

University Dean of Recruitment and Diversity, Dr. Arlene Torres



"I hope to bring administrative practice and scholarly fields of inquiry in the academy together to shed light on possible courses of action to strategically increase diversity and inclusion at CUNY. As an educator and university administrator, scholarship that addresses structure, governance, and fiscal constraints have to be reviewed in relation to, as opposed to in opposition to, the development of leadership, faculty, curricula and courses that educate and prepare students, the next generation of critical thinkers who must solve complex social problems locally and on a global scale in contexts that reflect our the changing social and cultural landscape. The challenge put before us to engage one another in meaningful ways in the service of our students."

Arlene Torres, Ph.D.

Biography

University Dean Arlene Torres is an academic in the discipline of anthropology and in the interdisciplinary fields of African American and Latina/o Studies. Dr. Torres is a scholar of race and ethnicity. She has been involved in the American Anthropological Association's national project on race which includes a book on curriculum development for k-16 educators, a major website <http://www.understandingrace.org> and scholarly articles. Her scholarship has helped to contextualize her new professional role as a university administrator, one that takes into account the relationship between compliance and the practice of diversity, noting that effective practices have the power to change mindsets.

Dean Torres is currently the Principal Investigator and Director of of the CUNY Mellon Faculty Diversity Career Enhancement Initiative, an exciting four year initiative that will work in conjunction with the four Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow serving institutions at CUNY to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a mentor, she coordinated and directed the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program at Hunter College. She also served as the Director of the Chancellor's Latino Faculty Initiative in Academic Affairs in the Central Administration at CUNY. She is on leave from her position as an Associate Professor in the Department of Africana, Puerto Rican/Latino Studies at Hunter College at the City University of New York (CUNY).

As University Dean of Recruitment and Diversity, Torres uses compliance-driven data presented in annual campus Affirmative Action Plans (AAPs) in tandem with the practices identified in the Faculty Diversity Strategic Plans (FDSPs) to pose the following questions: 1) What is the campus vision and how is it aligned with CUNY's broader vision? 2) What are its current practices? 3) What are its challenges? 4) And if diversity and inclusion is not being achieved, how will current practices be changed? Toward that end, she is now working with the University Advisory Council on Diversity to engage in campus visits to advance initiatives to advance diversity.

Torres is Past President of the Puerto Rican Studies Association (2014-2016) and Past-President of the Association of Latina and Latino Anthropological Association, a division of the American Anthropological Association. She received her Ph.D. and Master's degrees in Anthropology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she served a head of the Department of Latina and Latino Studies as an administrator and member of the faculty.

Dean Torres has also held post-doctoral fellowships at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy, Princeton University and the Museum of American History at Smithsonian Institution. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Sociology and Anthropology at Colgate University and believes in the transformative possibilities of an education in the Liberal Arts and Sciences. She works on several University-wide and community organizations to support the educational advancement of underrepresented communities in higher education.

She serves on the Mission Effectiveness Committee of the Cornelia Connelly Center, a vibrant middle school for girls on the lower east side of New York City, whose mission is to support young girls in their academic pursuits.