

**Progress Report  
for Faculty Research and Development Grant  
(Granted April 2025):**

Title of Project: "Images of African-American Culture in Afro-Spanish Literature"

Name of Faculty Member: Juan Martinez Millan, Assistant Professor of Spanish

**1. A concise description of the project.**

I applied for research funding in support of the preparation of a peer-reviewed academic article on the topic of images of United States African American culture in the work of Afro-Spanish authors.

In the field of Hispanic studies, there are very few literary studies of Afro-Spanish contemporary narrative and autobiographical writings. Existing scholarship on Afro-Spanish literature focuses on the period of the Spanish Civil war (1936-1939) and the early years of Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975). Studies analyze, for example, the perception of jazz music during the dictatorship, or memoirs written by African American soldiers in the anti-fascist Lincoln Brigades of the 1930s. However, literary scholars studying Afro-Spanish cultural production have neglected to study literary works produced after the dictatorship (1980s to the present).

From 2013 onward, there has been a resurgence of Black authors in Spain writing about identity. The majority of Afro-Spanish authors are journalists ages 35 to 45. These works began to be published in Spain in response to the Black Lives Matter movement that started in the United States. Their work grapples with the question of what it means to be Black and Spanish, and also what it means to be Black and belong to a regional identity group such as Catalan or Basque (because Spain is a nation strong in regional identities, e.g. individuals may think of themselves as Catalan or Basque before thinking of themselves as Spanish).

My research project therefore looks at the impact of US African American cultural production on works published by Afro-Spanish authors, including, but not limited to: Desiree Bela-Lobedde, Moha Gerehou, Adriana Boho, and Lucia Mbomio.

**Status as of December 29, 2025:** I am preparing an article to submit to the *Afro-Hispanic Review*, a bilingual journal of Afro-Hispanic literature and culture published by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. I also used this grant to prepare lectures and other course materials for my upper-level Spanish courses based on my research for my article.

As part of my goal of sharing my research, I chaired a panel on April 17, 2025 at the University of Kentucky's Languages, Literatures, and Cultures conference titled "La memoria de África" (The Memory of Africa). I presented my research as part of this panel, "Nuevos narradores Afro-españoles; Lucía Mbomio y Rubén H. Bermúdez" (New Afro-Spanish Authors: Lucía Mbomio and Rubén H. Bermúdez)

## **2. Measurable goals and objectives for the project**

**Goal 1:** To prepare and submit a peer-reviewed article on my research.

**Objective:** to have my article accepted for publication.

### **Status as of December 29, 2025:**

- Plan to submit manuscript to the *Afro-Hispanic Review* journal by January 31, 2026.

**Goal 2:** To prepare lectures and course materials for my Spanish courses on the work of these selected Afro-Spanish authors.

**Objective:** to enhance student learning by creating guided readings and writing/speaking activities featuring the work of selected Afro-Spanish authors.

### **Status as of December 29, 2025:**

- Created five reading/writing/discussion guides for 2000 and 3000 level Spanish courses. I plan to incorporate these materials into my courses in the 2026-2027 academic year when I am scheduled to teach these upper-level courses.

**Goal 3:** To share my research with colleagues.

### **Status as of December 29, 2025:**

- I chaired a panel on April 17, 2025 at the University of Kentucky's Languages, Literatures, and Cultures conference titled "La memoria de África" (The Memory of Africa).
- I presented my research as part of this panel, "Nuevos narradores Afro-españoles; Lucía Mbomio y Rubén H. Bermúdez" (New Afro-Spanish Authors: Lucía Mbomio and Rubén H. Bermúdez)
- I look forward to sharing my results with colleagues at an officially scheduled department, college, or university meeting in Spring 2026.

## **3. The timeframe for the project**

- a. **Article:** Prepare article over the summer; submit peer-reviewed article no later than January 31, 2026.

- b. **Course development:** Prepared pedagogical materials over the summer; use those materials in my teaching, from 1000 through 3000 level Spanish courses, beginning in Fall 2026.

#### **4. How the project will enhance teaching and research at Lincoln University**

I used this summer and fall to prepare lectures and other course materials for my Spanish courses on the works of Afro-Spanish authors. By publishing my research, I will contribute to Lincoln University's continued success as a community of internationally-recognized researchers and scholars.

#### **5. How the outcome of the project will be measured:**

- a. Acceptance of my article in a peer-reviewed publication
- b. Production of pedagogical materials on the topic of Afro-Spanish authors that I will use to enhance my Spanish courses

#### **6. How, when, where, and with whom the project's outcome will be shared**

- a. I shared my results with colleagues in Hispanic Studies through my presentation at the University of Kentucky Conference. I will also share my results with colleagues at an officially scheduled department, college, or university meeting. I also hope that my article is accepted for peer-reviewed publication.
- b. I will submit a project report to the FRDC Chair and Faculty Affairs, including my article's publication status.
- c. I will teach courses in Fall 2026/Spring 2027 (including but not limited to SPAN 304 and SPAN 303) using the materials I prepared in Summer and Fall 2025.