

An aerial photograph of the Loyola Marymount University campus. The image shows several large, white, multi-story buildings with classical architectural features, surrounded by lush green lawns and numerous palm trees. In the foreground, a large hillside is covered in dense vegetation, with the letters 'LMU' painted in large, white, block letters. The background shows a residential neighborhood with houses and a green field.

# **Biosketches**

## **Loyola Marymount University**

### **2018-19**



# Loyola Marymount University

## NEW FACULTY 2018-19: BIOSKETCHES



### TO THE LOYOLA MARYMOUNT COMMUNITY:

I am pleased to introduce our new faculty colleagues for 2018-2019. Our 28 new tenure-line faculty and 27 visiting and clinical faculty bring a breadth of expertise and life experience, further extending the intellectualism and creativity of our highly-esteemed and world-class faculty community.

Reflecting back to your first year as faculty and staff members, you may recall the excitement of meeting new people, the thrill of navigating a new campus and culture, and the optimism for accomplishing the goals you set for yourselves. Our new colleagues will experience similar sentiments. Let's embrace them by inviting them into our offices, welcoming their ideas, hearing their voices, and lending a helping hand. This way, we not only embolden our faculty, we enliven the LMU Community as we encourage learning, educate the whole person, and lead lives in the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

I look forward to working with all of you. May your 2018-2019 year be filled with new friendships, fresh ideas, and exciting opportunities for growth and renewal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Poon'.

Thomas Poon, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President and Provost



**TAHEREH AGHDASIFAR**  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
**Women and Gender Studies**

Professor Aghdasifar received her B.A. in Middle Eastern Studies and M.A. in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Georgia State University. She earned her Ph.D. in Cultural

Studies with a certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Emory University. Her research interests include queer of color critique, everyday life, affect, and opacity. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Queering the Quotidian: Everyday Homosociality in Iranian Bra Shops*, and conducting research for a new project exploring how queer of color performances that refuse audience legibility facilitate modes of relationality outside of identity politics. She is currently the director of the Society for Radical Geography, Spatial Theory, and Everyday Life.



**GRAHAM BEATTIE**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Economics**

Professor Graham Beattie earned a B.A. in Economics from McGill University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Toronto. He joins LMU from the

University of Pittsburgh, where he was a Postdoctoral Associate in the Department of Economics. His research spans the fields of environmental economics, public economics, and applied microeconomics. His ongoing work investigates the causes and consequences of media coverage and public opinion about environmental issues. He is also interested in applications of text-as-data methodologies to a wide range of fields of economics.



**STACEY CABAJ**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Theatre Arts and Dance**

Professor Stacey Cabaj is an award-winning actress, performance pedagogy specialist, and voice coach. She holds an M.F.A. in Theatre Pedagogy from Virginia Commonwealth University

and a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, as well as teaching certifications in the Meisner Approach to Acting, Vibrant Voice Technique®, and Vocal Yoga®. Before joining the faculty at LMU, she was an Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University and headed the M.F.A. program in Performance Pedagogy at the University of Pittsburgh. Professor Cabaj balances her ongoing creative work as an actress and voice coach with her research on emerging techniques in performance pedagogy.

**ASHLEIGH CAMPI**  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
**Political Science**



Ashleigh M. Campi is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science at Loyola Marymount University, where her research and teaching focus on right and left social movements in the United States, gender, and authority. Her current book project theorizes American neoliberalism as a political project based in anti-democratic relations of rule, and offers an historical account of the role of conservative media and movement organizations in forming these relations. She traces how these actors cultivate submission internally to conservative political culture, and how they advance rule through policing externally—for instance, through extending crime control logics into schools. Her article, “The Unstable Alliance for School Choice: Social Movements and American Neoliberalism” recently appeared in *Polity*.

**LAUREN R. CASELLA**  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*  
**Educational Leadership**



Professor Lauren Casella holds a B.A. in Liberal Studies from LMU, an M.A. in Leadership and Supervision from Loyola University Chicago, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and

Teacher Education in Multicultural Societies from the University of Southern California. Dr. Casella served Catholic elementary schools within the Chicago Archdiocese for ten years as a teacher, administrator, and principal. She also taught courses on curriculum and instructional leadership at LMU and served as a consultant with the LMU Family of Schools, providing ongoing support of local Catholic schools focus on the integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) curriculums, and seeking to foster positive climate and culture. Her teaching and research interests include leadership theory and applications related to the Catholic school principalship, mission-driven leadership, teacher education, and innovative instructional practices in support of exceptional Catholic education.

**DAVID CLAWSON**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Screenwriting**



Professor David Clawson holds B.A.'s in English/Writing and Dramatic Theory from the University of Arizona and an M.F.A. in Screenwriting from the University of Southern California.

He also taught at USC for eight years before joining LMU full-time. As a screenwriter, he has written for studios and independent production companies, in Hollywood and internationally. In 2017, his first novel, *My Fairy Godmother Is A Drag Queen*, was published by Sky Pony Press, and in 2018, he was named one of *Variety's* 10 Top Teachers in Entertainment Education.



**KRISTEN COVINO**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Biology**

Professor Kristen Covino earned her B.S. degree in Biology from Canisius College in Buffalo, NY and her M.S. in Biology/Zoology from the University of Maine, Orono. Professor

Covino received her Ph.D. from the University of Southern Mississippi where she investigated physiological breeding development in migrating songbirds. Her research encompasses many scales of inquiry, ranging from avian physiology to continental-scale migratory movements, and seeks to understand the movement biology and whole life-cycle biology of migratory birds. Professor Covino's pedagogical interests include integrating active and team-learning activities into traditional lectures, incorporating science communication into her courses, and mentoring undergraduate researchers. Professor Covino teaches a summer Field Ornithology course at the Shoals Marine Laboratory (Cornell University) on Appledore Island, Maine, where she also co-manages the Appledore Island Bird Banding Station. She recently received the Early Professional Award from the American Ornithological Society, for which she serves as an Elective Member on their Early Professional Committee. Professor Covino's research has been published in numerous journals including *Hormones and Behavior*, *General and Comparative Endocrinology*, *AUK: Ornithological Advances*, and *The Journal of Ornithology*.

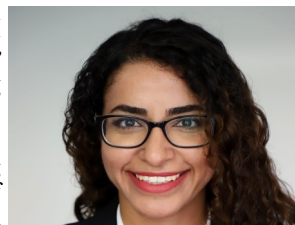


**VANESSA DIAZ**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Chicano/a & Latino/a Studies**

Professor Vanessa Diaz received her B.A. in Latin American Studies & Political Science from New York University and her M.A. and Ph.D. in

Anthropology from the University of Michigan. In the past three years, she has served as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Dartmouth College and UCLA, an assistant professor of Latina/o Communications at CSU, Fullerton, and a lecturer in the department of Sociology at the University of Southern California. Her research, publications, and creative works include: *Manufacturing Celebrity: How Women Reporters and Latino Paparazzi Build the Hollywood Industrial Complex* published with the Duke University Press; co-authoring the fourth annual Hollywood Diversity Report at the UCLA Bunche Center for African American Studies; co-founding a user-generated digital mapping site to track hate crimes and harassment since the 2016 U.S. presidential election ([HateCrimeMap.com](http://HateCrimeMap.com)); and authoring a chapter in the anthology *Contemporary Latina/o Media: Production, Circulation, Politics*, titled, "Latinos at the Margins of Celebrity Culture: Informal Image Sales and the Politics of Paparazzi."

**MAHSA EBRAHIM**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Mechanical Engineering**



Dr. Mahsa Ebrahim received her B.S. and M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from K.N.Toosi University of Technology. She earned her Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Villanova University. Dr. Ebrahim performs experimental, numerical research in Thermo-Fluid field and her work has centered on spray cooling, droplet impingement, multi-phase flows, interfacial flows and phase interactions. She has collaborated with the University of Leeds in developing lattice Boltzmann model for small scale droplet impingement simulation. She has been able to develop analytical models as well as correlations for droplet impingement based on her comprehensive experimental and numerical data and physical comprehension. Her latest publication in the *Journal of Physics of Fluids* was identified as a newsworthy article for the journal highlights.

**JONGYEON (JOY) EE**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Specialized Programs in Urban Education**



Professor Jongyeon (Joy) Ee received her Ph.D. in Education from University of California, Los Angeles. She was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the UCLA Civil Rights Project. She has authored several research reports and book chapters on school segregation, racial inequality, and school discipline in K-12 schools. Her recent work also focuses on education for language-minority students and immigrant students. She has published her work on dual immersion education and bilingualism in multiple research articles. She was awarded the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the National Association for Bilingual Education. She earned an M.A. degree in the Teaching of English as a Second Language at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and received a B.A. in English from South Korea.

**FULYA ERSOY**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Economics**



Professor Fulya Ersoy is a tenure-track assistant professor in the Economics department of Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts at Loyola Marymount University. Professor Ersoy earned her B.A. in Management from Bogazici University and her M.A. in Economics from Sabanci University. She received her Ph.D. in Economics from Stanford University. She worked as a research assistant and teaching assistant during her studies at Stanford University. Her primary research interests are the economics of education and experimental economics. In particular, she is interested in understanding how students make their decisions using a combination of behavioral insights, experimental methods, and empirical methods.





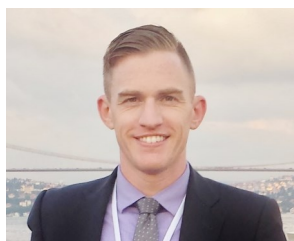
**LAUREN FRANCES GUERRA**  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
**Theological Studies**

Dr. Lauren Frances Guerra grew up in the heart of Los Angeles, California. She is of Guatemalan-Ecuadorian descent and an active member of the Roman Catholic Church. She earned her doctorate in Systematic and Philosophical Theology from the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley. She is thrilled to be serving as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Theological Studies Department here at her alma mater, Loyola Marymount University. As a Systematic Theologian, she approaches the theological task with the complexities of race, class, and gender in mind. Popular Religion and community-based art inform her theologizing. Teaching and research combines all of those things that are most important to her including: faith, culture, and justice. Her current research interests include U.S. Latina/o theology, Theological Aesthetics, and Chicana/o Studies. Her long-term goal is to serve as an advocate for the U.S. Latina/o community through her theological work.



**SONA GALA**  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*  
**Marketing and Business Law**

Professor Sona Gala received her B.B.A. in marketing from Loyola Marymount University and her J.D. from Loyola Law School. She has been a practicing attorney since 1999. Most recently, Professor Gala served as in-house counsel to a restaurant and real estate development company. She continues to serve as the Managing Director for the Gala Foundation, which partners with local and international charities to promote education for underprivileged youth. In 2012, she began teaching courses in the Legal Environment of Business and Law for the Entrepreneur and Small Business at LMU. During her time at LMU, Professor Gala has co-authored a number of legal articles on topics such as sexual harassment, with Dr. Arthur Gross-Schaeffer.



**ALEXANDER GLÖSENBERG**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Management and Entrepreneurship**

Professor Alexander (Alex) Glösenberg earned a B.A. in International Affairs from the University of Colorado at Boulder and a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from North Carolina State University. Alex's research interests include the psychology of entrepreneurship – especially social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in lower-income settings. Alex grew interested in these topics as a United States Peace Corps Volunteer in the Republic of South Africa. As a social entrepreneur, Alex works to apply research findings and psychological tools to promote the empowerment of disadvantaged populations.

**JOSHUA HALLAM**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Mathematics**



Professor Joshua Hallam received a B.S. in mathematics and a M.S. in biomathematics from Illinois State University. He received his Ph.D. in mathematics from Michigan State University in 2015. For the last three years, he was a teacher-scholar postdoctoral fellow at Wake Forest University. His research interests are in algebraic and enumerative combinatorics. He has published several articles concerning partially ordered sets, combinatorial graphs, and quasisymmetric functions. One of his pedagogical goals is to show students the vast amount of creativity in mathematics.

**REBECCA HERR STEPHENSON**  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*  
**Educational Leadership and Administration**



Professor Rebecca Herr Stephenson earned her Ph.D. and M.A. in Communication from USC and her M.A. in Teaching from LMU. She returned to LMU in 2013 to serve as the Managing Editor for the Journal of Catholic Education. In addition to working with the Journal, Professor Stephenson teaches qualitative research methods and writing courses in the doctoral program. Her research focuses broadly on teaching and learning with media and technology. She has published and presented on topics ranging from children's educational television and video games to strategies for incorporating blended learning into the K-12 curriculum. She is co-author of two books, *Teaching Harry Potter: The Power of Imagination in Multicultural Classrooms* (2011, Palgrave MacMillan) and *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with Digital Media* (2009, MIT Press). Currently, she is working on a study of K-12 teachers' perceptions of the impacts of the current political climate on their students' experiences at school and is a contributor to the Magic Chair project, a transmedia project dedicated to telling stories about disability.

**LAURA HUFFMAN**  
*Instructor*  
**Modern Languages and Literature**

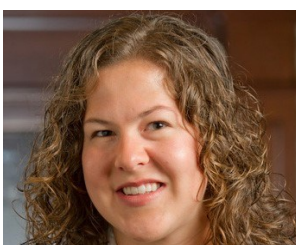


Professor Laura Huffman received her Ph.D. in French and Francophone Studies from UCLA and did her undergraduate work in French at UC Santa Cruz, the Université de Pau and the Sorbonne (Paris III). Her doctoral dissertation focused on autobiographical realism in the work of Marguerite Duras and Annie Ernaux. She has taught at UCLA, Occidental College, Pomona College, and USC. Her teaching interests include the language, literature, culture, and food of France and the Francophone world. She sees foreign language acquisition as an essential step toward intercultural understanding.



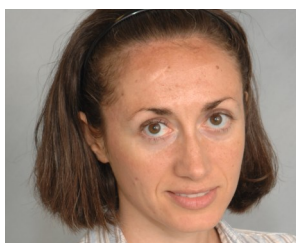
**ERIN KAPLAN**  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
**Economics**

Professor Erin Kaplan earned her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of California Santa Barbara and her B.A. in Economics and Mathematics from the University of Kansas. She has held faculty appointments at CSU Channel Islands, University of Pittsburgh, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, and Rhodes College. Professor Kaplan's research interests are broad within the fields of labor, health, education, and urban economics, with a focus on the impact of public policy on individuals and communities. She has published about the impact of unemployment on the health of children and families, the value of high quality public schools, and the impact of the Affordable Care Act on health insurance markets.



**LAYLA KARST**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Theological Studies**

Professor Layla Karst earned her B.A. in Communication Studies from Whitworth College and her Master of Divinity from the University of Notre Dame. In 2018, she will receive her Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Emory University. Professor Karst has taught courses in liturgical theology, ecclesiology, and American Catholicism. Her current research situates the study of Christian pilgrimage at the intersection of liturgical theology, ritual studies, and critical theory.



**INAS R. KELLY**  
*Associate Professor*  
**Economics**

Professor Inas R. Kelly earned her B.A. in economics from Queens College of the City University of New York, with minors in math and business. She received her Ph.D. in economics from the City University of New York Graduate Center in 2004, specializing in health economics. Professor Kelly was a faculty member in the Department of Economics at Queens College of the City University of New York and at the City University of New York Graduate Center from 2009 to 2018. Prior to that, she was a faculty member in the Department of Economics in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University (2004-2009). She is also a research associate in the Health Economics program at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and a Quintiles Fellow at the Schaeffer Center at the University of Southern California. Her primary fields are health economics, labor economics, and public policy. Kelly was Co-Editor-in-Chief of the peer-reviewed Elsevier journal *Economics and Human Biology* from January 2013 to January 2018 and is Co-Editor of the *Oxford Handbook of Economics and Human Biology*.



**YU LI**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Modern Languages and Literature**

Professor Yu Li earned her B.A. in English language and literature and M.A. in linguistics from Peking University. She received her Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Before joining LMU, she was a Senior Lecturer in Chinese studies, East Asian studies, and linguistics at Emory University. Professor Li's recent research focuses on the visual and social semiotics of the Chinese writing system. She is currently working on an interdisciplinary study of the Chinese script and on integrating linguistic-landscape research in the teaching of Chinese as a second language.



**JOSHUA MASON**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Philosophy**

Joshua Mason earned his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and specializes in comparative philosophy, Asian philosophy, and ethics. He takes a hermeneutic approach to comparison across traditions, focusing on the historical connotations of ethical ideals and metaphors. His research addresses the concepts of justice and harmony, and their compatibility as social goals in both Chinese and American contexts. Recent publications include "Generalization, Cultural Essentialism, and Metaphorical Gulfs" in *Dao*, and "Harmonetics" in *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*. He previously worked at West Chester University of Pennsylvania and at Kennesaw State University in Georgia.



**CHERYLYNN JODY MOODY**  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*  
**Specialized Programs in Urban Education**

Professor Cherylynn Jody Moody earned her B.A. in Sociology from CSU, Chico, as a Robert P. Rankin awardee and a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Honor Society. She then earned her M.A. in Teaching from CSU, Fresno with an emphasis in Social Justice. She received her Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership from the University of La Verne, with research in Twice Exceptionality, students with giftedness and disabilities, in the P12 classroom. Her interests also include understanding and exploring the use of standardized assessments in teacher credential programs. She teaches secondary and elementary methodology and assessment courses in the Northern California Bay Area and supports candidates in the rural Central Valley.





**DAVID MOORE**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Finance & CIS**

Professor David Moore earned his B.S. in engineering management and M.B.A. from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He competed in track and field and cross-country while at UTC, earning Academic All-American honors in 2010. He earned his Ph.D. in Finance from the University of Kentucky. Professor Moore's research is in corporate finance with a focus on payout policy. He studies the reasons why firms repurchase shares as well as the manner in which they buy back those shares.



**RAVARIS MOORE**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Sociology**

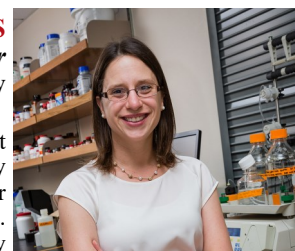
Professor Ravaris Moore earned his B.A. at Morehouse College with a double major in Mathematics and Economics. He completed his doctoral studies in Sociology, as well as M.A. degrees in Sociology and Economics at UCLA. Prior to matriculating at UCLA, he contributed to several national evaluations as a Research Programmer at Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. in the areas of education, health, and child and family well-being. Professor Moore is a quantitative sociologist with training in the fields of Social Stratification and Social Demography. His work employs quantitative methods with large-scale microdata to explore questions of inequality at the intersection of race and ethnicity, education, and health. His present research studies the effects of gun-violence exposure on the educational outcomes of students attending California public schools.



**ANDREA ODINOV FULLER**  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*  
**Theatre Arts and Dance**

Andrea Odinov (Fuller) is a voice, speech, and dialect specialist who earned her B.A. in U.S. History (with minors in music and theatre) from the University of Delaware, her M.F.A. in Acting from the University of California at Irvine, and Associate Instructor Certification in Fitzmaurice Voicework® from The Fitzmaurice Institute. In addition to her academic instruction, she has provided vocal and dialect coaching for professional theaters in Los Angeles since 2005. From 2008 to 2018, Andrea was an adjunct lecturer in LMU's Theatre Department, coached LMU theatre productions, and served as the Voice and Language Coach for the Center for Teaching Excellence. While adjunct at LMU, she also served as the Voice Instructor at the Lee Strasberg Institute for Theatre and Film in Los Angeles. There, she designed a course of study which integrated Fitzmaurice Voicework® and Strasberg's "Method Acting." Andrea holds performance credits from stage and screen, but currently focuses on her work as a voice-over artist. She is a member of SAG-AFTRA, AEA, and VASTA (Voice and Speech Trainers Association.)

**KATIE MOUZAKIS**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Chemistry and Biochemistry**



Professor Katie Mouzakis earned a joint B.S. in Chemistry-Biology from Harvey Mudd College; not far from her hometown of Rancho Cucamonga, CA. She received her Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin – Madison (UW Madison). During her graduate and postdoctoral work (also at UW Madison), she used biochemical, biophysical, and computational methods to study viral RNA structures and their functions. Concurrently, she gained invaluable teaching experience through the HHMI Teaching Fellows Program. Professor Mouzakis comes to LMU from Durango, CO, where she was an Assistant Professor of Biochemistry at Fort Lewis College (FLC). At FLC, she established an undergraduate-driven, externally-funded research program was awarded the FLC New Faculty Teaching Award, and was named a 2017 Cottrell Scholar by the Research Corporation for Science Advancement for her innovative research and educational programs. Her work is published in numerous journals, including Nucleic Acids Research and PNAS. She is excited to continue work she loves, teaching and doing research with undergraduates, as a faculty member in LMU's the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

**MARGARET MURPHY**  
*Associate Professor*  
**Film and Television Production**

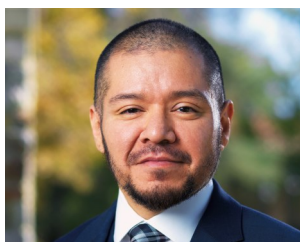


Maggie Murphy has more than 25 years of experience in television development and production and has developed with top talent including Darren Star (SEX IN THE CITY), Howard Gordon (HOMELAND), Diablo Cody (JUNO), Rob Thomas (VERONICA MARS), Ron Moore (OUTLANDER), and many others. She is an Executive Producer for Shaftesbury and her most recent executive producing credit is the drama series HOUDINI & DOYLE, from House creator David Shore, for Sony Pictures Television. She sold it internationally at its developmental inception to FOX, SHAW, and ITV. It aired on all three networks concurrently and is now streaming on Amazon. Murphy is also currently working at Universal Studios with Vin Diesel's company One Race. She is helping with their development slate which includes the remakes of MIAMI VICE, GET CHRISTIE LOVE and RIDDICK as a TV series. Ms. Murphy served as the development executive for David Kelley and helped develop ALLY MCBEAL, THE PRACTICE and CHICAGO HOPE. She also acted in over a dozen episodes of their shows. Murphy served as Senior Vice President of Drama Development for UPN/CW where she supervised the creation, from inception to series, for a variety of shows including VERONICA MARS and IN PLAIN SIGHT. Before UPN/CW, Murphy served as Senior Vice President at Regency TV where she helped create and develop top-rated series including ROSWELL, THE BERNIE MAC SHOW, and MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE. Early in her career, she worked in development at 20th Century Fox where she was involved in the development of X-FILES, THE SIMPSONS, BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER and many others. Maggie has been teaching the past 10 years both at UCLA and at various universities and seminars around the world in TV/Digital development and production. She holds a BFA from Northern Kentucky University.



**NICOLAS ORLANDO**  
**Clinical Assistant Professor**  
**Educational Leadership**

Nik Orlando earned his B.A. in Art from California State University, Long Beach. He earned his M.A. in Collaborative Educational Leadership and his Ed.D. in Leadership for Change from Fielding Graduate University. Nik's research has focused on school leadership development and evaluation systems. He oversaw the design and implementation of a school leadership evaluation system for a set of charter schools in Los Angeles. Nik Orlando spent the last 17 years at PUC Schools as a teacher, principal, regional director and superintendent of seven charter schools spanning elementary, middle and high school. Nik Orlando has been a Fieldwork Instructor and guest lecturer at LMU for the past 11 years.



**WILLIAM PEREZ**  
**Professor**  
**Educational Leadership**

Professor William Perez received his B.A. in psychology from Pomona College and his Ph.D. in Education from Stanford University. His research focuses on the social and psychological processes associated with academic success and higher education access among immigrant, undocumented, indigenous, and deported students in the U.S. and Mexico. He is recognized as one of the nation's leading academic experts on undocumented students. In 2009, he received the 2009 Mildred Garcia Prize for Excellence in Research (from the Association for the Study of Higher Education) for his book, *We ARE Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream*. His follow up book, *Americans by Heart: Undocumented Latino Students and the Promise of Higher Education*, was selected for the 2013 Critics Choice Award by the American Educational Studies Association. He has been interviewed or quoted as an academic expert in various media outlets including *NBC Nightly News*, *Time Magazine*, the *LA Times*, *Hispanic Magazine*, the *Washington Post*, and NPR's *All Things Considered*. He has also received various awards for his research on immigration and education including the Stanford University Distinguished Scholar Alumni Award, the early career scholar award from the Hispanic Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association and the Fulbright Fellowship. For the past four years, he has been selected for *Education Week's* annual ranking of the top 200 university-based scholars in the U.S. who are doing the most to influence educational policy and practice.



**CARISSA PHILLIPS-GARRETT**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Philosophy**

Carissa Phillips-Garrett earned her B.A. in philosophy from Point Loma Nazarene University, her M.A. in philosophy from Simon Fraser University, and her Ph.D. in philosophy from Rice University. After earning her Ph.D. in August 2017, she taught in the University of Houston Honors College program during the 2017-2018 school year. Her research focuses on the nature of virtues that arise from seeing agents as embedded within relationships and communities, not primarily as independent and isolated, and examines the role virtue plays in mediating and shaping social relationships. Her second line of research focuses on Aristotle's account of virtue. Her next project continues her research on ethical virtue through examining the value that the virtues of mercy and charity contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion.

**TARA PIXLEY**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**English**



Professor Tara Pixley earned her Ph.D. in Communication from University of California, San Diego and her M.F.A. in Photography from Savannah College of Art & Design. Her research interests include journalism studies, visual culture, and critical race, gender and queer theory, particularly as it relates to re-visioning oppressed populations in the new(s) media sphere. She is an award-winning journalist, filmmaker, and photographer who co-founded Reclaim Photo and Authority Collective — two organizations dedicated to de-colonizing visual media industry and individual practices. Her film and photographic works intersect with her scholarship, each addressing the problematics of representation and the possibility of contemporary visual media to reimagine historically misrepresented communities. Professor Pixley's published work appears in *Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies & Research*; *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*; *Nieman Reports*; *Newsweek*; *New York Times*; *ProPublica*; *PhotoVoice*; *PDN Magazine* and *Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities*. Her research and creative work has been funded by the Nieman Foundation for Journalism, National Endowment for the Arts, UC Consortium for Black Studies, UC San Diego's Interdisciplinary Collaboratories Grant, Frontiers of Innovation Scholarship, Center for Humanities, and the UC Fletcher Jones Fellowship.

**CHELSEA ROBINSON**  
**Visiting Assistant Professor**  
**Urban and Environmental Studies**



Professor Chelsea Robinson completed her B.A., M.A., and recently her Ph.D. in Geography at UCLA with a focus on Environmental Studies. She has spent extensive time doing field work in the country of Costa Rica to collect data on tree diversity and carbon storage to test the feasibility of relating remotely sensed structural information to tree diversity, utilizing remote sensing imagery collected from airplanes and satellites like lidar and optical datasets. In the field, she collected hundreds of tree cores from ~30 different species to assess drivers of carbon sequestration and to improve estimations of biomass. Before and during her graduate school career, she was an independent contractor at NASA's Jet Propulsion laboratory in their Earth Science division, working on carbon dynamics using remote sensing, and has worked on field campaigns for multiple NASA projects. She has published two papers as first-author on forestry mapping using remote sensing, and has contributed to many different projects with her advisors and colleagues. In her teaching, she loves to incorporate hands-on learning by getting the students outside to appreciate their surroundings, more than just lecturing about the environment within the classroom.





**NATALIE SCHAAL**  
*Assistant Professor*  
**Mechanical Engineering**

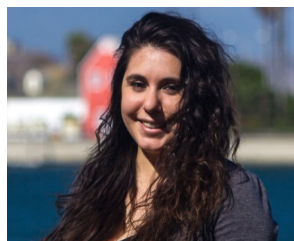
Professor Natalie Schaal received her B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Portland, with minors in Physics and Mathematics. She spent the following year at the University of Stuttgart in Germany on a Fulbright research grant, experimentally investigating wave propagation in multi-wire cables for damage detection methods. At the California Institute of Technology, she completed both her M.S. and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering, with a minor in Geophysics. Her research focused on developing models of nucleation and dynamic rupture on heterogeneous frictional interfaces and numerically simulating their long-term behavior, with applications to foreshocks.



**MARIA CHRISTINA VASQUEZ**  
*Associate Professor*  
**Biology**

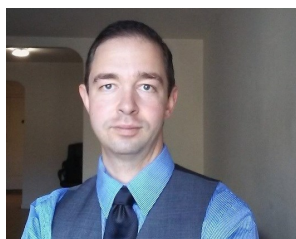
Professor Christina Vasquez received her B.S. in Animal Science from UC Davis in 2006, her M.S. in Biology from California State University, Northridge in 2009 and her Ph.D. in Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology at the University of Florida in 2013. She was awarded an NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology for Broadening Participation in 2014, which she completed at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo working with Dr. Lars Tomanek in the Environmental Proteomics Laboratory. Her research interests focus on investigating the effects of multiple environmental stressors on marine invertebrate physiology by integrating whole organism physiology with molecular, field, and ecological approaches to predict effects of climate change on marine communities. She also served as adjunct faculty at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, teaching both undergraduate and graduate physiology and scientific writing courses.

**CHÉLA WILLEY**  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
**Psychology**



Professor Chéla Willey earned her B.A. in Psychology with a second major in Justice Studies & Criminology, as well as her M.A. in Experimental Psychology from CSU San Marcos. She will receive her Ph.D. in Psychology from UCLA with a specialization in Cognitive Psychology. Her research interests span areas of visual perception, multisensory integration, and motor learning with recent work that focuses on vestibular and visual cue integration in the perception of vertical. This work attempts to aid in unraveling the underlying causes of common ailments such as motion sickness, vertigo, and acrophobia. She plans to expand this work using theories of perceptual learning and neuromodulation, and she's currently exploring sensory integration and balance in patients with cervical dystonia with UCLA's Department of Neurology.

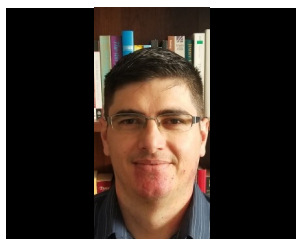
## POSTDOCTORAL TEACHING FELLOWS



**DAVID KOVACS**  
*Postdoctoral Fellow—Instructor*  
**Philosophy**

Professor David Kovacs received his B.A. in Philosophy from the University of Akron, his M.A. in Philosophy from Gonzaga University, and his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Fordham University.

He recently worked as a César Chávez Postdoctoral Fellow, Latin American. He taught courses such as Philosophy of Human Nature, Philosophical Ethics, Philosophical Issues of Life and Death, and Religion and Morality. Notable works include: “Overall and Aquinas on Miracles,” published in *Dialogue* 55 in 2016 and *Being in America, Sixty Years of the Metaphysical Society*, co-edited with Brian Henning and published by Rodopi Press in 2014.



**JUAN TORRES**  
*Postdoctoral Fellow—Instructor*  
**Philosophy**

Professor Juan Garcia Torres earned his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in philosophy from The Ohio State University. He has been a teaching assistant at The Ohio State University and an adjunct

professor at the Pontifical College Josephinum. His notable publications from 2018 include “Libertarianism, Moral Character, and Alternative Possibilities in Thomas Reid”, published in *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, and “Leibniz, a Friend of Molinism”, published in *Res Philosophica*, special edition *New Frontiers in Philosophy of Religion*. Professor Garcia was born, and partly raised, in a small town near Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Over 15 years ago Garcia and his extended family moved to Columbus, Ohio; staying near his family, and watching his wonderful nieces and nephews grow, was a major motivation for his pursuing higher education at The Ohio State University. One of the highlights of Garcia’s academic career took place last summer when he was able to participate in a delightful seminar in Rome, Italy. The wallpaper on Garcia’s phone, depicting his participation in a private Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica, commemorates this precious experience.

**DERMOTT WALSH**  
*Postdoctoral Fellow—Instructor*  
**Theological Studies**



Dr. Dermott Walsh earned a B.A. in Philosophy from Trinity College Dublin, and an M.A. in Japanese studies from Leiden University, the Netherlands. He received his Ph.D. in Buddhist studies from UCLA. Dermott’s main interests are in the area of Buddhist morality, the links between morality and meditation, and the relationship between Zen and other Buddhist schools in China and Japan.



**In addition, we welcome these colleagues to LMU:**

**ZAHRASADAT ALAVI\***

*Assistant Professor*  
Physics

**ARIN BRAHMA\***

*Assistant Professor*  
Finance and CIS

**MATTHEW PEREIRA\***

*Visiting Assistant Professor*  
Theological Studies

**DEMIAN WILLETTE\***

*Associate Professor*  
Biology

**\*Entry appeared in a previous Biosketches publication**

