

Institution: University College London (UCL)
Unit of Assessment: 25b - Area Studies: Institute of the Americas (UCL-IA)
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>The Institute of the Americas was established as a new department in the Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences (SHS) at UCL in 2012, and is submitted to the REF for the first time. We are the only Area Studies Unit in the United Kingdom that covers the whole of the western hemisphere. Building on this unique profile, we aim to make the Institute the leading centre in the world for disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in Canadian Studies, Caribbean Studies, Latin American Studies and United States Studies. We have invested in a dynamic, fast-growing research community, having appointed eight new permanent members of academic staff during the census period (out of a total of 12.3FTE), strengthening and diversifying our transnational and comparative hemispheric study of the Americas, and advancing our efforts to realize the potential impact of our research.</p> <p>The Institute's research activity is underpinned by the principle that the western hemisphere, while marked by tremendous diversity, shares distinct linguistic, political, historical, and cultural commonalities. Our research therefore covers: experiences of colonialism; struggles for independence and democratisation; histories of racism and racial diversity; economic and social inequality; dependence upon resource extraction and exploitation, with attendant environmental degradation; traditions of revolutionary, labour, and feminist mobilisation; battles over the relationship between capitalism and democracy; and the centrality of migration within, between and beyond the countries of the Americas. At the same time, the logic for embracing the entire western hemisphere lies not in its singularity but in the diversity of cultures, societies, and national experiences that it encompasses. This diversity allows us to subject claims about national or regional uniqueness to critical scrutiny. More importantly, the vast historical, climatic, ethno-racial and topographic variety of the Americas allows the Institute to participate in genuinely global conversations about both historic and present challenges.</p> <p>Our academic mission as an Area Studies Unit is one of intellectual and policy engagement with these major global problems. This mission has shaped – and will continue to drive, post-REF2021 – our unique strategic focus on history and the social sciences. In contrast to American Studies departments at other HEIs, which often combine language, literature, and history of either North America or Latin America, our main disciplinary areas include anthropology, development and environmental studies, history, human rights studies, international relations, political economy, politics, and sociology. This range of expertise allows us to study key issues that impact the Americas from multidisciplinary perspectives. Our research focuses on questions of democracy, governance and human rights, ethnic diversity and racism, economic development, environmental justice, social policy, and gender and sexual equality. These questions lend themselves not only to high-quality academic research, but also to recognised interventions in public policy in the UK and beyond, to a degree that is unmatched by any other American Studies programme in Europe.</p> <p>The Institute has been central to a broader effort at UCL to build capacity in Area Studies, which has resulted in the establishment of research clusters and centres focused on the study of Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, as well as the European Institute, in order to complement the long-established School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies (SEESS). This Area Studies expertise is put into dialogue in the context of the UCL Institute of Advanced Studies, which facilitates cross-disciplinary Area Studies activities across UCL.</p> <p>At its establishment in 2012, the Institute had specific strengths in US political history and in the history, sociology, politics and human rights of Latin America and the Caribbean. From 2014 onwards, we expanded our research profile in modern US history, with four new appointments (Bell, Witham, Hyman and Davies), including two appointments at full Professor level (Bell and Davies), extending expertise into areas such as race, gender, sexuality, social movements, and</p>

environmental history. The appointment of a political scientist (Hilliard), who specializes in American political development, has further extended our coverage of the study of the modern US. We have also enhanced our coverage of Latin American political science and political economy with two appointments, who have specialisms in gender politics and electoral behaviour (Gatto), and in the political economy of development (Castañeda). We also made a new appointment in urban anthropology (Saunders-Hastings), bringing particular expertise in the study of crime and state formation. In doing so, we were also able to fill significant gaps in our country-specific expertise by appointing colleagues with expertise in Brazil (Gatto) and Central America (Saunders-Hastings).

We have also expanded and contributed to the development of our disciplinary coverage by strategically supporting early career fellowships (ECFs) from the British Academy (Grigera), the Leverhulme Trust (Grisaffi), the EU's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship scheme (Simonetto) and UCL's Institute of Advanced Studies (Bollington). These ECFs have enhanced our engagement with the political economy of industrialization, social movements and the drug trade, and visual politics, and brought additional country expertise on Argentina (Grigera, Simonetto) and Bolivia (Grisaffi).

This combination of disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise, together with the Institute's unique hemispheric focus, has driven our research strategy, which has **three principal elements**:

1. **Strategy 1: to serve as a centre for the development of early career researchers (ECRs) and academic leaders of the future** whose commitment to excellence in research is matched by the ambition to ask big questions that place scholarship on the Americas at the centre of pressing debates about the world. Following the appointment of Bell as Professor and Head of Department in 2014, we decided to focus on recruiting early career scholars into permanent positions; six out of eight new appointments since our creation at UCL have been Lecturers. By advertising academic posts with broad thematic parameters, we have been able to attract the most promising early career scholars, whatever their specialism. We have encouraged and nurtured the individual research agendas of both our new academic colleagues and our early career fellows. One indicator of the value of this strategy has been the success of our ECFs, all of whom have secured academic appointments after their fellowships have ended (Grisaffi at Reading, Grigera at King's College London, and Bollington at UCL). We also have a large and vibrant community of postgraduate researchers (over 30 at any one time).
2. **Strategy 2: to shape a collective research identity for our scholarly community**, mindful that the small size of the Institute makes the formation of research centres or formal clusters impractical and limiting. The nature of contemporary Area Studies, and specifically the place of the Americas within it, encourages scholars to understand their research in terms of common agendas that lead to more ambitious collective research priorities. The following priorities frame our research mission:
 - **Human rights and struggles for reparative justice**: Led by the work of Engstrom (nurtured by a Leverhulme Network Grant) and the focus of one of our impact case studies for REF2021, this topic is central to many countries in Latin America, as well as the postcolonial Caribbean, and informs the work of Witham on US solidarity movements in Latin America, and Quinn on colonial legacies in the Caribbean (awarded an AHRC Network Grant).
 - **Histories of race and racism**: We have a longstanding research focus on themes of racial diversity and exclusion, from the perspectives the African diaspora, and whiteness and white supremacy. For example, Quinn specialises in Caribbean history, especially on the ideology of Black Power and anti-colonialism (evidenced by two AHRC grants), while Hyman explores racism through the lens of white supremacist politics in transnational context, bridging the Americas, Britain, and southern Africa. The recent creation of the Sarah Parker Remond Centre for the

Study of Race and Racialisation at UCL (directed by Professor Paul Gilroy) is particularly exciting for the Institute and will provide further opportunities for staff to strengthen research networks in these areas across UCL.

- **Social policy and the politics of health and welfare:** Molyneux's pioneering work on social cash transfers and innovative policy formation in Latin America is the focus of our second impact case study and demonstrates the productive effects of collaborations between academics and public policymakers in this field. The overarching theme of social policy and welfare also frames the work of Bell on the relationship between sexuality and healthcare in the US, Drinot's work on the history of sexuality and public health in Peru, and Saunders-Hastings's work on the informal social networks in Guatemala that replace a formalised welfare system. We also saw the award of an EU Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship for Patricio Simonetto, for work on the dynamics of sex change practices in Argentina.
- **The challenges of democracy and governance:** As well as being key themes in the politics of the Americas, democracy and governance represent a central interest of political scientists more generally, and thus inform much of our work, including Hilliard on democratic accountability in the US state, Gatto on gender dynamics in Brazilian legislatures, Morgan on the US Presidency, Davies on environmental disaster and state capacity, Castañeda on the influence of business elites and corporate capital on the democratic process, Middlebrook on how international trade relationships shape democratic norms, and McCulloch on federalism and regional identity in Canada.

These themes indicate the affinity between our individual agendas as historians and social scientists of the Americas with certain integrative themes that unite us as a group and facilitate our task in understanding key global challenges through both a historical and a contemporary perspective. This connection between past and present drives our research strategy.

3. **Strategy 3: to facilitate links between our research and wider communities of policymakers, researchers and community partners in order to extend the impact of our research beyond UCL.** The Institute is a unique point of reference for academics, policymakers, the press, and the corporate sector in the UK and more broadly. Our deep connection to non-academic stakeholders is particularly evident in the two case studies submitted for REF2021: Molyneux's on the connection between her research on cash transfers and the policy of the UK government, NGOs and development consultancies; and Engstrom's on the contributions his research has made to policy design and government practice on torture prevention in Latin America. These case studies highlight how research from the Institute informs both the implementation of public policy and the activities of NGOs and other comparable organizations.

The Institute is also the home to the largest programme of public events on the Americas in the UK. Between 2014 and 2020, the Institute held 519 events, which were attended by over 21,000 people, including staff and students from the Institute and the wider UCL and UK HE communities, representatives from Whitehall, the City, embassies and consulates, NGOs, the press, and the general public. McCulloch runs our seminar series on Canadian Studies, which is funded by external sponsorship, primarily from the Canada-UK Foundation. Academics, diplomatic staff from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Canadian High Commission, the Quebec Delegation and from various NGOs regularly attend. The Caribbean seminar series, the largest in the UK, is run by Quinn, and holds regular seminars and panel sessions with contributions from academics and speakers from other sectors (museums, NGOs, government, think tanks). The Latin American seminar series serves as a forum for the latest research on Latin America from a broad range of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary perspectives. In addition, Institute staff help convene both the North American History (Bell, Hyman, Morgan, Witham) and Latin American History (Drinot) seminars at the Institute of Historical Research. These seminars, which draw their audience of scholars

and students from London and elsewhere in the UK, play a key national role in the public dissemination of research on the Americas.

We also host visiting academics from around the world as scholars-in-residence. Since 2014, we have hosted colleagues from 24 universities from across the Americas and Europe. Upon their return to their home institutions, these visiting academics continue to serve as bridges to institutions and international networks. These connections ensure that the Institute is a major hub for research on the Americas in both the UK and Europe.

Our future strategic vision is oriented towards long-term excellence rather than short-term targets. It rests on the consolidation and development of our research base, along with the expansion of the number of world-leading staff. The strategic appointment of a new Professor in 2020 (Davies) allowed the Institute to deepen senior leadership in the department while we continue to nurture and promote our pool of promising early- and mid-career researchers. The appointment signifies UCL's commitment to the mission and importance of the Institute and cements our reputation as a global centre for the study of the Americas. Davies's interest in the politics of the environment and climate change adds an exciting new strand to our research priorities, one that links with the recently established cross-faculty UCL Anthropocene Initiative. We have not benefitted from significant QR income to date. As we move forward from the REF2021 financial settlement, we will therefore appoint additional research-active staff in areas that remain underrepresented in the Institute, including International Relations, Caribbean Studies, environmental challenges, and the history of Latin America.

We will also facilitate additional opportunities for collaborative research, supporting another key strategic driver of the next five years: increasing the Institute's number of competitive research grants. In this regard, we can already record several funding successes that will initiate projects at the start of the next REF cycle. These include:

- A collaborative AHRC Research Grant with Quinn as Co-I alongside researchers from Royal Holloway, the School of Advanced Study, the University of Southampton and the University of the West Indies (2021-24, £252,653 of a total £825,417) to support research on Queen Elizabeth II and the Caribbean;
- An ERC Advanced Grant with Saunders-Hastings as Co-I alongside colleagues in the UCL Department of Anthropology (2021-26, £54,964 of a total £2,530,667) on anthropologies of extortion;
- A Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship for Drinot (2021-24, £200,988) to write a biography of José Carlos Mariátegui;
- A Leverhulme Visiting Professorship for Ricardo López-Pedrerros (Western Washington University, 2021-22, £91,500) to support work on the history of the middle class and democracy in Latin America.

Knowledge exchange and research impact lie at the heart of our academic mission, as evidenced by our case studies for REF 2021 (Engstrom and Molyneux), both of which engage public policy and NGO stakeholders internationally, and by our plans to develop impact beyond the census period. We nurture knowledge exchange with non-academic audiences, regularly hosting representatives of government bodies, diplomatic missions, NGOs, and interested community groups as participants in events. Such regular exchange leads organically to the charting of pathways to impact, as academic colleagues move in public policy and NGO circles and are asked to produce reports or to share their research with interested stakeholders. Our short course delivered to Latin American specialists in the UK FCO is an example of the robust links between our research and policymakers. Such links underpin work undertaken by several colleagues (e.g., Bell's current policy work on LGBTQ health issues with medical student-led NGO Polygeia, Castañeda's collaboration with policymakers from the Inter-American Development Bank on their Behavioural Economics Initiative, and Davies's investigation of the politics of climate change in coastal cities, which rests on work with government officials, universities and pressure groups). Linking individual research to broader debates outside

academia is part of the agenda for individual research meetings all staff undertake twice a year (see detailed discussion in section 2.2).

We are fully committed to fostering an open research environment, and our commitment to engaging non-academic as well as academic stakeholders is embodied in our sponsorship of a new Open Access book series entitled Modern Americas, published by UCL Press as a fully accessible, online publishing forum for cutting-edge academic work on the Americas. The series is edited by three members of Institute staff: Molyneux, McCulloch, and Quinn. In addition, staff regularly publish public-facing policy digests related to their research. As the Institute develops its Open Access strategy in future years, we intend to use significant funds drawn from the REF2021 financial settlement to underpin a more expansive approach to Gold Open Access outputs.

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy

Since our establishment in 2012, when six research academic staff (5.1 FTE) transferred to UCL from the School of Advanced Study, University of London, the Institute has more than doubled in size to 15 (12.3 FTE) research-active staff. The Institute is staffed by six Professors (three full-time, Bell, Davies, and Drinot; three part-time, Middlebrook, Molyneux, Morgan), four Associate Professors (Castañeda, Engstrom, Quinn, Witham), and five Lecturers (Hilliard, Hyman, Gatto, McCulloch, Saunders-Hastings). Additional appointments falling within the REF period include a Research Fellow working on a Ford Foundation-funded programme and research network on Cuba (Morris) and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow appointed in 2020 (Simonetto). The Institute has hosted a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow (Grigera), a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow (Grisaffi), and a Junior Research Fellow, funded by UCL's Institute of Advanced Studies (Bollington).

Three strategic drivers shape our staffing strategy:

- **Securing strategic and research leadership:** The Institute embraces UCL's institutional commitment (see REF5a, 3.1) to inspiring and empowering research leadership. In 2014 Bell was appointed as Professor and Head of Department (HoD). He has led the Institute throughout the census period (appointed to a five-year term 2014-19 and a subsequent three-year term 2019-22). He arrived with four years' experience as HoD in a larger department, and a strong record of research leadership. In terms of succession planning, in 2020 Davies was appointed as Professor. This strategy of bookending two senior strategic appointments in 2014 and 2020, with early career appointments in between, allowed the Institute to gain vital leadership at a time when other senior staff were moving towards retirement.
- **Ensuring academic career development for all staff:** Preparing staff for academic promotion and reward is a central part of our staff development strategy. Promotion is discussed as part of the annual appraisal process, and each year the Institute convenes a promotions committee consisting of Professorial staff who support colleagues with their promotion applications. During the census period, Drinot (2020) was promoted to Professor, and Engstrom (2016), Quinn (2017), Witham (2018) and Castañeda (2019) were promoted to Associate Professor. Our policies for flexible staff work patterns and for equality, diversity, and inclusion are detailed under 2.4 below.
- **Nurturing early career researchers:** We see the creation of a thriving research culture for junior scholars as a key part of our mission. We appointed six full-time, permanent Lecturers between 2015 and 2018, all of whom were as ECRs at the time of their appointment (Castañeda and Witham in 2015, Hyman and Saunders-Hastings in 2016, and Gatto and Hilliard in 2018). Four of the six are female, and only two of the six had permanent posts before coming to UCL. Of the four early career fellows we have hosted,

the three who have completed their fellowships now hold permanent academic posts (Bollington at UCL, Grigera at King's College London and Grisaffi at Reading). We do not employ staff on fixed-term contracts in the department, other than to cover maternity leave or research grants, and in such cases we do not use contracts of shorter duration than twelve months. In line with UCL's new concordat on teaching contracts, we ensure that all those on teaching contracts have dedicated time for research and scholarship.

2.2 Staff development

Staff development is supported in several ways. In addition to annual appraisals conducted by the HoD, the Institute conducts bi-annual research planning exercises, when the HoD, the Director of Research, and an external member of staff meet each researcher to review individual research strategies. Staff submit a research plan in advance, detailing publication plans, grant bid ideas, and collaborative research activity, thus facilitating the establishment of challenging but realistic milestones. Furthermore, the Institute has a Research Committee, comprising, in addition to the HoD (Bell) and Director of Research (Witham), five other colleagues representing all career stages (Davies, Drinot, Molyneux, Castañeda, Saunders-Hastings). This committee oversees the Institute's research strategy, evaluates and approves applications from visiting research fellows and postdoctoral students, and provides advice to staff on research grant applications. Early career staff as well as postdocs are assigned a mentor who advises on career progression, grant capture, and publication strategies. This process also encourages staff to consider research impact as they develop projects, with the Institute's two case studies indicating its success.

Research-active staff are entitled to one term sabbatical after three years of qualifying service, and they are awarded a yearly £1,000 personal research allowance from departmental funds, which supplements a £1,000 research allowance from the Faculty. Academic staff, particularly ECRs, are encouraged to make bids to the department for additional research funding to support the development of their research agendas, especially those involving collaborators from outside UCL. Staff are also supported in applications to the SHS Dean's Strategic Funds initiative for further research support. In addition, Institute staff have been successful in raising funds from central UCL funding schemes, such as that provided by the Global Engagement Office (£11,384 from four successful bids) and the UCL Grand Challenges Scheme (£8,000 from three successful bids).

Research leave is continuing at UCL in 2020-21, rather than being suspended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The senior promotions process has been altered to allow staff to account for the impact of COVID-19 on their research, with appropriate adjustments to accommodate its impact on travel, collaboration and caring responsibilities, and this will continue for a number of years. Colleagues impacted by the pandemic are supported by UCL's COVID-19 Career Support Scheme, an equity and inclusion-based initiative that aims to mitigate adverse impact that results in lost work productivity that may cause longer term career harm without additional support from UCL. The arrival of Simonetto as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow was delayed until September 2020 (meaning that his outputs could not be included in the Institute's submission) to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on his research plans.

Staff training in research integrity is underpinned by UCL's Code of Conduct for Research, and supported by the university's Research Integrity Team, based in the Office for the Vice-Provost of Research. The Institute has a dedicated research ethics lead (Saunders-Hastings), and an internal ethics committee that advises staff and students on questions of research integrity.

2.3 Support mechanisms for, and evidence of, the training and supervision of PGR students

The Institute has built a thriving community of PhD students (averaging 30 students at any one time), working on a broad range of topics from both disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives on all four regions of the Americas (the Caribbean, Canada, Latin America, and the United States) as well as on topics that connect these regions to other parts of the world. We are

committed to the recruitment of the highest quality researchers to join our postgraduate community.

A majority (54%) of our doctoral students receive funding from UK or overseas funding bodies. During the REF period, this included three AHRC-LAHP studentships, one AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership with the British Library; four UCL internally funded places for both home and overseas students; six UCL Wolfson scholarships; five students funded by CONACYT-México; six by CONICYT-Chile; one funded by the Universidad de los Andes-Colombia; and two by SENESCYT-Ecuador.

PhD students receive a thorough induction upon arrival and are paired with primary and subsidiary supervisors. Training is provided through regular meetings with the supervisory team, which happen at least once a month, via fortnightly research seminars where students and staff present their work, and through skills training courses offered by the UCL Doctoral School and the AHRC and ESRC Doctoral Training Partnerships. Students develop skills related to ethics and research integrity via specific training courses. Students gain further skills via opportunities to teach as PGTAs on undergraduate modules. The department employs 8-10 PGTAs each year, and students tend to undertake this work in their second year of study. Given their cross-disciplinary and hemispheric character, this equips students with a unique portfolio of teaching experience, which is supplemented by participation in UCL Arena One, a development pathway for PhD students leading to Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

Students are required to upgrade nine to 18 months after registration. They are provided extensive feedback on their progress by an upgrade committee consisting of the subsidiary supervisor and an additional member. The Departmental Graduate Tutor oversees PhD student experience, and monitors student progress alongside supervisors. Students in their second or third years present their work to the Institute's regular lunchtime research seminar, attended by both staff and research students, and receive extensive feedback. Moreover, staff provide regular career development sessions to students on a range of topics, from the current HE environment in the UK and elsewhere, to publication strategies, developing an impact agenda for their work, and the REF.

The Institute provides funding that allows every student the opportunity to undertake at least two fieldwork and/or conference trips abroad during the course of their studies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we deployed this funding to support students who have been adversely affected. Research students have successfully applied for UCL Global Challenges fund to further their research. The Institute encourages and supports student initiatives, such as the UCL-based Americas Research Network.

Academic staff guide research students in disseminating their research via publications and conference presentations. Our students have published articles in leading disciplinary and interdisciplinary journals such as *Development and Change*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Journal of Policy History*, and *Modern American History*. Furthermore, in recent years students have organized panels and presented papers at a series of major conferences (e.g., The Organization of American Historians, the Latin American Studies Association) and have won awards from international scholarly organizations (e.g., the Southern Labor Studies Association's Robert Zieger Award).

Since 2014, 21 students have earned PhDs, embarking on a range of careers, including the Belizean diplomatic service (as ambassador to the EU), the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission, the National Institute for Health Research Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care at the University of Southampton, the US Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC, human rights NGOs in Mexico and Colombia, the NGO Global Justice Now, as well as in academic posts at Universidad Tecnológica de Chile INACAP, Karlschochschule International University, Germany, SOAS, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and the University of Oxford.

2.4 Evidence of how the submitting unit supports and promotes equality and diversity

Our policies and hiring profile from 2014-20 reflect a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and UCL's overarching EDI strategies (REF5a, 3.2). We have made a concerted effort to redress gender imbalances through recruitment, achieving a near balance of male (nine) and female (eight) colleagues (compared to five male and two female in 2014). Having focussed our staffing strategy on the recruitment of ECRs, many of our female staff hold junior positions. To support their career development and to address gender disparity at senior levels, we have initiated a series of training sessions to support staff in applying for promotion. We thus aim to eliminate the gender imbalance at higher career grades by promoting our current junior colleagues.

We will submit an Athena SWAN application for a Bronze award in April 2022, and our action plan will provide a roadmap to deepen our commitment to equality and diversity. Our Athena SWAN lead (Gatto) relates her own work on gender politics to a wider EDI strategy. In 2017, she co-founded (and has since co-organised) the Summer School for Women in Political Methodology at the University of Zurich, a fellowship programme targeting the gender gap in the field of computational social science research by offering advanced training for women working in the field. Applications to the summer school more than doubled in two years, to 647 in 2019.

We are committed to implementing the SHS Faculty Pledge to Promote Race Equality and have to date succeeded in increasing BAME representation from 0% of the staff profile in 2014 to 20% in 2020. We will continue to focus our attention on attracting greater numbers of BAME candidates to the department through the use of Fair Recruitment Specialists and the development of Positive Action approaches. We all encourage staff to make use of UCL's leadership training programmes, including Accelerate to Leadership. In particular, we support the promotion of BAME staff to senior positions within the Institute.

The Institute supports part-time and flexible working, which is currently taken up by three colleagues. We make full use of UCL's occupational health facilities when supporting colleagues in making adjustments to work patterns due to issues such as ill health. The personal and family circumstances of individual members of staff are taken into consideration when scheduling classes and meetings. Research leave policy is applied in a manner that is attentive to the career development needs of individual academic members of staff, especially those of early career staff. We have accelerated research leave for ECRs where necessary to allow for the completion of monographs after maternity leave. We also follow UCL standard policy in offering an extra term of research leave for staff returning to work after a period of maternity leave, to help them re-establish their research. Additional support will be provided for ECRs and staff from protected groups who return to research after the COVID-19 pandemic in the form of additional research funding, and, where appropriate, accelerated research leave.

The Institute's EDI Committee brings staff and students together to jointly identify priorities for change in terms of diversity and equality issues. It is a safe space for staff and students to communicate issues and report key actions and recommendations. The committee is tasked with discussing and taking appropriate action on a range of areas, including: training; progression of projects such as work towards charter marks; assessment of curricula; organisation and management processes within the Institute; and anything raised by staff or students via surveys on EDI issues.

As of 2020-21, the Institute's PhD cohort comprises 19 male and 16 female researchers. Of these, 11 are overseas students, 5 from the EU, and 19 from the UK. In 2020, the Institute secured one of UCL's Research Opportunity Scholarships, which fund BAME research students. We have a strong record in supporting applications from students from the global South, especially Latin America and the Caribbean. A high proportion of our doctoral students do not fit the once 'traditional' profile: several are mature students; many have families and other dependents and caring responsibilities. We have found that international students, in particular those who may have family responsibilities in the UK and/or in their country of origin, often

require additional support. Supervisors, the Departmental Graduate Tutor, and the professional services staff all work to support students through parental leave, serious health problems, financial issues, and complex family circumstances to allow them to complete their PhDs, for example by facilitating periods of interruption where appropriate, signposting them to relevant support services, or offering video conference meetings when family responsibilities make in-person supervisions difficult. These processes are rooted in a principle of shared effort to ensure that the Institute takes care of its researchers.

To prepare our submission to REF2021, we established a Review and Selection Group (RSG) comprising a representative cross-section of staff: one Professor, three mid-career staff, and two ECRs; four male, two female. Staff were regularly updated of the progress of the development of the submission and encouraged to approach the RSG with any questions or concerns. Output selections were reviewed in light of the equalities analysis carried out by the UCL REF team. Given the small size of the Institute, there is low statistical power in the data collected. However, we can confidently say that while all our staff are included in the submission, and outputs by BAME staff are well represented, women have fewer outputs than other staff groups. This is largely the result of the preponderance of women in junior career posts. We know from our analysis of ongoing research projects that all our ECRs will make substantial contributions to the next REF exercise.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Income

The Institute has pursued a strategy to capture research income in order to support and enhance its coverage of cross-disciplinary and hemispheric study of the Americas. During the census period, the Institute was awarded a total of £786,353 in external research funding (with research income equalling £609,644).

Human rights research (Engstrom) has received extensive funding from three sources, which has fed directly into outputs included in this submission as well as the development of an impact case study on the prevention of torture in Latin America:

- A Leverhulme International Network Grant, for “The Inter-American Human Rights System: Assessing its Development and Impact” (2014-16, £124,799);
- A Leverhulme Visiting Professorship for Professor Roberto Gargarella of Universidad de Buenos Aires (2014, £44,695);
- The Association for the Prevention of Torture, for “Torture Prevention in Chile and Peru” (2014, £49,702).

The Institute has also secured research income through three successful bids for early career fellowships:

- From the British Academy (Grigera: “Bringing the Global Market Back In: Industrialising and Exporting Commodities, Argentina and Brazil, 1950-2010”, £251,732);
- The Leverhulme Trust (Grisaffi: “Indigenous Visions of Democracy: An Ethnographic Study of Political Values and Betrayal in the Chapare Province, Bolivia”, £69,603);
- The EU’s Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship scheme (Simonetto: “Was Sex Inflexible? Practices, Knowledge, Techniques, and Technologies of “Sex Change” Embodiment in Argentina during the Twentieth Century, £170,347).

The Institute has developed income streams to support research networking in Latin America. A clear mark of esteem in this regard was the award of a British Academy Global Professorship for Marcos Cueto (FIOCRUZ in Brazil) in 2019 totalling £647,604. While he was unable to come to UCL for personal reasons, this built on Drinot’s collaborative work with him on academic publishing in Latin America and the UK, which received funding from the British Academy Newton Mobility Grant Scheme (£9,930) and was also supported by a Santander Catalyst Award

(£1,870). Together with a team based at Aberdeen, Oxford and Cambridge, Drinot was awarded in January 2020 a British Academy Writing Workshop grant (£19,993) to run a series of workshops in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru to build capacity in the local academic community in submitting articles to international peer reviewed journals.

Funding from several sources supports our different sub-regional research strands. Research on the Caribbean has benefited from a major AHRC Research Network Grant led by Quinn on Westminster in the Caribbean: History, Legacies, Challenges (2012-14, £41,238). Funding from the Ford Foundation (£38,087), with additional project support from the FCO (£3,418) and UCL Global Engagement Fund and Grand Challenges Small Grants, enabled Morris to develop a multi-disciplinary research programme on Cuba, in collaboration with Cuban research partners, community organisations and public authorities. The Institute's Canadian Studies programme (McCulloch), including the regular seminar programme, conferences and publications, is supported by regular funding from the Canada-UK Foundation (£35,000 to date) as well as occasional funding from the British Association for Canadian Studies, the London Conference on Canadian Studies, the Quebec Government (£5,000).

A number of smaller grants have also supported the research of academic staff and led directly to outputs included in this submission. Bell's research on AIDS policy in the United States received support from British Academy Small Research Grant (2015-16, £3,977). Witham's research on popular historical writing in the United States was awarded British Academy Small Research Grant (2016-17, £4,702). Castañeda received a British Academy Small Research Grant (2016-17, £9,772) to support his work on tax compliance and tax morale in Latin America. Gatto has received funding from the Europa Institute and Wilson Center totalling £16,010 and the University of Zurich totalling £16,882 (2016-17) to develop her research agenda on women's political ambition in Latin America.

3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

The Institute is located in a substantial townhouse on Gordon Square in Bloomsbury, close to cognate departments in the Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences (Anthropology, Archaeology, Economics, History, History of Art, Political Science). It contains staff offices, a dedicated workspace for every PhD student that they share with no more than three other students, postdoc and visitor shared office space, plus two teaching rooms. The vast majority of our events are held here, allowing us to foster a sense of community and a vibrant research culture. The central location in Bloomsbury means that our regular events are easily accessible to a large and diverse public. We are close to six major libraries and specialist collections on the Americas (at the British Library and Senate House), which are used regularly by staff, students, and academic visitors.

The Institute is well positioned in our faculty to benefit from close collaborative relationships with cross-faculty initiatives such as the Institute of Advanced Studies, the Sarah Parker Remond Centre for the Study of Race and Racialisation, and the cross-faculty UCL Anthropocene Initiative. In collaboration with the History Department, the Institute also draws on significant cross-departmental strengths in Caribbean, Latin American and US history. The Institute's relationship with the Department of Political Science is similarly productive, especially in the areas of human rights research and US politics, in the latter case via the Centre on US Politics.

When developing funding bids, researchers in the Institute receive expert support—ranging from assistance with identifying appropriate funding schemes to detailed feedback on draft applications and mock interviews—from a three-person team in the Office for the Vice-Provost of Research and a Research Development Manager in SHS. Public engagement and impact activities are assisted by two full-time professional services staff in SHS, appointed during the current REF cycle, with whom staff in the Institute work closely.

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

4.1 Establishing and nurturing international scholarly networks

Collaboration, across disciplines and national borders, as well as between sectors, is at the heart of the Institute's activity. Support for networks is one way in which collaboration takes place, and external bodies, including NGOs and governments, actively benefit from our infrastructural support. For example, initiatives such as the **Westminster in the Caribbean: History, Legacies, Challenges** (established by Quinn) and the **Inter-American Human Rights Network** (established by Engstrom) bring together academics and policymakers to examine how research taking place in the Institute intersects with public policy in the Americas. The latter network has informed Engstrom's work on **Torture Prevention in Latin America**, developing research, policy and capacity-building projects that have strengthened the capacity of National Human Rights Institutions in Latin America to engage with the Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council. The capacity of this network is demonstrated in Engstrom's impact case study.

Additionally, a UCL Global Exchange Grant enabled Molyneux to establish a collaborative oral history research project entitled **Latin American Feminisms, 1968-Present**, with key partners in FLACSO (Mexico) and the Universities of Valparaiso (Chile). This web-based initiative receives institutional support from Florida International University, which funds the two pilot cases and hosts the archive.

The Institute also hosts the **Canada-UK Network**. Established by McCulloch, it keeps an open register of expertise in Canada-UK relations; fosters links with UK-based organisations such as the FCO, the Canadian High Commission, the Quebec Delegation in London, and the Canada-UK Council; develops partnerships between UCL and appropriate universities and organisations in Canada, such as the University of Toronto; attracts funding for scholarships and activities in the area of Canada-UK relations; and organises events that lead to publications on Canada-UK relations. In doing so, it fosters research and teaching on Canada-UK relations, a field that tends to be overshadowed by the attention devoted to the "special relationship" between the UK and the USA.

The **Cuba Research Network** (established by Morris) connects UCL, Humboldt University (Germany) and the University of Salamanca (Spain) – covering expertise in engineering, epidemiology, management, disaster reduction, urban planning, and transport policy – with Havana University and the Technological University of Havana. The network's main funders to date, the Ford Foundation and British Embassy in Havana, have sponsored policy-oriented research projects to support social, environmental and economic improvements.

The Institute is also a focal point for national and international networks focused on US Studies. Staff enjoy a fruitful and multi-faceted partnership with the British Library Eccles Centre for American Studies. In addition to co-hosting conferences and research collaborations, the Centre sponsors an annual lecture at the British Association for American Studies annual conference. Two colleagues from the Institute have given this plenary: Morgan in 2014 and Bell in 2019. Since 2018, the Institute also participates in a US History research network with the History departments of Boston University, Stanford University, UC Berkeley, Emory University, and UC Davis. Through annual meetings, the network showcases the latest research of staff and PhD students in each department, providing opportunities for feedback from a high-quality yet supportive group of international peers. The collaboration is led by Bell, with support from Davies, Hyman, and Witham. Participation by staff and PhD students in the inaugural event in Boston, and the Institute's hosting of the 2019 event in London, was funded by UCL's Global Engagement Office and the UCL Commonwealth Fund in American History.

The Institute collaborates frequently with UK government agencies, international organisations, and civil society organisations in the UK, Europe and the Americas. For example, since 2017, the Institute has provided an annual training course for diplomats at the UK FCO. Delivered by the Institute's subject-matter experts, the half-day course offers an overview of key contemporary themes and issues in Latin America that are of particular relevance to the role of the UK in the region. The Institute has also organised high level conferences for policy communities such as the FCO-funded events on *Mexico after the Return of the PRI: An Initial*

Assessment of the Peña Nieto Administration (2013) and *Argentina After Kirchnerismo* (2016). In addition, staff have delivered briefings to British diplomats serving in Canada, Belize, Guyana, Cuba, Mexico and Peru, to the Permanent Parliamentary Group on Latin America, to the Home Office's global network on Serious and Organised Crime, and to the FCO's Research Group on the Americas.

Staff from the Institute have also offered ad hoc advice for governmental and non-governmental organisations. Hilliard has advised members of the United States National Academy of Public Administration and the Bipartisan Policy Center on Inspector General reform. The Human Rights Subcommittee of the European Parliament commissioned Engstrom to prepare an expert study on "The Situation of Rule of Law and Human Rights in Cuba and Venezuela and EU Engagement". Molyneux has participated in webinars and presented papers at policy conferences on social protection for the ILO, the FAO, UN Women, UNICEF and UNRISD. She has also served as expert adviser to DFID on social protection. Drinot has provided advice on asylum cases by Peruvians before courts in New York. Saunders-Hastings has used her research on Central American street gangs to work with US pro bono law networks and provide expert testimony on asylum claims by Guatemalans before courts in California, Georgia, New Mexico, and New York.

Staff from the Institute regularly share their research expertise with journalists and broadcasters. They have provided comments on US and Latin American affairs in venues such as *El País*, *The Guardian*, the *Financial Times*, *Deutsche Welle*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and *The Conversation*. They have also appeared on a range of media, including radio (e.g., BBC Radio 4, National Public Radio, LBC Radio) and television (e.g., CNN News, Sky News, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation).

4.2 Supporting the research base

Both nationally and internationally, several members of staff have supported the work of, and provided leadership to, subject associations that promote the study of the Americas. Bell was Chair of Historians of the Twentieth-Century United States (HOTCUS) from 2013 to 2017. Molyneux served as a Committee Member of the British Academy's Latin American and Caribbean Areas Panel from 2008 to 2017. McCulloch was President of the British Association for Canadian Studies from 2013 to 2016, and Immediate Past President in 2017. Quinn was Chair (2012-14) of the Society for Caribbean Studies, Chair of the Haiti Support Group (2014-15) and is a Trustee and Secretary of the David Nicholls Memorial Trust. Castañeda is convenor of the UK Political Studies Association's Specialist Group on Latin American Politics. Several members of staff have played key roles in the Latin American Studies Association (LASA). Middlebrook was co-creator, co-fundraiser and selection panel co-chair (2016-19) of LASA's newest endowed prize, the Guillermo O'Donnell Democracy Award and Lectureship. Together with colleagues at several universities in the UK, Drinot established in 2020 the United Kingdom Latin American Historians Network.

In their capacities as key members of research council committees, Institute staff have helped to provide direction to scholarship in their fields and encouraged the development of new research agendas and priorities with respect to the study of the Americas in the UK. For example, Bell has been an AHRC Strategic Reviewer since 2013, and in 2016 Molyneux served as Chair of the UK Research Council Awards Panel for the Newton-Picarte Fund.

Similarly, as editors of book series and as reviewers of book manuscripts, Institute staff contribute to shape the fields in which they work. The Institute hosts two book series: the Palgrave Studies of the Americas (edited by Molyneux) and the new UCL Press Modern Americas, a unique Open Access series (edited by Molyneux, McCulloch, Quinn). The online journal *Radical Americas*, established by a former PhD student, is also published by UCL Press. All of these publications encourage the submission of proposals on the whole of the hemisphere and on cross-disciplinary themes. In addition, academic staff review manuscripts for several

major academic publishers (e.g., University of Pennsylvania Press, Duke University Press, Oxford University Press).

Several staff make substantial contributions to major journals in their fields as editors and members of editorial boards and thus contribute to the development of new scholarship and debates in their fields. In so doing they contribute to enhancing the visibility of hemispheric American studies in the UK around the world. Drinot and Witham have co-edited the *Journal of Latin American Studies* and the *Journal of American Studies*, respectively, two world-leading journals in Area Studies. Similar leadership in the field of Canadian studies is demonstrated by McCulloch, who is the editor of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies*, which has been published by UCL Press as an Open Access journal since 2014.

Academic staff serve as editorial board members of high-profile journals (*European Journal of American Studies*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Economy and Society*, *Development and Change*, *Oxford Development Studies*, *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, *British Journal of Canadian Studies*) and regularly referee for a broad range of Area Studies and disciplinary journals and in this way contribute to shaping new scholarship in the study of the Americas and in their disciplinary areas.

Since 2014, the Institute has pursued a research and impact strategy that has emphasized its cross-regional expertise, a vision of multi-disciplinarity rooted in history and the social sciences, and its concrete contributions to genuinely global conversations about historic and present challenges that have faced all humanity. This strategy has consistently informed the research of continuing staff within the Institute, as well as a series of high-calibre new appointments at both early-career and senior levels. For its modest size, the Institute has excelled in grant capture across the disciplinary and geographic spectrums of its research agenda. This has led to a series of important contributions to the research base at the academic level, as well as with stakeholders in government and the NGO sector.

Ultimately, then, this is a new, dynamic unit that has delivered on its key strategic goal of acting as the leading centre in the United Kingdom and the world for disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in Canadian Studies, Caribbean Studies, Latin American Studies and United States Studies and in the transnational and comparative study of the Americas.