

**PRESS RELEASE**

---

**Embargoed until 4 PM, March 29, 2019**

**Citing lack of support from University administration, 13 tenured faculty withdraw from Yale's Ethnicity, Race & Migration program**

**Contact:** Professor Alicia Schmidt Camacho <[alicitasc@gmail.com](mailto:alicitasc@gmail.com)> and Professor Daniel Martinez HoSang <[danielhosang@gmail.com](mailto:danielhosang@gmail.com)>

**NEW HAVEN, CT.** Thirteen senior faculty at Yale University today submitted individual letters to Tamar Gendler, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, announcing their intention to withdraw their labor from the University's Ethnicity, Race, & Migration (ER&M) program.

Leading scholars in a number of academic fields, the group includes four faculty with endowed chairs, two Heads of residential colleges, and four current department or program chairs. It also includes all current officers in the ER&M program, and all of the Yale faculty who have served as ER&M chairs since the program was founded in 1997. The senior faculty noted in their letters that they regret administrative disinterest in the program, and the pattern of unfulfilled promises by the University. The withdrawals leave ER&M with no tenured faculty or professional leadership.

With 87 majors, ER&M is one of the fastest growing programs in Yale College. Michael Denning, faculty co-founder of ER&M and the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of American Studies and English, called ER&M one of the "most dynamic programs at Yale, an alliance of academic excellence whose scholars win teaching and writing awards and are visible in public discussions of race, labor, migration, and indigeneity."

"For two decades we have been assigned to an irregular and precarious status within the University's administrative structure, and in recent years we have seen Yale leaders turn away from the promises they have made to our program and the students we serve," explained Professor Alicia Schmidt Camacho, who serves as Chair of ER&M. "In spite of repeated efforts to remind the administration of their promises, and despite repeated assurances from the University over the last seven years that the situation would change, our program still lacks basic rights in hiring and appointment. The administration has maintained a system that fails to recognize our work and prevents us from participating in the tenure and promotion process."

Since 2002, faculty members have held dozens of meetings with upper administrators regarding the status of the ER&M Program, emphasizing that the President and others should not expect faculty to volunteer their labor to support the academic unit. In 2011, 2015, and 2016 the University President, the Provost, and the Dean of the Faculty repeatedly promised to change the status and funding of the Program, but those promises were not kept. Over the last seven years, the administration has also promised newly recruited Yale faculty an appointment in ER&M, but -- to the surprise of those faculty members -- the University never followed through in establishing those administrative procedures.

Professor Schmidt Camacho explained that ER&M will meet its commitments to junior and senior majors, but that “we cannot responsibly meet our growing obligations to students or our respective research fields under the current structure.”

Professor Michael Denning expressed regret that the administration has seemed “eager to use and exploit our scholarship and teaching to provide educational opportunities for our students, but unwilling to allow us an equal share in defining excellence and institutional priorities for Yale.”

Former ER&M chair Matthew Frye Jacobson explained that “Yale’s inconsistent support for the study of Ethnicity, Race, and Migration is alarming given the multitude of critical issues our teaching and scholarship engage in this moment: The rise of white nationalism, a refugee crises across three continents, climate migration, and pressing matters related to immigration and detention, voting rights, policing and incarceration, and racial violence.”

The faculty who submitted individual letters today are tenured members of the Executive Committee of the Ethnicity, Race, and Migration Program at Yale:

- **Alicia Schmidt Camacho** (ER&M Chair), Professor of American Studies
- **Ned Blackhawk**, Professor of History and American Studies
- **Michael Denning**, William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of American Studies and English
- **Inderpal Grewal**, Professor of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies and American Studies
- **Zareena Grewal**, Associate Professor of American Studies and Religious Studies
- **Daniel Martinez HoSang**, Associate Professor of American Studies
- **Matthew Frye Jacobson**, William Robertson Coe Professor of American Studies, History and African American Studies
- **Grace Kao**, IBM Professor of Sociology; Chair, Department of Sociology; Faculty Director; Education Studies

- **Lisa Lowe**, Samuel Knight Professor of American Studies
- **Mary Lui**, Professor of History and American Studies
- **Gary Okihiro**, Visiting professor of American studies at Yale University, and professor emeritus of international and public affairs at Columbia University
- **Stephen Pitti**, Professor of History and American Studies
- **Ana Ramos-Zayas**, Professor of American Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

###