Professor Santiago’s research focuses on preparing educators to teach about race and ethnicity in history classrooms, especially about Latinx complexities. Through this scholarship, she interrogates the contradictions within Latinx communities, such as inter-ethnic tensions and the continued privileging of lighter-skinned Latinxs, and challenges assumptions that approach race and ethnicity as binary and that all people of color experience race in the same way.

She received a National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship to conduct the first comparative study exploring the teaching of the differing experiences of Latinx peoples in K-12 social studies classrooms. Professor Santiago also leads the History TALLER (Teaching And Learning of Language, Ethnicity, and Race) research group.


Her dissertation “Reconceptualizing the Teaching of Mexican American Contributions in U.S. History: A Case Study on Mendez v. Westminster” won the 2016 Larry Metcalf Exemplary Dissertation Award from the National Council for the Social Studies.

Listen to Professor Santiago discuss the importance of teaching Mexican-American histories on the “Visions of Education” podcast.

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