

College of Integrative Sciences and Arts welcomes Manuel Avilés-Santiago as new interim dean

Avilés-Santiago brings 13 years of service, proven record of leadership to the college

By Sona Patel Srinarayana, ASU News
July 29, 2025

[Manuel Avilés-Santiago](#) was appointed interim dean of the [College of Integrative Sciences and Arts](#) at Arizona State University beginning July 1.

“Manu has been an impactful leader at the College of Integrative Sciences and Arts throughout his career,” says [Nancy Gonzales](#), ASU’s executive vice president and university provost. “He is a respected scholar and public intellectual, with influential publications, national conference contributions, and prestigious fellowships and grants from the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities.”

Since joining the college in 2012, Avilés-Santiago, a Dr. Manuel Servin Faculty Awardee, has advanced its mission as the associate dean of academic programs and curricular innovation, director of the [Office for Veteran and Military Academic Engagement](#), acting dean and, most recently, vice dean and professor of communication and culture.

His commitment to elevate the college's impact is evident — he helped launch 23 new academic programs and played a critical role in [establishing a new three-school structure](#), among many other contributions.

As a scholar, educator and academic leader, he continues to champion inclusive excellence and interdisciplinary impact across research, teaching and service. In recognition of his deep commitment to the [ASU Charter](#) — particularly its call to measure success by whom we include and how they succeed — Avilés-Santiago was honored with a Catalyst Award by ASU’s

[Committee for Campus Inclusion.](#)

Avilés-Santiago's research contributions in media studies, Latina/o studies, and military and veteran culture studies have earned him numerous grants, awards and fellowships, culminating in a robust body of scholarly work — including books, peer-reviewed articles, and national and international presentations.

"I step into this role as a firm believer in the transformational power of public higher education," says Avilés-Santiago, a graduate of the [ASU Leadership Academy](#) and [Advanced Leadership Initiative](#). "My path from a small town in Puerto Rico to Arizona State University has been shaped by educators and communities that dared to envision something more expansive, more just and more human-centered. That spirit is what guides me now."

Vision for the future

As one of ASU's fastest-growing colleges, the College of Integrative Sciences and Arts is poised for continued expansion and sustainable innovation under Avilés-Santiago's leadership.

Advancing the college's core mission to deliver a curriculum that is career-connected, applied, interdisciplinary and responsive to the evolving needs of today's learners across the Polytechnic, Downtown Phoenix, Tempe and ASU Online campuses will remain a top priority for him.

To achieve this, Avilés-Santiago will strive to nurture community engagement with local, growing industries, embrace new modalities and fields that reflect the aspirations of 21st-century learners, amplify the college's research and its community impact, and integrate responsible AI frameworks into operations, among many other activities.

"We will continue to engage thoughtfully in the growing conversation about AI in higher education," says Avilés-Santiago, recipient of the Dr. Eugene Garcia Outstanding Latina/o Faculty Research Award. "We aim to develop a strong foundation in AI fluency and share that knowledge in meaningful, responsible ways — always with a focus on ethics, equity and human-centered practices."

Together, we achieve more

Avilés-Santiago has appointed a new leadership team, each member bringing distinct expertise to propel the college forward with renewed momentum:

Professor [Heather Bateman](#), associate dean for graduate studies and research.

Teaching Professor [Shillana Bowen-Armendáez](#), associate dean for career track faculty development.

Associate Professor [Aaron Hess](#), associate dean for academic programs and curricular innovation.

President's Professor [Ian Moulton](#), associate dean for academic affairs and faculty development.

Associate Teaching Professor [Adam Pacton](#), dean's fellow for AI literacy and integration.

Associate Professor [Francisco Sánchez](#), associate dean for student success and inclusive excellence.

"The College of Integrative Sciences and Arts represents the best of ASU's commitment to innovation, access and real-world impact," says Avilés-Santiago. "I am excited to work alongside our talented students, faculty, staff and community partners as we imagine new futures, design solutions and expand the possibilities of what higher education can achieve — together."

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



ASU's College of Integrative Sciences and Arts recently named Manuel Avilés-Santiago as its new interim dean. Photo by Marcos Rodriguez/ASU