



**NASPA**<sup>®</sup>

Student Affairs Administrators  
in Higher Education

**2025-2026**

**Emerging Faculty Leader Academy Cohort**

Erica Campbell  
Assistant Professor  
Miami University  
@ericatcampbell

Roberto Orozco  
Assistant Professor  
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Dallas Doane  
Associate Professor of Practice  
University of Kansas

Grace Poon Ghaffari  
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Amber Holton-Thomas  
Assistant Professor  
Pacific University

Carlton Smith  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
University of North Carolina  
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Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley  
Assistant Professor  
Baylor University  
@SaralynMC

Jia Zheng  
Assistant Professor  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

*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)



Erica Campbell  
Assistant Professor  
Miami University  
@ericatcampbell

Erica T. Campbell, Ph.D. (she/her) is an Assistant Professor in the Student Affairs in Higher Education program at Miami University. Prior to her current role, she served as a Heanon Wilkins Faculty Fellow and Visiting Professor at Miami University from 2022 to 2024. She has also worked as a student affairs administrator in multicultural affairs and student activities at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. She holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration, along with a Certificate in Qualitative Research and College Teaching from the University of Alabama (2022). She also earned an M.S.Ed. in Higher Education and Student Affairs from Indiana University and a B.A. in Marketing with a minor in Family Relationships from Miami University. As an alumna, she is passionate about giving back to her alma mater, supporting students in their educational journeys. Her teaching is grounded in a critical perspective, with a focus on amplifying underrepresented voices. Her research primarily investigates the experiences of Black women multicultural center administrators at historically white institutions, as well as the challenges faced by minoritized students and administrators in higher education. One of her recent projects includes co-editing a book on teaching social justice in qualitative research. She is also actively engaged in campus service, community involvement, and professional organizations such as ASHE, ACPA, NASPA, and AERA. She has received numerous accolades throughout her career, including the 2024 "Outstanding Graduate Faculty Award" from the Miami University College of Education, Health, and Society Dean's Student Leadership Council. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys spending time with family, friends, mentees, her church community, and her sisters in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She also loves dancing, reading, and binge-watching reality TV shows.



Dallas Doane  
Associate Professor of Practice  
University of Kansas

Dallas Doane, Ed.D. (he/him), is an associate professor of practice in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas. At KU, he teaches broadly about DEI, college access, and program evaluation. Additionally, Dallas is the program coordinator for the master's degree in higher education administration. Before joining the University of Kansas, he spent several years as a student affairs practitioner working in admissions, academic affairs, and TRIO programs. He is a proud first-generation college graduate of the University of South Dakota (BMA, EdD) and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (MA).

Dallas actively engages with NASPA IV-W, FirstGen Forward, and the Council for Opportunity in Education.



Amber Holton-Thomas  
Assistant Professor  
Pacific University

Dr. Amber Holton-Thomas (she/her/ella) is an Assistant Professor in the PhD in Education and Leadership program. Her research and teaching focus on equity and access for underrepresented students in higher education and includes an emphasis on public policy at the federal level (Pell Grants, Immigration, SNAP, TANF). She also has interests in critical quantitative methods, age diversity and parenting students in higher education, and dynamics of power in leadership.

Prior to shifting into a tenure track faculty role, Dr. Holton-Thomas spent almost 20 years in student affairs in roles such as the Inaugural Director of the First-Gen+ Center within the Division of University Life at George Mason University, Associate Director for the Center for Leadership and Social Change at Florida State University and positions in the Center for Multicultural Education and School of Medicine at New York University.

Amber completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2005 with a double-major in Psychology and Spanish from Capital University, a Master of Arts degree in Higher Education in 2007 from New York University and her Doctor of Philosophy degree was awarded in May 2019 in Higher Education and Public Policy from Florida State University. She grew up in Cleveland, Ohio and is a proud first-generation college graduate and the only member of her family to hold a Doctor of Philosophy degree.



Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley is an interdisciplinary scholar of higher education informed by student affairs practice. Her research addresses staff in higher education, financial aid, community colleges and transfer, and gender in the academy. She is passionate about translating research to practice. In 2019, she began service as NASPA's WISA Research and Scholarship Co-Chair.

Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley  
Assistant Professor  
Baylor University  
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Roberto Orozco  
Assistant Professor  
University of Minnesota -  
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Roberto C. Orozco, is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities. His research explores questions around race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality with relation to college student activism and student development, queer resistance and queer worldmaking in and outside of higher education contexts. He grounds his work at the intersection of Jotería Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Chicana Latina Feminisms to examine the identity and socio-political consciousness of queer Latinx/a/o student activists in higher education. Dr. Orozco received his PhD in Higher Education from Rutgers University–New Brunswick, his M.S. in Higher Education from Florida State University, and his B.S. in Marketing and International Business from Iowa State University, and a B.S. in Psychology from Iowa State University. His professional experiences in student affairs and higher education include his role as the Director of the Center for Social Justice at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; his roles within the Center for Leadership & Social Change at Florida State University, and his work in the Division of Enrollment Management at Rutgers University–New Brunswick.



Grace Poon Ghaffari  
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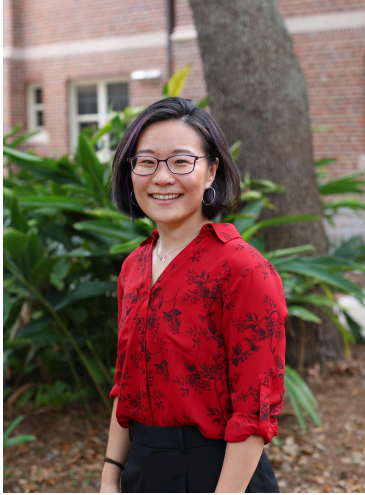
Grace Poon Ghaffari, PhD is a motherscholar practitioner, daughter of Chinese immigrants, and embodied healer. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs for the Department of Counselor Education at San Jose State University. Rooted in de/colonial and abolitionist ways of being, Grace's research and praxis explores healing and harm among student survivors of sexual and relationship violence, as interconnected and shaped by systems of oppression. Grace is also a trauma-informed yoga teacher who facilitates yoga as healing for survivors. In her recent past, Grace also served as a sexual violence prevention educator and survivor advocate, and has previously worked in various areas in higher education and student affairs for over a decade. Grace finds joy anytime she is playing with her daughter, connecting with community, and tasting all the foods.



Carlton Smith  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
University of North Carolina  
Wilmington  
@ProfPhreeze06

Carlton Smith (He/Him) is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Educational Leadership at UNC Wilmington. Carlton served as a practitioner in both Higher Education and Student Affairs for nearly 10 years before joining the department. He received his Ph.D. in College Student Affairs Administration from the University of Georgia. He received his B.A. in Government from the College of William & Mary where he also received his M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration with a concentration in Multicultural Affairs. His research interests focus on the development of sense of belonging in various student populations, virtual campus environments, and the impacts of technology on the student experience. Through these interests, he hopes to better understand the students of today while providing resources and guidance for practitioners to best support the next generation of students. Outside of his academic interests, Carlton enjoys coffee, cooking, video games, and reading detective fiction.





Jia Zheng  
Assistant Professor  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Dr. Jia Zheng (a.k.a. Dr. Z) is an Assistant Professor of Social Justice Education in the Department of Student Development at the University of Massachusetts College of Education. Her scholarship draws from critical theories and critical qualitative methodologies to interrogate inequitable power systems and push for equity and justice in higher education through a transnational lens. Jia's research focuses on Asian American and Asian international students and race; academic partnerships at transnational programs and institutions in the Global South; college and graduate students' socialization to principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice during politically challenging times; and critical qualitative method(ologies). Her work has appeared in the *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *Research in Higher Education*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering*, *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, and *Inside Higher Ed*. She also serves on the Editorial Board of the *Opportunity Matters Journal*. Before her role at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Jia served as a Clinical Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator for the On-Campus Student Personnel in Higher Education Program at the University of Florida. Prior to her faculty life, Jia was an instructor for the undergraduate Leadership Studies Program at the University of Maryland College Park and has worked in various capacities as a student affairs practitioner at the University of Maryland College Park and Duke Kunshan University in China. Jia received her Ph.D. in the Higher Education, Student Affairs, and International Education Policy Program at the University of Maryland College Park, Master in Education in Educational Policy at the University of Washington, and Bachelor of Education in English Education at the Education University of Hong Kong.