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UC San Diego Arts and Humanities Names New Associate Deans

The University of California San Diego's Division of Arts and Humanities includes three new associate deans. In addition to their faculty and research work, David Gutierrez from the Department of History will serve as the new associate dean for the division, and John "Jody" Blanco from the Department of Literature will fill the role of associate dean for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Natalia Molina of the Department of History has been selected to serve as interim associate dean of the division until Gutierrez returns from a scheduled sabbatical in 2017.



Natalia Molina during a recent presentation. Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

These new administrative leaders will assist division Dean Cristina Della Coletta in her continued efforts to engage current and prospective faculty and students, as well as raise awareness of the division.

"I look forward to having our new deans further enhance the spirit of collaboration, transparency and accountability that guides the ways goals are set and initiatives promoted in the Division of Arts and Humanities," said Della Coletta. "Jody, Natalia and David will be eloquent ambassadors for the foundational, transferable and enduring values of the humanities within and beyond the UC San Diego campus."

The academic associate dean advises Della Coletta on the development of division-wide initiatives, strategic planning, and the creation and review of divisional policies. This associate dean position also provides advice on academic personnel matters, participates in division-wide fundraising and development efforts, assists in faculty recruitment processes—including

the creation of multi-year recruitment plans for the division—and participates in numerous initiatives and programs, such as the cross-divisional joint hires in practical ethics and new collaborations with other academic partners.

“I understand that much of this job involves rolling up your sleeves and working hard,” Molina said of her interim role. “The division is in a period of growth, and I look forward to collaborating on and providing leadership over its many projects.”

Blanco, as associate dean for EDI, will help ensure that diversity is a meaningful part of the division’s plans for success. He will assist in promoting equity and inclusion in faculty searches, advancement and retention cases, and the evaluation of faculty contributions to diversity in merit and promotion. Blanco also will work to create positive policies and practices that support equity, diversity and inclusion.



*From left, Jody Blanco with Augusto Espiritu from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Dylan Rodriguez from UC Riverside during a recent book launch and roundtable event.
Photo by Jody Blanco*

“Jody’s work for the division will be an extension of his existing commitment to diversity found in his teaching, service and research. He will draw upon the latest research practices to create resources for faculty at all stages of career and across multiple areas of study,” said Della Coletta.

Blanco said that he is looking forward to what he sees as a challenging task for the division and the university, which is to build on the gains made by students, faculty and administration in defending and promoting diversity and equity in the division and on campus.

“I look forward most to finding new ways of responding to student and faculty needs in promoting a culture that enhances our mission to develop the humanities in and through our

commitment to diversity and equity,” said Blanco.

Molina noted that the division’s Institute of Arts and Humanities serves as a hub for intellectual exchange, interdisciplinary research and as a bridge to the other universities within the University of California system, as well as the local community.

“The humanities offer a vehicle—be it through a novel, historical case study or documentary—to gain some insight into someone else’s experience, making it less foreign, less distant and less frightening,” Molina said. “This connection is the first step in meaningful dialogue, one in which we are willing to listen to as well as communicate our ideas: the keystone of democracy.”

UC San Diego’s Division of Arts and Humanities ranks in the top 35 programs in the country, according to U.S. News & World Report.

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