Ten faculty and staff members will serve as the second cohort of HSI fellows, a program that aims to further the University's efforts as a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

The fellowship came out of the work that helped the UA earn its designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution in April 2018. Those efforts were led by Marla Franco, assistant vice provost for HSI initiatives.

The designation is defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as an institution of higher education with an undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 percent Hispanic. The UA is one of 523 institutions in the U.S. with the designation, of which 133 are four-year public institutions. The designation allows institutions to compete in certain grant programs.

The program is affiliated with the Inclusive Leadership Program, which is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, along with participating colleges and departments.

This year's cohort, which includes five faculty members and five staff members from academic and central units, is the first to include a fellow from a branch campus – UA South. That campus has been an HSI since 2002.

Fellows are expected to participate in nine sessions, including a kickoff dinner at the beginning and a panel presentation at the end, along with a commitment of eight to 10 hours per week to their HSI project. To compensate units for the time that fellows will be away from their normal responsibilities, the Office of the Provost and the units will share the cost of the missed time.

Unlike the first cohort of fellows, who served for a semester, this second class will serve for a full academic year, beginning in the fall. Having the program run for the full year was what the program's organizers had in mind from the start, Franco said.

"Being able to spread that across a full year will, I think, lend to the amount of time that it takes to really put a substantive project together and to be able to execute on it, and to kind of learn from the program in a way that helps inform the development of those projects," she added.

Similar to the first cohort, next year's fellows were asked to choose an area of focus for their fellowship and the projects they will undertake. The options were:

- Developing and facilitating capacity in support of culturally responsive pedagogies and practices.
- Developing and facilitating a plan to partner with regional two-year HSIs to facilitate faculty and staff partnerships in support of transfer student success.
- Designing or redesigning curricular experiences with community partners to offer place-based experiential learning.
- A “build-your-own” area of focus.

Once the cohort begins meeting next semester, Franco said, fellows will work in groups on their projects.

Ashlee Linares-Gaffer, an assistant professor of practice in the Department of Nutritional Sciences and one of the incoming fellows, is already involved in several campus groups dedicated to addressing issues surrounding diversity and inclusion, including the Diversity and Inclusion Council in the Division of Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences and Cooperative Extension. She was given the Richard Ruiz Diversity Leadership Faculty Award last month.

Linares-Gaffer said she applied for the fellowship because it was an opportunity to work with like-minded colleagues who support the same work.

"The thing that I'm really excited about with the HSI Fellows Program is getting to have dedicated time that's not just included in my service, but that's dedicated work time with a group of colleagues that have similar interests and passions," Linares-Gaffer said.

Adrián Arroyo Pérez, manager of curriculum integration in UA Global, said he looked forward to bringing his own perspectives and expertise to the fellowship, as well as enhancing his own leadership skills.

"If the universities are entities, agencies, institutions that are creating knowledge, that are advancing our society, our liberties and values to create a truly democratic population," then universities should ensure that they're serving people from all backgrounds, he said.

The members of the new cohort of HSI fellows are:
Adrián Arroyo Pérez, Manager of Curriculum Integration, UA Global
Lynette Duran, Director of Academic Advising, College of Humanities
Lillian Gorman, Assistant Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Sarah Kyte, Senior Research Scientist, Student Success and Retention Innovation
Ashlee Linares-Gaffner, Assistant Professor of Practice, Department of Nutritional Sciences
Linda Perez, Senior Lecturer, College of Nursing
Melissa Silva, Coordinator of Student Services, UA South
Elizabeth Soltero, Director, Adalberto and Ana Guerrero Student Center
Desiree Vega, Assistant Professor, Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies
Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Assistant Research Scientist, School of Landscape Architecture and Planning and the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy

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