

Transforms Newsletter

Advancing Faculty Equity at SF State

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Faculty Highlight

Interview with Valerie Francisco Menchavez

[Assistant Dean of Restorative and Transformative Racial Justice in the College of Health and Social Sciences](#)

By **Dr. Anoshvua Chaudhuri**

Valerie Francisco-Menchavez is the Assistant Dean of Restorative and Transformative Racial Justice in the College of Health and Social Sciences at San Francisco State University. She is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Sexuality Studies. She is committed to teaching, organizing, and conducting research on the topics of Filipina migration, transnational lives, and family-making in the United States and in the Philippines.



Tell us about your background and what guided you to an academic career?

After receiving my undergrad degrees at SF State in Sociology and Asian American Studies, I went to the City University of New York to get my masters and PhD in sociology. Going from the Bay Area to New York was like jumping from the pan to the fire. It really allowed me to see and learn about the different ways that communities of color and immigrant communities in San Francisco and New York build strategies of survival and thrive through caring for one another. This became foundational in my dissertation.

I think I am someone who carries and stands on the shoulders of my immigrant parents, my immigrant grandparents, the immigrant workers and working-class heroes who are my everyday heroes. I am a mother of two children, who are third generation Filipino Americans, and live in Daly City, a highly concentrated Filipino

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Program Highlights

Transforms Launches PERC Portal by Petra Dekens

We are happy to announce that the Promoting Equity and Relationships among Colleagues (PERC) portal was launched in March 2023. The PERC program is designed to promote healthy relationships among staff and faculty by providing space where relationships can be built or repaired. The approach uses a restorative circle model that provides a place to begin to talk about conflict in a healthy, honest, and productive manner so that we can mend and thereby build our professional communities. We honor the global indigenous roots of restorative circles and invite you to think of this process as a starting point of your journey in working towards a healthier relationship with your colleague(s).

The PERC fellows are a collective of staff and faculty who have received a year of extensive training including a series of zoom and in-person sessions guided by experts with years experience using restorative practices in a variety of professional and educational settings. PERC fellows are a community of learners rooted in the ongoing practice of restorative conversations, so that we can hold spaces and opportunities for staff and faculty to address conflicts that do not rise to the level of a Title IX and/or Discrimination, Harassment, & Retaliation (DHR) policy violation.

We invite faculty and staff campus members to come to PERC if you are experiencing tensions or conflict with a workplace colleague and would like to have help speaking directly and potentially resolving the issue using a healthy, fair, equity-minded and relationship building space. The process is entirely voluntary and is not designed for assigning blame or doling out punishment. Once a concern has been submitted via the portal, a PERC fellow will reach out for an initial conversation to learn more about the situation and will only proceed with reaching out to other participants if the initial person is comfortable doing so.

By building the skills and relationships faculty and staff members need when challenges arise, PERC fellows seek to inspire hope, connection, and healing while promoting the workplace well-being of our wonderfully diverse faculty and staff.

Transforms Gathered Faculty and Staff for Face-to-Face Connection

A Spring Faculty Luncheon was held on March 2nd as part of our efforts to expand faculty and staff community and support as we build intersectional racial and gender equity for faculty advancement. Transforms provided information, food, and connection for those who joined us. Highlights include:

- Petra Dekens announced the launch of the [PERC \(Promoting Equity and Relationships among Colleagues\) portal](#).
- Information was provided on our Faculty Scholarship Hubs and Other programs.
- A Service Equity Table highlighted findings from the Transforms analysis of the PDC survey distributed last spring 2022 (see Campus Connections story).
- Former Provost Sue Rosser signed her books published on Gender Equity and Faculty over her career. The books were a generous donation by the J. Paul Leonard Library.

We thank [Women in Science & Engineering \(WISE\)](#) for co-hosting and all of you who joined us!

Photo of Professor Laura Mamo, Professor of Public Health and Co-PI of Transforms with Sue Rosser (former Provost, SFSU).



Photo of the room of round tables with attendees.

News From This Year's Faculty Scholars

The ADVANCE Scholarship Hub fellows are meeting monthly under the banner of Creating Community and Solidarity for Faculty Equity.

During our February meeting, following winter break, faculty shared “who we are as faculty scholars” bringing conversation about children, birthdays, publications, as well as community work to the foreground of their lives as scholars. We can't help share two photos that came into our zoom engagement.



Professor Tiffany Caesar (Africana Studies) adopted into her forever home, Rocky!



Professor Jaime Chaves (Biology) shared photos from his visit to his home and research trip in Ecuador.

Writing Meet-Ups

Transforms Continues to host the **WRITING MEET-UPS** Scholarship Meet-ups to support writing time are held twice a month- the first Tuesday 1-3pm and the 3rd Friday 1-3pm each month in the Library 2nd floor Teaching and Learning Commons. Sessions are hybrid: in person and on Zoom. Thank you goes to Professor Anoshua Chaudhuri (Economics) and Advance Hub alumni for leading the Writing Meet-Ups.

Upcoming Writing Meet-Up Session Dates:

- Friday April 21st 1-3pm
- Tuesday May 2nd 1-3pm
- Friday May 19th 1-3pm

For zoom link or more information contact: transforms@sfsu.edu. If you are attending via Zoom please RSVP by scanning the QR code below or follow the [link](#).



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American community. I bring all these communities with me to the work of racial justice on our campus. It is because of them that I uphold principles around equity and justice that I am called to uphold every day in CHSS.

Tell us about your scholarship contributions?

Broadly, my work is about Filipino domestic workers. I've written a book called *The Labor of Care* about the lives of Filipino domestic workers in New York City. In the process, I was also able to serve my community as an organizer and activist, campaigning for general welfare and rights of Filipino migrants. I've continued that scholar-activist tradition in all of my research projects here in the Bay area.

Currently, my second book and research is with Filipino caregivers in the San Francisco/Bay Area. The research was conducted in the pandemic and through lockdown so it encompasses the changes in caregivers' work and in the organization of social movements. I'm part of the California Coalition for Domestic Workers Rights, and support organizations that directly serve Filipino migrants like PAWIS in the South Bay.

Why SF State and what do you like best about SF State? What about SF State challenges you?

As a woman of color and immigrant in this country, who was also an undocumented student, coming to SF state as an undergrad, helped me grow academically and politically. My education here allowed me to see my identities of being an undocumented, immigrant, woman of color, not as a deficit, but as my superpowers. Many of us could find those identities as insurmountable barriers but SF state's history and activism only opened doors for me.

Who and what inspired you to pursue your work?

The late historian, Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, a Filipino American and professor at SF State, was one of the mentors who really showed me that you can really bring your whole self and be a professor. Allyson Tintiango-Cubales taught me from the very beginning that being a professor also meant

investing in my pedagogy, and how I related with students in the classroom. Jessica Fields, who's no longer in sociology at SF State, but is at University of Toronto, was a mentor who helped me think about participatory methods and research that's accountable to our communities. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, who just recently retired as the chair of Asian American studies at UC Davis was my example in scholar activism, who helped me see how to really think about bringing together, in a very difficult but a very worthy journey, scholarship and activism.

Where do you get support and mentoring now?

My current strength building collective are faculty at our own university. Sherria Taylor in Child Adolescent Development, who has shown me what it means to center radical care and healing, not only for us, but for our students. I think of Che Rodriguez in criminal justice, as someone who's so eloquent with his words, but also really principled in the way that he moves and thinks about the kinds of classrooms we set up for our students, and the ways in which we bring our humanity in this space. Marty Martinson in Public Health and Savi Malik in Metro who ran a faculty learning community where we talked about social justice, pedagogy, and the issues that were coming up for us in the classroom and as faculty, it was so formative for me.

What advice do you give to other (women or non-binary persons from communities of color) interested in an academic career in STEM?

How I mentor my undergrad, master's, and doctoral students, is that I start with humility, and knowing and understanding, that at any point in our lives our life's work is to deepen our understanding of one another, and that means one another's suffering, and also our ability to create solutions.

I want to acknowledge, first, that the legacy of deficit, and how people of color, women, immigrants, Queer and trans people have often been narrated as less than and that obviously leads us to sort of an impostor syndrome, that is very real, and that doesn't go away. Even as an assistant Dean, I don't think that goes away for me either. But in fact, we might take that impostor syndrome, that 'outsider positionality', as Patricia Hill Collins would call it, and run with it.

To be a renegade scholar, and to be an outsider scholar means that we can embrace the identities that we have that have been called less than or not good enough and perhaps show up with those as our superpowers, as our strengths, as our very unique vantage points in shaping academia, and shaping our research field and shaping our classrooms, our boardrooms, and our workplaces.

How do you mark success for yourself?

I mark it with how much time I have to be present with my children, and my husband and my community. I mark it with the relationships that I build, and how I build, how much integrity I can do my work with. I mark it with how my body feels, and how my spirit feels on any given day. I hold my success in the fact that I can always say yes to people like you, because I want any minutes that I can get with you. I also mark it with the relationships I have with my students, and to see them thrive.

Is there something about your work and/or life you are particularly proud of that you'd like to share?

Currently, my project is a working paper called the Rank, Tenure, Promotion and Social Justice created collaboratively with colleagues in CHSS namely, Sherria Taylor, Che Rodriguez, David Rebanal, Sheldon Gen, and Mickey Eliason. We wrote this paper based on a sustained conversation about how the metrics of RTP sustain white supremacy culture, and what we can do to challenge those principles.

The working paper is designed to be an action plan for departments in our college to consider principles of racial justice and equity when they are sitting down to revise their RTP criteria. It contains a problem posing guide with questions like, what do we mean by 'rigor' or 'significance' in research? What metrics are we using to define faculty's 'impact'? Is there a compelling reason why we should have 3 peer-reviewed articles versus 2 versus none? How are social justice pedagogies weighed in teaching, knowing that at times, putting social justice at the center of our teaching can be risky, especially for faculty of color? How do we weigh that student evaluations have proven to be racist, sexist, homophobic, and transphobic? How do we include the invisible service of faculty of color outside of

the elected committees? This short list describes some of the critical questions in the working paper. In this work, I have felt proud to have critical conversations to create a developmental path to bring faculty of color to tenure and beyond. I am most proud of the discussions and the relationships I am building with staff, faculty, and college leaders on these very topics.

The Professional Development Council

By Sally Pasion and the Values Team

Faculty workload is a complicated issue, and with respect to performance of service, we all have many questions. Do you know who is doing service in your department? How is service distributed? How much hidden service is being done?

In Spring 2022, the [Professional Development Council \(PDC\)](#) initiated and implemented a Faculty Service Survey. The [PDC charge](#) includes "gather, survey, and maintain information about the needs of faculty and staff pertaining to professional development." In Fall 2022, SF State Transforms partnered with PDC to collaborate on the analysis and summary of that survey.

The collaborative PDC and Transforms team included Diane Harris and William Jerome Jacobs, Laura Mamo, Sally Pasion, Dawn-Elissa Fischer. The survey analysis was done by Health Equity Institute colleagues (Sepideh Modrek, HEI Professor of Economics with MPH graduate student Maia Rose Feinman-Welcher) in partnership with SF State Transforms. It is exciting to share that over 160 faculty (Tenure line and Lecturer) completed the survey.

PDC and SF State Transforms presented a preliminary summary of the survey analysis and recommendations to the Academic Senate Plenary on April 18, 2023.

Campus Connections

Resources For Campus Equity

News from the College of Business

The Lam Family College of Business opened a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Lounge in BUS 221. The space includes a free library of books on DEIB topics, information on upcoming DIEB events in the College, and celebrations of special events, including an Eid al-fitr celebration April 24 from 2:30-4:30 pm, and an interview-clothing giveaway April 25 & 26. Student groups are welcome to hold their officer meetings in our conference room. Please stop by!

Theresa Hammond leads the effort as Senior Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Hammond received her Ph.D. in Accounting from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research on African-American and Black South African accountants has been published in many outlets, including the NAACP's Crisis Magazine and the Urban League's State of Black America. She interviewed more than thirty of the first 100 Black CPAs while researching her book, *A White-Collar Profession: African-American certified public accountants since 1921* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002). She is actively involved in the National Association of Black Accountants, the Association of Latinx Professionals, the PhD Project, and the Diversity Section of the American Accounting Association. In 2004 she testified on the under-representation of African Americans in finance professions before a Congressional subcommittee. She was chosen as the 2021 Distinguished Alumna by the University of Wisconsin Department of Accounting and Information Systems.

Please share your college or department faculty, staff, and student equity efforts with our team to highlight in a future NSF Transforms newsletter.

Gratitude

Thank you to Anoshua Chaudhuri (Economics) for leading the Transforms Writing Meet Ups. Anoshua joins Transforms in our effort to recognize and support faculty scholarship.

We thank the Campus Senate and Senate Chair, Professor Mike Goldman for allowing Transforms to share our work once again at the Faculty Senate meeting. In April the Professional Development Council and Transforms join efforts to share results of the campus service survey.

Gratitude to all of you able to join our campus wide efforts to advance faculty equity.

Announcement

SF State Transforms Heads to the 2023 ADVANCE Equity in STEM Community Convening (ARC)

SF State Transforms was invited to join this year's ARC plenary panel on "COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty: Research & Practice".

Professor Dawn-Elissa Fischer (Anthropology) will lead the team presentation titled "Systemic Faculty Change in the Midst of 'Parallel pandemics of Covid-19 and Racism.'" For information on ARC see: <https://www.equityinstem.org/firstlook>.

Congratulations Maia and the SFSU Grad Divisions Award Winners

Transforms Graduate Research Assistant Maia Feinman-Welcher is headed to the CSU graduate research competition.

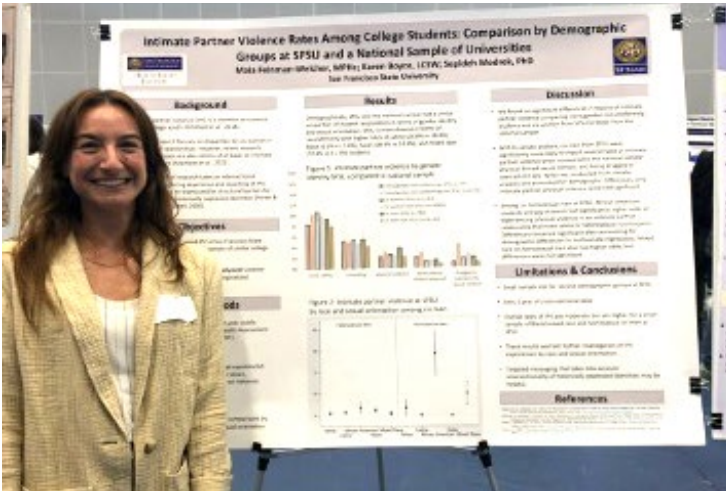


Photo of Maia Feinman-Welcher as she presents her research poster at the April SFSU Graduate Showcase.

Daniel Dubrovsky: Business, Economics, & Hospitality Management category · Master of Science in Quantitative Economics program.

Loni Matthew: Biological & Agricultural Sciences category · Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology & Limnology program

Maia Feinman-Welcher: Health, Nutrition, & Clinical Sciences category · Master of Public Health program

Morgan Butler: Behavioral, Social Sciences, & Public Administration category · Master of Arts in Broadcast & Electronic Communication program

Nancy Lagunas: Health, Nutrition, & Clinical Sciences category. Master of Science in Clinical Psychology program

Preet Agnihotri: Physical & Mathematical Sciences category · Master of Science in Astronomy & Astrophysics program

Ruth Truman: Humanities & Letters category · Master of Arts in History program

Sara Ucar: Education category · Master of Arts in Special Education program

Steffi Win: Engineering & Computer Sciences category · Master of Science in Structural/Earthquake Engineering program

Sylvia Nwakanma: Creative Arts & Design category · Master of Science in Statistical Data Science program.



Have a great summer!