

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to welcome Sabrina Kwist, who joins the provost's team as associate vice provost for antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion. For more than two decades, Sabrina's work has embodied her deep commitment to equity and inclusion as a transformational force in higher education. I am grateful to chair Shannon Gary and members of the **search committee** for identifying such talented candidates for this critical role.



As the inaugural dean of equity and inclusion and chief equity adviser to the president of Los Medanos College, Sabrina helped create the institutional vision for access, belonging, and inclusive excellence. She led the college's first comprehensive campus climate assessment and spearheaded its development of specific equity goals and interventions. In managing the college's \$3.4 million Student Equity and Achievement Plan, she was involved in the implementation, evaluation, and funding of 41 student success initiatives to address equity opportunity gaps in and out of the classroom. Her creation of a campus-wide inclusive professional development model provided more than 90 workshops for faculty, staff, and managers to deepen their knowledge, skills, and sense of community.

While assistant dean of students at Mills College, Sabrina managed the Center for Leadership, Equity, and Excellence, overseeing orientation programs, first-year experience, peer advocate programs for transfer, first-generation, low-income, and parenting students, and undocumented success programs. She forged partnerships with community-based organizations and secured grant and donor funding to support equity initiatives. She led timely responses to issues of bias and facilitated campus climate interventions from town hall meetings to small group mediations, always working to build what she describes as "spaces of breath and transformation."

In her academic career, Sabrina has studied how inequities can shape outcomes for communities locally and globally. A first-generation student at the University of California, Santa Barbara, she earned a bachelor of arts in sociology with a dual emphasis in U.S. race, class, and inequality and global women, culture, and development. As a research fellow, she examined U.S. human rights abuses and later worked on justice issues in South Africa, Mexico, and the Bay Area. She earned a master's in higher education and student affairs administration from the University of Vermont and an education doctorate from Mills College.

Across the many leadership positions she has held in equity, retention, residential life, and student success, Sabrina has worked to eliminate inequitable practices and cultivate the unique strengths each student brings — whether by creating identity-conscious cultural centers and programs, building student success initiatives for first-generation scholars, or tracking institutional hiring and training trends. As she notes, "Equity work requires building strong communities of practice, spending the time to build trust, and shared understanding, practicing principled conflict, as well as centering healing and joy." All of these elements will be essential as we work toward centering ADEI here at USF.

In this critical role, reporting to Vice Provost Sheila Smith McKoy, Sabrina will build and manage a re-envisioned Office of ADEI, partner with campus stakeholders to develop a university-wide antiracism/DEI plan, refresh our diversity hiring practices, and oversee key efforts in partnership with Student Life, including the Black Achievement, Success and Engagement Initiative and the Latinx Excellence and Belonging Initiative now being developed. One of Sabrina's priorities will be to ensure we move forward collaboratively, gathering inputs from key stakeholders, ensuring broad representation across our community, and working closely with the committees that fall within the AVP's charge, such as University Council on Antiracism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (formerly UCDI) and the Student Advisory Board to the ADEI office (formerly called DECO-SAB).

Sabrina has begun her work with Vice Provost McKoy on a part-time basis and will join our team full time on Oct. 17. We look forward to her presence on campus as a vital part of our community.

Warmly,

Chinyere Oparah
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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