



**COLLEGE OF  
ARTS AND SCIENCES**  
*Illinois State University*

# Inaugural Dean's Research Challenge Symposium

**October 11, 2024    Stevenson Hall 401**

**8:00AM Coffee/Pastries**

**8:15AM Opening remarks, Dean Heather Dillaway**

**8:30AM Michael Hendricks, Joan Brehm, Eric Peterson, and Noha Shawki** "Cleaning up the River without Clearing Out the Neighborhood: Examining the Communal Impacts of Floating Gardens in the Chicago River"

**9:15AM Susan Chen**, "Gender and Race Inequalities during COVID-19: Evidence from the Labor Market Outcomes for New Ph.D. Economists"

**10:00AM Dan Ispas, Alexandra Ilie, and Dragos Iliescu (University of Bucharest, Romania)**, "Exploring Equity in Personnel Selection: Differential Prediction of Personality in High-Stakes Contexts."

**10:45AM Maura Toro-Morn and Jim Pancrazio**

**11:30AM Keynote Address, Mariela Fernandez, University of Illinois**, "Advancing Environmental Justice Research through Community Partners"

**12:30-1:30PM Lunch Break**

**1:45PM Christopher Mulligan**, "Mass Spectrometric Methods for On-Site and On-Demand Environmental Pollutant Monitoring"

**2:30PM Sudipa Topdar**, "Lifeless Feathers, Masculinity, and Ecological Imperialism in the Late Colonial Himalayas (1800-1947)"

**3:15PM Ben Wodika, Vickie Borowicz, Matt Dugas, and Sydney Metternich**, "Do species matter? A test of the Functional Equivalence Hypothesis using Ants as Indicators"

**4:00PM Maochao Xu**, "Cyber Misconduct: A Predictive Modeling Exploration in Educational Communities"

**4:45PM Poster Viewing** Open to all faculty/students

**5:15PM Closing Remarks**



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Mariela Fernandez, Associate Professor,  
University of Illinois

Keynote address:

“Advancing Environmental Justice  
Research through Community Partners”

In this keynote, Dr. Mariela Fernandez draws upon her academic and personal experiences to highlight the transformative power of placing communities at the forefront of environmental justice research. Attendees will learn how using an environmental justice lens in their work can foster inclusive research practices. This talk is a call to action for researchers to reimagine their work and allow for community voices to shape their work, ultimately advancing environmental justice.

**Friday, October 11, 2024**

**11:30AM**

**Stevenson Hall 401**

*If you need an accommodation to fully participate in this program/event, please contact [CAS\\_DEAN@ilstu.edu](mailto:CAS_DEAN@ilstu.edu) or call 309-438-5669. Please allow sufficient time to arrange the accommodation.*