial Committee. Other scholars from the JUDNEA whose excellent research will contribute to our cluster include: Aviva Ben-Hur (the Jewish diaspora in Suriname), Jay Berkowitz (the Jewish diaspora in France), Tayeb El-Hibri (Arabic and Islamic Studies), Olga Gershenson (the Russian-Jewish diaspora and Jewish immigration), Robert Rothstein (Yiddish literature and culture, Emmanuel Rubin (Jewish music in America), and Susan Shapiro (Jewish philosophy and post-Holocaust religious thought, also the director of the Religious Studies Program).

**Center for Latin-American, Caribbean, and Latino/a Studies:** CLACLS sponsors a number of research groups on issues related to diaspora and transnational studies, including Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural and Political Transformations, Black Cultures and Racial Politics in the Americas, and Transnational Latinidades and Cultural Production. In December 2008 it hosted a two-day international conference on “Reconfigurations of Racism and New Scenarios of Power after 2001” attended by a number of Latin American political figures. Together with the Democracy and Global Transformation Program, Universidad Nacional General San Marcos, Lima, Perú, it is host to an international consortium on Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural-Political Transformations. CLACLS offers graduate and undergraduate certificates. CLACLS director, Professor of Political Science, Sonia Alvarez is a renown scholar of social movements in Latin America and is a former president of the Latin
American Studies Association. CLACLS has no faculty appointments of its own but assembles a distinguished group of faculty from other departments of the university.

**Asian and Asian-American Studies Program:** The program offers an undergraduate certification in Asian and Asian-American Studies Director C.N. Le focuses his scholarship on race and ethnicity, immigration and ethnic communities, Asian American Studies, and social demography. Established in 2000, the program draws its faculty from other departments of the university.

**Center for Public Policy and Administration:** CPPA offers a Master's in Public Policy & Administration (MPPA) program, a MPPA/ MBA program together with the Isenberg School of Management, and a MPPA / Food Sciences specialization. The program could provide useful certification for graduate students focused on Comparative Diaspora and Transnational Studies.

**Institute for Global Health:** Established in 2006, the mission of the IGH is to protect and promote the health of people across the globe and has a special emphasis on finding integrated system solutions to health problems associated with post-colonial, post-conflict social conditions. The IGH attempts to reduce threats to population health, ranging from emerging infectious disease epidemics to the aftermath of natural disasters to the social unrest caused by hunger and the inequitable burden of disease. Director David Buchanan focuses on international health and social justice.

**Interdepartmental Program in Film Studies:** Each spring the Film Studies Program sponsors the “Multicultural Film Festival,” with many films directed by diasporic filmmakers. The program has recently launched a graduate certificate in film studies.

**Political Economy Research Institute:** PERI's Globalization and Macroeconomics program provides research to promote sustained full employment and widespread prosperity for advanced and developing countries. PERI's director Gerald Epstein researches the global economic crisis.

**Psychology of Peace and Violence Concentration,** is directed by Linda Tropp, whose scholarship focuses on issues of prejudice and intergroup contact, group identity, and reactions to group disadvantage.

**Translation Center:** Director Edwin Genzler specializes in translation theory and postcolonial theory.

**Women’s Studies Program:** The scholarship of Women’s Studies Director Arlene Avakian focuses on the Armenian Diaspora. Faculty members whose work will contribute to our cluster include Millian Kang (Korean diaspora in the U.S.), Dayo Gore (African-American women), Banu Subramaniam (population genetics and postcolonial studies), and Svati Shah (political economy of migration, South Asian diaspora). The undergraduate major and minor as well as the Graduate Certificate in Feminist Studies focus on intersectional analysis, contextualizing women and gender within the complex web of interlocking social formations including race/nationality/ethnicity, class, and sexuality. The Graduate Certificate in Feminist Studies demands cross-cultural expertise as well as an intersectional analysis.
In addition, many individual research scholars working on diaspora and transnational studies may be found in other departments of the university, including:

**Anthropology Department:** Whitney Battle-Baptiste (African diaspora theory, African diaspora archaeology), Krista Harper (race, ethnicity, and human rights, Roma [“Gypsy”] diaspora), Elizabeth Krause (population politics in a transnational Europe), Enoch Page (race and racism in the African diaspora, including the US, Zimbabwe, and Jamaica), Amanda Walker (political economy of race and education in the African diaspora), Jacqueline Urla (minority politics and social movements)

**Art Department:** Walter Denny (Orientalism)

**Communication Department:** Mari Catañeda (Spanish-language and Latina/o media and cultural production; the political economy of global media and transnational telecommunications), Paula Chakravarthy (global communications, political economy, postcolonial theory and new media and social movements, including high-skilled labor migration in a neo-liberal information economy), Anne Cieckó (Asian diaspora cinemas, global cinema, transcultural film, video, and multimedia installations), Martha Fuentes-Bautista (migration and new media technologies; global communications and institutions; communication policy in the Americas; social movements and new media technologies), Henry Geddes (Communication and Latin American studies; cultural criticism and policy; global communication and international relations; political economy of the media and of Latin American societies), and Lisa Henderson (CISA director 2005-09).

**Department of Educational Policy Research:** Sangeeta Kamat (globalization and educational policy)

**Economics Department:** James Boyce (Development economics and environmental economics, with particular interests in the impacts of inequalities of wealth and power and the dynamics of conflict), Diane Flaherty (Political Economy, Comparative Economic Systems, Labor Process and Organization of Work, Globalization and Location Decisions of Firms), J.Mohan Rao (Development Theory, Globalization, Theory of the State, Developing Agriculture), Mwangi wa Gĩthĩnji (issues of inequality, poverty, rural development and the environment, impact of East Asian development on African countries)

**English Department:** Joselyn Almeida-Beveridge (globalization, transatlantic studies with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, women and slavery, and Latino Literature), Stephen Clingman (postcolonial theory and literature), Jane Degenhardt (Asian-American and African-American literature), Laura Doyle, (geomodernisms, race, postcolonial theory, Atlantic studies), Asha Nadkarni (postcolonial literature and theory, transnational feminism, theories of development, nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature [canonical and ethnic], and literatures and cultures of the South Asian diaspora), Hoang Phan (Asian-American literature, postcolonial theory), Rachel Mordecai (Caribbean literature, African Diaspora literature; history, memory and narrative) TreaAndrea Russworm (African-American literature),
Geoscience Department: Piper Gaubartz (urban geography), James Hafner (migration and Southeast Asia in global context),

History Department: Richard Chu (ethnic identity in the Philippines including immigrants from China and the Pacific), Dan Gordon (Muslim headscarf issue in France, Germany, Turkey, and the U.S.), José Angel Hernández (Mexico, Latin America, US Borderlands, Subaltern Studies, Nationalism, and Mexican American Studies), Joel Wolfe (modern Latin America, Brazil)

Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning: Ellen Pader (cultural, social, and political facets of housing policy and design, particularly housing discrimination, social issues in planning from inter-ethnic and cross-cultural perspectives, including: identifying discriminatory practices on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender and class)

Languages, Literatures, and Cultures: María Soledad Barbón (Cultural history of colonial Latin America) Frank Fagundes (Portugues diaspora), Kathryn Lachman (contemporary francophone literature of the Maghreb and the Caribbean, South African literature, and postcolonial opera), Sara Lennox (colonialism, transnational and postcolonial theory, Black Europeans, Black Germans), Luis Marentes (Chicano Literature and Theory, Borders, diaspora and migration), Patrick Mensah (postcolonial discourse), Daphne Patai (Brazil), Margara Russotto (Latin American women authors), Jonathan Skolnik (German-Jewish literature and culture), Maria Tymoczko (translation in a postcolonial context)

Legal Studies Department: Iza Hussin (interconnectedness of religion, law and society, particularly within the Muslim world, contemporary Islam in the Middle East, Asia, Europe and North America, the Indian Ocean as an arena of legal transmission, the travels of Islamic law [by land, sea and through virtual space], and theoretical approaches to the study of religion and politics), David Mednicoff (Arab human rights activism, the relation of just war theory and the international law of humanitarian intervention, the politics of contemporary Middle Eastern monarchies, and post-9/11/01 U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East), Nina Siulc (migration, crime, governance, and interstitial spaces such as borderlands and detention centers in the urban United States, the U.S./Mexican border region, and Latin America and the Caribbean), Diana Yoon (citizenship, immigration, human rights, political activism and rights discourses around questions of race and gender, and the relationship between U.S. military policies and citizenship practices)

Linguistics Department: Lisa Green (African-American linguistics, director of Center for the Study of African American Language)

School of Management: D. Anthony Butterfield (Leadership and organization phenomena in other cultures), Marta B. Calás (Post-colonial analyses, Management and globalization, cultural studies, Research and theory in international organization studies, Behavior in the global economy, International management), Jane Giacobbe-Miller (Cross-cultural values adaptation), Mzamo P. Mangaliso (global management), Anurag Sharma (international business).
Political Science Department: Charli Carpenter (transnational advocacy networks, gender and political violence, war crimes, comparative genocide studies, humanitarian affairs and the role of information technology in human security), Carlene Edie (Comparative Politics -- Caribbean, Africa; International Relations and Development Studies), Peter Haas (International Relations; International Relations Theory; International Political Economy; International Environmental Politics; International Institutions; Global Governance), Rahsann Maxwell (ethnic minority migrant integration, attitudes, and political behavior, with a particular focus on West Europe), Tatishe Ntetea (African-American politics), M.J. Peterson (World Politics; International Institutions; International Political Economy; technology and technological change), Dean Robinson (Policy and Health Disparities; Afro-American Politics and Social Thought; Race and American Political Development), Srirupa Roy (nationalism and ethnicity, South Asian studies, cultural politics), Jillian Swedler (Political Culture, Repression and Dissent, Democratization, Civil Society and the Public Sphere, Contentious Politics, Ethnographic Methods, Political Islam, Middle East Politics)

Psychology Department: David Butz (political ideologies, identification with social groups, and national symbols in intergroup conflict, antecedents of prosocial and antisocial responses to interracial and interethnic interactions), Nilanjana Dasgupta (nonconscious social cognition and intergroup relations, overt and covert social behavior toward disadvantaged and advantaged groups).

School of Public Health: Glendene Lemard (cross-cultural studies on violence as a public health issue, Globalization and Change in World Politics, International Health Issues, and International Health & Development), Rosa Rodriguez-Monguio (Racial and Ethnic disparities in health care)

Sociology Department: Enobong Hannah Branch (race, racism, and inequality, intersectional theory [race, gender, and class], the study of blacks contemporarily and historically), David Cort (Immigration, Race/Ethnicity), Dani Lainer-Vos (nationalism, diaspora, historical comparative methods), Agustin Lao-Montes (world-historical sociology and globalization, political sociology (especially social movements, & sociology of state and nationalism), social identities & social inequalities, sociology of race and ethnicity, African Diaspora and Latino Studies, and postcolonial critique), Jennifer Hickes Lundquist (Social stratification, race and ethnicity, family, immigration, fertility, social demography), Joya Misra (Comparative Political Economy, Race/Gender/Class), Wenona Rymond-Richmond (Urban Sociology; Inequality; Race and Ethnicity), Millie Thayer (Social Movements, Sociology of Globalization and Development, Gender and Globalization, Women's Movements in the Global South, Feminisms in the Latin/a Americas), Melissa Wooten (education and African-Americans).