



**NASPA**<sup>®</sup>

Student Affairs Administrators  
in Higher Education

**2024-2025**

**Emerging Faculty Leader Academy Cohort**

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*More information about this program can be found here:*

[https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Emerging\\_Leaders\\_Overview.pdf](https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Emerging_Leaders_Overview.pdf)



Leslie Ekpe  
Assistant Professor  
Texas A&M University -  
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Leslie U. Ekpe, Ph.D. (she/her) is an assistant professor at Texas A&M University-Commerce in the Department of Higher Education and Learning Technologies. Before her role, Leslie earned her Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership from Texas Christian University. Through qualitative methodologies, Leslie conducts research on anti-racism, DEI, and racial equity by analyzing the challenges racially and ethnically marginalized people encounter in the academy and society. Her research seeks to investigate equitable practices and policies for institutions and societies to implement and sustain.



Paige Gardner  
Assistant Professor  
Seattle University

Dr. Paige J. Gardner (she/her/hers) is a co-Program Director and Assistant Professor of Student Development Administration (SDA). Prior to this role, Dr. Gardner served as an Assistant Dean of Students at Loyola University Chicago and has 12 years of experience in crisis management, multicultural affairs, and residential education.

Dr. Gardner received her Ph.D. in higher education from Loyola University Chicago, a M.Ed. in Student Development Administration from Seattle University, and a BA in early child development from Mills College. As a queer, Black feminist scholar, Dr. Gardner continues to radically imagine the success of those on the margins of society. Her research agenda centers on race and gender equity in the workplace, the experience of emotional labor at historically White institutions and scholar-practitioner identity development.

Dr. Gardner's passion for social justice, collective leadership, and student-centered practice fuels her commitment to cultivate compassionate learning environments that empower graduate students to see themselves as scholars; in this way, she pushes graduate students to think more critically, build caring communities, and create lasting change in their spheres of influence. With *cura personalis* (care for the whole person) as a guiding principle in her professional practice, students can always expect to be affirmed, celebrated, and seen as whole inside and outside of the classroom.



Ángel Gonzalez  
Assistant Professor  
California State University –  
Fresno

Ángel de Jesus González, Ed.D. (he/they/elle) is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education Administration and Leadership at Fresno State University. While a postdoctoral scholar in the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the University of Southern California (USC), they supported institutional transformation through the creation of the Change Leadership Toolkit (CLT) funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and curriculum development for the Building Capacity Campus webinar series funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

As a self-identified first-generation queer, Latinx, joto, they engage their scholarship through post-structuralist and transformative paradigms rooted in Xicana/Latina feminists epistemologies. Dr. González's research agenda focuses on: 1) examining the conditions, experiences, and outcomes for queer and/or trans communities; 2) Latinx Leadership and organizational change; and 3) racial equity policy implementation all within the community college context.

As an interdisciplinary scholar, Dr. González's employs critical methods such as queer pláticas, testimonio, queer chisme, queer phenomenology, critical policy analysis, and QuantCrit to name a few. Dr. Gonzalez is a Faculty Affiliate for the Queer and Trans Latinx/a/o in HigherEd Collective and the Community College HigherEd Access Leadership Equity Scholarship (CCHALES) research collective at San Diego State University (SDSU). Dr. González is a part of the Queer Trans People in Education (QTPIE) Research Team as an Emerging Scholar at the University of Vermont (UVM).

Dr. Gonzalez earned their Ed.D. in Community College Leadership and M.A in Post-Secondary Educational Leadership with a Specialization in Student Affairs from San Diego State University (SDSU) and received a B.A. from Whittier College in Environmental Science and Spanish.



Sergio A. Gonzalez  
Assistant Professor  
Duquesne University

Sergio A. Gonzalez, Ph.D. (él/he/him) is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership in the School of Education at Duquesne University. He teaches undergraduate and graduate-level coursework in higher education, emphasizing social justice discourse. His interdisciplinary research is informed by Women of Color Feminisms, Chicana/Latina Feminisms, and Jotería Studies within higher education scholarship. As a first-generation academic, being the first in his family to graduate from high school, undergraduate, and graduate school has shaped how he shows up in community and navigates academia. He is an hijo to his Madre y Padre, a brother, a Tio, Madrina, Nino, and Nieto to his chosen family and family.



Susana Hernandez  
Assistant Professor  
Northern Arizona University

Susana is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and program coordinator for the Counseling Student Affairs M.Ed. program at Northern Arizona University. Susana's student and professional experiences in higher education as a first-generation Latina shapes and informs her work. Her research interests are centered on using critical and non-deficit frameworks to study how higher education state and institutional policies may create hostile campus environments for racially and ethnically minoritized students and faculty. More recently, her research has examined developmental education reform policies and campus carry policies. Susana has her Ph.D. in Educational Administration with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration from Texas A&M University.



**Norma Lopez**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Loyola University Chicago**

Norma López (she/her/ella) is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education at Loyola University Chicago. She was previously a postdoctoral scholar at the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE) at Tufts University, as well as a full-time instructor in the higher education administration program at Northern Illinois University for a year and a half. Prior to entering the doctoral program, Norma worked for over 20 years in higher education, ranging from admissions and orientation at Williams College to residential life and academic advising at the University of Chicago. She received a B.A. from Williams College, an Ed.M. from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. from Loyola University Chicago.

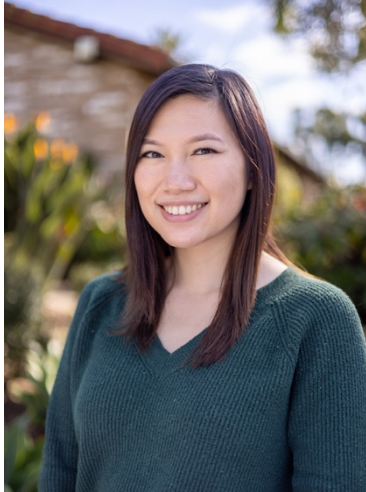
Norma's research agenda focuses on how power manifests in higher education and how developing a critical consciousness can advance equity and inclusion while navigating and dismantling that power. One strand focuses on the role of critical consciousness, which means the ability to understand, analyze, and confront political, social, and economic oppression, in the academic identity development of Latinx college students. A current research project, in collaboration with IDHE, explores how a sense of belonging on campus might contribute to closing political equity gaps for students of color. Another research strain considers how organizational theory informs change efforts for underrepresented minority students in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). She serves as a Bottom Line Chicago board member and hopes to continue to have direct impact on the college trajectories of Chicago students through this college access non-profit.



Ty McNamee  
Assistant Professor  
University of Mississippi

Growing up as a gay, poor and working-class student in rural Wyoming influenced Ty's research interests. He conducts research on higher education access, success, and equity for rural students, particularly those from poor and working-class backgrounds and those who are queer, as well as college teaching and learning and faculty development at rural postsecondary institutions. Outside research, Ty co-founded the Rural Education and Healthcare Coalition, a Teachers College, Columbia University network focused on rural education and healthcare programming and research. He also serves in the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), NASPA and ACPA. Ty holds his EdD in Higher and Postsecondary Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, MA in Higher Education and Student Affairs from the University of Connecticut, and BA in English from the University of Wyoming.





Amy Wang  
Assistant Professor  
Lewis and Clark College

Dr. Amy C. Wang is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs at Lewis and Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. At Lewis & Clark, she teaches courses on equity and social justice in higher education, critical pedagogies, and student development theories.

Amy's scholarship examines race and racism in higher education and is grounded in social justice and equity. Specifically, she critiques inequity in higher education and amplifies how marginalized populations navigate and disrupt the system from within. Her dissertation looked at how neoliberalism shaped Asian American initiatives, including curricular, co-curricular, and policy efforts. She also identified how these initiatives navigate and leverage neoliberalism to advance the needs and interests of Asian Americans on campus.

Outside of higher education, Amy enjoys indulging in K-Pop and playing with her 13-year-old pup, Mango. She is also active in her community and volunteers for a nonprofit in Texas that educates youth on Chinese heritage.