

Departmental Opportunity: 2025-2027 Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Program in Support of Career Launch of Underrepresented Faculty

William Paterson is a designated Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Minority-Serving Institution (MSI). As of Fall 2024, Hispanic students constitute 31.3% of our undergraduate population and 20.8% of our graduate population, and Black/African American students make up 20.1% of our undergraduate population and 13.6% of our graduate population. The number of Hispanic full-time Hispanic faculty members in our Fall 2023 Factbook, however, was only 16 (or 6% of all FT faculty) and the number of Black/African American full-time faculty members was 25 (or 9% of all FT faculty).

Strategic intention within annual processes for faculty searches is critical to improving the diversity of faculty at William Paterson. Research on institutions that have been especially effective at diversifying their faculty also reveals the value of focused investment in career success initiatives.

In support of these goals, William Paterson launched in 2021 a unique fellowship program supporting pre-doctoral or other pre-terminal degree candidates who desire a career at an institution that emphasizes teaching quality and encourages multiple forms of scholarship. Within the framework of campus diversity and inclusion initiatives, WP continued a second round of fellowships in 2023 and will launch this year a third round for Fellows to begin in 2025. The program invests in the success of advanced pre-doctoral students (coursework completed and working on dissertation/thesis or who will soon receive their degrees) from underrepresented backgrounds either at the institutional or disciplinary levels.

Fellowships will begin in mid-August via an NTPP appointment in an intended two-year appointment, although a recommendation can be made to convert the fellowship to a full-time faculty line at any point after the end of the first year if the candidate has completed their doctoral degree and the department and Fellow both wish to do so.

The Fellowship Program's goals are the nurture of instructional talent as well as support for the effective launch of the Fellows' scholarly agendas. Fellowship features:

- Cohort experience through the Center for Teaching Excellence and on-going activities.
- Tailored mentorship to assist Fellow's degree completion and scholarly career launch.
- Fellows' activities linked to acclimation to the institution, the needs and professional growth of faculty from underrepresented backgrounds, and community integration.
- Teaching of three courses per semester, including a team-teaching opportunity, as informed by experience and department need and with additional option of paid summer teaching.
- Engagement with a student population that is among the most diverse in the state.
- Competitive academic year salary (plus summer teaching option for additional pay) including benefits package and travel/prof. development funding equivalent to tenure-track faculty.

Departmental Application for the Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Program in Support of Career Launch of Underrepresented Faculty

The goals of the pre-doctoral fellowship program are threefold, namely, (a) to support the career success of selected candidates, (b) to advance the Mission, Vision, and Values of the University with regard to diversity, and (c) to deepen the pool of excellent candidates for faculty positions at the University. Fellow appointments as NTTP are for two years, although a recommendation for a conversion to a full-time faculty position is possible as soon as the end of the first year if the candidate has completed their doctoral degree.

Any department may apply to participate in the pursuit of a Pre-Doctoral Fellow for their department. Apply through your Dean via email and addressing the questions below by **November 7, 2024**. Deans will advance their recommendation(s) to the Provost's Office for University selection of up to 4 fellowship opportunities. National advertising will be handled by the Provost's Office, with opportunities for departments to also engage their disciplinary listings. Departments selected will participate in a collective search process in the Spring Semester including collective training, scheduled for **1/30/25**, and a singular two-day interview event to be held **April 10-11, 2025** during which candidates will join together to share their research, learn about the campus, and interview with the committees. Costs for the search and the program will be borne by the Provost's Office except as noted under bullet 4 below.

Approval criteria are:

- Demonstrated commitment to the success of the Fellow, including mentoring.
- Appropriate teaching assignment and evidence of teaching coverage need¹.
- Well-articulated case for how a more diversified faculty serves the department, college, and university.
- Willingness to provide Fellow with same T/TT travel/professional development resources as a new T/TT hire at departmental/college expense.
- Departmental willingness to participate in all aspects of the search and selection process.

Department Application Questions (due via email to Dean by no later than November 7):

1. Why is your department interested in participating in this program (i.e., your justification for the Fellow position)?
2. How will you support your fellow for the two-year commitment? (Please also list a specific person who would potentially serve as the designated mentor and why they are a potentially good match, although we do realize this may ultimately be candidate-specific.)
3. What would the Fellow teach in the Fall and Spring Terms² and what opportunities might there be for a course(s) to teach in the summer?

¹Although Deans and the Provost's Office will give consideration to teaching load data when assessing applications, that is not the only criteria for selection (for example, consider data from Program Vitality Reports and the EAB posted to the [Provost's Office website](#)).

²Preference is for courses for which a broader range of candidates could teach to enhance the likelihood of finding suitable candidates.