

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DIVERSITY POSTDOCTORAL FACULTY PROGRAM**

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The Committee on Faculty Diversity Recruitment and Retention continues to work to create opportunities to highlight the expertise of faculty who have been historically underrepresented in the academy. The Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Program welcomed the first postdocs in Fall 2014 with a purpose to mentor faculty in teaching excellence and to cultivate inclusive communities within departments at the University. USD is poised to serve as a resource for faculty who are interested in pursuing an academic career that follows a teacher-scholar model and as we approach the ten-year anniversary of the program, we continue to seek ways to improve the program.

Recruitment

The College of Arts and Sciences launched a search for three postdoctoral faculty who advance the perspectives of historically marginalized ethnic communities with a focus on the domestic Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x community in Fall 2022. A total of 4 departments and 5 programs requested to participate: Art History (AA+AH), Chemistry & Biochemistry, Communication, Psychological Sciences, Visual Arts (AA+AH). The advertisements were placed in national academic outlets and promoted separately in discipline specific listservs and national organizations. At the February 1, 2023 submission deadline the candidate pool was very limited and it was clear it would be difficult to create a cohort of scholars for Fall 2023. The committee met on February 3 and determined that the search would be suspended and postponed until the following year. The committee discussed a number of factors that may have contributed to the small pool. One committee member noted that postdoc positions in the sciences had seen a sharp decline in applications. Another noted that the pandemic may have delayed graduate students in their degree completion. And finally, all agreed that the posted salary (~\$55,000) did not provide a competitive wage for San Diego (See Appendix A).

From the 2021 cohort, Dr. Jennifer Tillman continued in her second year of the program. The teaching load for postdoc faculty is a 1-2 in order to provide time for scholarship or creative

work. In the Fall semester, she taught GNDS 101: “Introduction to Gender Studies” and in the Spring taught PHIL 331: “Biomedical Ethics” and PHIL 334: “Justice, Disability, and Healthcare.” Dr. Tillman’s interdisciplinary expertise made her the perfect candidate to become a permanent faculty member at USD. The Philosophy department was impressed with her success in the classroom and her productivity as a scholar and offered her a permanent position. Dr. Tillman will begin a position as an assistant professor of philosophy in Fall 2023.

Programming

Drs. Sue Lowery and Chris Daley had the opportunity to share what they learned from attending the AAC&U Summer 2022 “Teaching to Increase Diversity and Equity in STEM” (TIDES) Institute held in Virginia. TIDES offers a unique opportunity for STEM faculty and administrators responsible for academic STEM units to build capacity and understanding about the root causes of minority group underrepresentation in STEM. The Institute provided information about the unique roles and responsibilities that faculty and others play in addressing the needs of students. Uniquely designed presentations, experiential activities, and expert-guided discussions with institution coaches was transformational for Drs. Lowery and Daley. They presented their Summer experience to students and the campus community on November 29, 2022 in the Shiley Center for Science & Technology. Subsequently, they presented the same information at a College department chairs meeting in the Spring of 2023.

To showcase the diversity postdoc program, the committee hosted a panel in March 2023 featuring Dr. Angela Nurse (cohort 2017) who presented “Fashionable Resistance,” Dr. Jennifer Tillman, (cohort 2021) “Self-Respect, Self-Esteem and Health,” Dr. Channon Miller (cohort 2017), “Ways and Means: Recovering Black Women’s Histories.” The panel celebrated Women’s history month by featuring the contribution of Black women’s voices in their various research projects.

Program Assessment

As we approach the ten-year anniversary of the College of Arts and Sciences’ Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Program at the University of San Diego, we solicited feedback from faculty who participated since 2014 in an effort to continue to improve the program (See Appendix B).

Specifically, we gathered data related to the mentoring experience, pedagogical development, and general professional development. The purpose of this study is to identify the effectiveness of the program as a preparation for an academic career. A survey was distributed to 20 participants and 12 responded, yielding a 60% response rate. The survey was organized into three categories to assess the frequency of teaching feedback, the quality of mentorship, and integration into the department culture. In general, 91% (n=11) of the faculty participants were “somewhat” or “extremely” satisfied with their overall experience and 11 out of 12 would recommend participating in the diversity postdoctoral program to others.

The postdoc teaching position includes a reduced teaching load from the full-time tenure track appointment to provide ample opportunity for faculty to develop courses and to also maintain a strong research agenda as they prepare to enter the job market for assistant professor positions. Most postdocs teach a 3-course load over the academic year, but occasionally faculty have taught 4 courses. It is expected that each postdoc faculty member is assigned a department mentor (See Appendix C).

Teaching Experience

It is the goal of the program to provide pedagogical development and of the respondents only 2 faculty reported “frequently” receiving feedback on syllabi construction and other course design. Only 6 faculty reported that their peers or mentor observed them teach in the classroom. A total of 5 faculty, who were in the program to be mentored on teaching, did not have any classroom observations by their department colleagues. One participant stated, “It is important to ensure that senior faculty are aware of and value current and diverse pedagogy to avoid uninformed criticism” and another reported, “The feedback received did not come from the department they were assigned to but rather faculty from other departments.”

Mentoring Experience

The respondents indicate a wide range of satisfaction with their mentoring experience. Eight respondents were “somewhat” or “extremely” satisfied with the mentoring they received, but 3 were “extremely dissatisfied.” The mentoring relationship is an important expectation of the program, but only 50% reported meeting with their mentor on a regular basis. Of the 12

respondents, 50% agreed that their mentor “provided insight into what to expect from an academic career.”

Department Experience

The integration of the postdoc faculty into department life varied across the College. Postdoc faculty were invited to faculty meetings (n=9), research talks (n=9), curriculum discussions (n=6), student-focused events (n=10), social events (n=11) and 7 out of 12 felt their expertise were valued by the department “most of the time” or “always.” Of the respondents, only 4 report “sometimes” or “never” feeling welcomed by the department.

The program has developed overtime and to protect the identity of respondents, we did not ask them to disclose the years they participated. It may be that some of the challenges with mentoring and teaching observations have been reduced as we have created clearer expectations for the department and the faculty member. One of the most poignant responses included, “Ensure the department is adequately prepared to welcome and engage BIPOC faculty.” Part of the on-going work in the College is to promote inclusive practices.

Program Recommendations:

- Formalize pedagogical feedback expectations.
- Ensure that the mentors are trained through the College mentoring program and complete the “mentoring course.”
- Outline clear expectations for the mentor and hold the department accountable.
- Increase the salary to reach the required minimum for exempt status.
- Continue to support opportunities for faculty to demonstrate their expertise through research panels and other activities.
- Foster connections with offices on campus such as Mulvaney Center, Changemaker Hub, and other interdisciplinary opportunities.

Retention

Because the committee is also charged with considering retention broadly, it is important to note that at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, five faculty members left the College for other

institutions, all of whom identify as faculty of color. We know that each had an opportunity to move closer to family or to more prestigious Universities that advanced their career, but we must consider how the College can improve retention of faculty, especially faculty of color. While there are many personal reasons a faculty may decide to leave USD, the city of San Diego continues to rank as one of the most expensive cities in the country. The Academic Assembly Junior Faculty Council gathered data from newer faculty to learn more about their housing needs. It appears that even though USD provides a housing assistance program and limited opportunities to rent university-owned housing, the programs are not sufficient to meet the needs of faculty in the College. A total of 80% of respondents (N=26) to the survey initiated by the Junior Faculty Council answered no to the question: “Do you feel that USD provides sufficient and supportive resources for faculty struggling to find affordable, safe, and secure housing in San Diego county?” As a result of the findings from both the postdoc assessment and information from untenured faculty, we feel that a comprehensive review of the retention strategies within departments and the College broadly can inform how to improve the conditions for faculty at all stages of their careers.

We recommend:

- Continue to support departments by providing information on effective mentoring, including training on microaggressions and their impact on faculty success.
- Implement a College-wide mentoring program that will provide more training to mentors.
- Foster an advocacy mindset for mentors and chairs who should advocate for new faculty.
- Provide new faculty with resources to succeed, including pedagogical support through College programs, Center for Educational Excellence (CEE) and National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD).
- Update curricular offerings to align with the expertise of newer faculty.

Housing Specific Recommendations:

- Advocate to update faculty housing support options to include rental subsidies.
- Advocate to update faculty home buying program to reduce the barriers for faculty to participate.

- Advocate to establish partnerships with nearby rental properties that would make it easier for newer faculty to rent in the USD area.
- Advocate to prioritize housing support as proportional to faculty salary.
- Advocate that College faculty, due to their salary differential, should have priority to rent university-owned housing.
- Reinstate the “Faculty in Residence” program. Faculty could live up to 3 years (rent free) in campus housing and provide residential academic programming for student life.

Lasting Impact

As the Committee on Faculty Diversity Recruitment and Retention turns the corner of another decade of productivity, we are faced with making sure that we keep the purpose of the program central to our planning. The goal of recruiting faculty through the diversity postdoc program is to expand the diversity of the faculty at all levels. Our program provides opportunities for recent PhD graduates to develop their teaching as they prepare for tenure-track positions. The undergraduate, liberal arts educational mission at USD provides a teacher-scholar model for faculty who are interested in pursuing a career that emphasizes high-quality teaching with scholarship. Since 2017, the College has recruited 12 faculty members as diversity postdocs and 49 faculty on the tenure track. Of the 49 faculty hired as permanent faculty 20% identified as Black, 18% as Latinx, 8% as Asian/Asian American. Since the inception of the program, seven faculty became tenure-track faculty at USD. Two faculty were offered positions, but accepted tenure-track jobs elsewhere. Other faculty pursued positions at other academic institutions and some moved into industry. We have been able to transition a significant number of faculty from the postdoc to the tenure track, but we must continue to work at ensuring that department colleagues create an inclusive environment that supports and sustains the faculty members’ advancement over the course of their career.

It is imperative that USD remains committed to intentionally recruiting faculty who have been historically underrepresented in the academy. The diversity postdoc faculty program has proven to be a mechanism to widen the recruitment pipeline for the College and for higher education more broadly as those who learn from their experience at USD join the faculty ranks and industry across the nation.

Appendix A: Email to Participating Departments

Dear All,

We are writing to share an update about the diversity postdoc search process. The deadline for applications was February 1 and the total submissions were only 30 applications. Normally our pools are between 150 – 215 applications. It is unusual for the call to generate so few candidates. Upon review of the pool, there are very few options to create a cohort of teacher/scholars.

It is the committee's recommendation to suspend the search at this time. We will restart the recruitment process for Fall 2024 and start the process from the beginning. We will revisit the specific call and encourage more participation from departments. Further, it will be a goal of the committee to increase the salary for these positions. If your department wants to participate next year, you do not need to complete the request paperwork – you can just let us know you want to be part of the call.

If you have interest in reviewing any applications for potential adjunct roles in your program, please let us know and we can send them. These positions would then be funded completely from your department budget.

Of course we are disappointed that we find ourselves in this position, but we feel it is best for the continuity of the program and the success of our postdocs to create the best opportunities for their advancement.

Dear friends,

As we approach the 10-year anniversary of the College of Arts and Sciences' Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Program at the University of San Diego, we are gathering feedback from participating faculty in an effort to continue to improve the experience. As you know, the purpose of the Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Program is to mentor faculty in teaching excellence in the context of a primarily undergraduate institution within Catholic Higher Education and to cultivate inclusive communities within departments at the University.

We are hoping that your feedback will provide insight into the mentoring experience, pedagogical development, and general professional development as a result of the program. Since fall 2014, the College has welcomed 20 faculty members who have joined the College of Arts & Sciences. The survey is designed to collect anonymous feedback. There are no identifying features within the survey that will link to your identity.

Informed Consent

Pauline Powell (Assistant Dean) and Kristin Moran (Professor and Associate Dean) are co-chairs of the "Committee on Faculty Diversity Recruitment and Retention" in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Diego, San Diego, CA. We are conducting a research study to assess the program outcomes of the diversity postdoctoral faculty program and we would like you to participate.

The purpose of this study is to identify the effectiveness of the program as a preparation for an academic career. You are being asked to participate because you have been a participant in the program.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to take an online survey that takes about 15 minutes to complete. You will be asked things like, "did your mentor watch you teach?" You will not receive compensation for participation.

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life. Your responses will be kept confidential and all your information will be coded with a number. Your email or IP address will automatically be deleted, and nobody will know your identity. We will keep the study data for a minimum of 5 years.

Taking part in this study is entirely optional. Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your employment status, recommendations, or any other benefits to which you are entitled. You may quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any specific questions. Should you decide to participate, please print out a copy of this page for future reference.

We are happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact us at usdpostdoc@sandiego.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kristin Moran
Pauline Powell

Appendix C



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES DIVERSITY POSTDOCTORAL FACULTY PROGRAM

The Committee on Faculty Diversity Recruitment and Retention solicits interest in hiring postdoctoral (or other terminal degree) faculty beginning in the fall semester of 2024. The College seeks to support three U.S. faculty members with a commitment to empowering students from U.S. communities that are underrepresented in academia through research, creative scholarship, teaching, service and/or mentoring. We are especially interested in scholars who advance the perspectives of historically marginalized ethnic communities with a focus on the domestic Chicana/o/x, Latinx/e community. The Dean's office will place the advertisement across academic listings.

The purpose of the Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Program is to mentor faculty in teaching excellence in the context of a primarily undergraduate institution within Catholic Higher Education and to cultivate inclusive communities within departments at the University. USD is poised to serve as a resource for faculty who are interested in pursuing an academic career that follows a teacher-scholar model.

Please submit a 2-3 page proposal to usdpostdoc@sandiego.edu that addresses the following areas:

Impact on department:

- How will the addition of a postdoctoral faculty impact your department's goals toward an equity agenda?
- Is your department interested in collaborating with another department to host a postdoctoral faculty with interdisciplinary interests or to participate in a joint appointment?
- How will the addition of a diversity postdoctoral faculty member provide momentum to your department's future hiring plans?

Curricular need:

- Provide a brief statement that describes how the expertise of the postdoctoral faculty will be integrated into your curriculum.
- Explain specific details about the area of expertise that most aligns with the department's curricular goals or research needs.
- List possible courses to be taught by the postdoctoral faculty.

Mentoring plan:

- Describe your department's mentoring plan and identify potential mentors.
- How will the faculty member be integrated into the department, college, and USD?
- How does the plan work to serve an equity agenda within your discipline?

Requirements for participation:

- Department provides the equivalent non-benefit-based teaching units that will be used by the postdoctoral faculty member (9-12 units per year for two years). These must come from the department's budget, including faculty replacement for FRGs, sabbaticals, chair or other administrative reassigned times. Benefits and travel funding will be provided through the Dean's office.
- Provide office space and/or research facilities. The Dean's office does not have funding to provide a computer.
- Departments, in consultation with the committee, can create a discipline-specific call to advertise the position through their disciplinary networks.

DEADLINE: September 14, 2024. If you have questions, contact: usdpostdoc@sandiego.edu