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Jim Logan

Eye on Inequality

Latin America is one of the most diverse regions on the planet. Racial equality there, however, remains elusive. At a conference in Mexico City, two UC Santa Barbara scholars will present the preliminary findings of their research into the inclusion of black Mexicans in the country's census.

The conference they organized, "Between Identity and Classification: Racial Inequality in the Americas," will be held June 18-20 at Iberoamericana University. [Emiko Saldivar](#), a continuing lecturer in the [Department of Anthropology](#), and [Erika Arenas](#), an assistant professor of [sociology](#), will present on their research project, "Towards the Inclusion Afrodescendants in Mexico's 2020 Census."

"Our interest is to address how the increasing availability of ethnic and racial statistics has created new ways of gathering information, analytical frameworks and conceptual approaches," Saldivar said. "In particular we are interested to present recent research that addresses the tension between self-identification and racial classification to measure racial inequality."

Consisting of six panels and three workshops, the conference will bring together scholars, government officials, and indigenous and afro-descendant advocacy organizations from Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Brazil, France and the United States.

"The goal of the conference," Saldivar said, "is to provide a space where ethnographers, statisticians, government officials and social activists can exchange their different perspectives and together move forward the work for racial inequality."

In order to do so we are using different formats (panels, round tables and a workshop on statistical literacy the morning after the conference) to promote conversations and exchange of ideas.”

Other faculty participating in the conference are Edward Telles, a professor of sociology, and [Vilna Bashi Treitler](#), professor and chair of the [Department of Black Studies](#).

The conference, which will be [livestreamed](#), is sponsored by Iberoamericana University, Center for Research and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), UCSB and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.