Online experience and migration research are among areas of interest for incoming HSI fellows

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The University will continue to build on its designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution through the work of 10 faculty and staff members who have been selected for the third cohort of HSI fellows.

The program, sponsored by the Office of the Provost and participating colleges and departments, involves fellows working in groups to lead projects from conception to launch with the goal of supporting Hispanic undergraduate and graduate students.

The University achieved Hispanic-Serving Institution status in 2018. It is one of 539 institutions in the United States to receive the designation, which is earned by having an undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25% Hispanic.

"We have really done some important work here and created a national model for investing in the development of faculty and staff to strengthen ambassadorship across campus for HSI initiatives," said Marla Franco, assistant vice provost for HSI initiatives. "Other HSIs and national professional organizations haven taken note of our efforts and this program is on their radar."

Fellows are asked to commit four to five hours per week on their HSI projects and to take part in nine sessions, including a kickoff dinner planned for Sept. 11 and a panel discussion scheduled for April 23, 2021.

While each fellow has chosen a focus area, all of the fellows also will work in small groups toward shared interests that are reflective of the members and priorities from the office of Hispanic-Serving Institution Initiatives.

Daniel Martinez, assistant professor of sociology, will serve as co-director of the Binational Migration Institute in the Department of Mexican American Studies beginning this fall. He says that appointment allows him to align his work as a fellow with his ongoing research and service efforts.

"One of my long-term goals is to increase the number of Latino undergraduate and graduate students working with the institute on migration- or identity-related research projects," Martinez said. "I would like to focus my project on identifying ways to help make this happen."

Lysette Davi, assistant director of student engagement for the Honors College, says she would like to focus on best practices to better serve Hispanic students online in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Any time a group of people is willing to work together to dedicate themselves to students, not
because they are a vulnerable population, but because they are a mighty student group ready to exceed expectations, I know that is something where my time and energy belong," Davi said. "The HSI Fellows Program is at the core mission of this land-grant institution and working on this mission feels like a valuable contribution to the University as a whole."

The new HSI fellows are:

- **Damián Baca**, Associate Professor, Department of English
- **Sandra Bernal**, Lecturer, School of Architecture
- **Sheena Brown**, Assistant Professor, College of Applied Science and Technology
- **Lysette Davi**, Assistant Director of Student Engagement, Honors College
- **Daniel Martinez**, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
- **Melani Martinez**, Senior Lecturer, Department of English
- **Annabelle Núñez**, Associate Director, Health Sciences Library
- **Michelle Ortiz**, Assistant Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, College of Medicine
- **Karina Rodriguez**, Recruitment Coordinator, College of Humanities
- **Jennifer Teske**, Associate Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences

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