

February 18, 2026

RE: Faculty Research Development Committee, Lincoln University (Pa)

Dear Members of the Faculty Research Development Committee,

I am writing to request funding in the amount of \$2,300.00 through the Faculty Research Development Grant program to support my participation in the annual African American Literature and Culture Society Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois from May 20-23, 2026. Funds secured through this grant will provide me with the financial capacity to present my research on Chicago based African American authors and to engage with other scholars whose work are also relevant to my field of study and procure a safe network of African American literary scholars to mentor me on an ongoing collaborative book project.

My presentation titled, "From Race Men to YN's: Literary Rejections of Race Man Tropology Illustrated by Wright's Black Male Protagonists: Bigger Thomas (Native Son), Dave ("The Man Who Was Almost a Man"), and Saul ("The Man Who Killed a Shadow")" explores several works of Chicago-based author Richard Wright, and analyzes his classification of Progressive Black Masculinity as a violent response to traditional, hegemonic Black masculinity. This project contributes to ongoing, contemporary discussions on race, gender, and sexuality in the African American community and challenges readers to recodify their notions of race performativity in the (re)discovery of Black, periodic texts.

Participation in this conference allows me to share my research with an interdisciplinary audience of African American literary scholars, authors, educators, etc. This conference will also help me to revise my presentation for potential publications in major journals on African American literary studies. Additionally, my research has previously gained interest from the College Language Association (CLA), resulting in an invitation to present my scholarship at the College Language Association's annual Convention in Jackson, Mississippi in April 2026. In addition to this, my scholarship also resulted in a completed book proposal for an ongoing collaborative book project on teaching African American literature to NextGen students. I believe presenting at the African American Literature and Culture Society Conference will strengthen my craft as a scholar of African American literature, provide me with additional research/content for my upcoming book project, as well as cultivate a strong working relationship with potential publishers and editors, and increase the institutional visibility of Lincoln's Department of Languages and Literature.

This conference aligns directly with my ongoing research agenda, pedagogical approaches applied to my teaching of NextGen students, and a proposed course on gendered storytelling in African American literature. As a junior faculty member teaching courses in African American literature and Black gender studies, I continually seek to integrate current scholarly debates and emerging authors into my curriculum to expand my students' understanding of the canon. Engaging with leading scholars in this field will lend perspective to the incorporation of new texts in my course curriculum, theoretical frameworks, and classroom strategies to enrich the learning experiences of my students which will subsequently be included in my ongoing book project.

As previously mentioned, the opportunity to present my research at the African American Literature and Culture Society will advance my larger book project (in progress) which examines interdisciplinary pedagogies to teaching African American literature to NextGen students. Conversations with potential editors, peer scholars, and potential collaborators at this conference will support the refinement of the project's scope and methodology, which will move this project toward publication readiness.

Thank you for considering my application. I am deeply grateful to Lincoln University and for the opportunities the Faculty Research Development Grant program provides to support junior faculty's dedication for continued scholarship and enhancing our institution's collective academic community. I would be honored to share the outcomes of my research and conference experience in the end-of-term faculty colloquium upon my return.

Sincerely,

Jacquetta T. Ayewoh, PhD

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