

**Academic Affairs T/TT Hiring Themes
San José State University
Three-Year Plans, 2021-2024**

“The Future of California Starts Here”

Preamble

The SJSU Strategic Plan, [Transformation 2030](#), calls upon the campus to: “Gain a national and global reputation for academic excellence characterized by scholarly and professional contributions from faculty members who are genuine teacher-scholars.” To make this possible, the campus hiring plan for tenure-track/tenured faculty (T/TT) should focus on core campus strengths while meeting critical need areas in particular disciplines.

More than this, though, it is our campus belief that for us to gain a “national and global reputation,” we must be a leader in the recruitment and retention of faculty who come from historically under-represented communities in the academy, particularly Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Latinx, and Asian-American communities, as well as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersexed communities. This focus will help increase the representation of diverse voices on campus and support our students, who are a majority People of Color.

The following themes, presented in alphabetical order, were developed from the hiring requests made by the departments during the three-year hiring planning process. These themes were developed inductively and are cross-cut by our commitment to recruiting and retaining highly diverse T/TT faculty. This list is not exhaustive, but rather serves as a starting point. More themes can and should emerge.

Themes

Data Analytics and Design Thinking

We live in a world of “big” and “little” data, where terabytes of information are flowing faster across space and time than ever before. There is so much data that it is almost impossible to “crunch it all” or think about what it all means for our sociocultural and political-economic lives. This broad theme seeks to attract faculty across the campus with an interest in data analytics – e.g., artificial intelligence, user experience, visualization – and design thinking – e.g., the development of innovations that are focused on the context in which a challenge may arise. Across this theme, it is important that faculty are also hired that are asking the core questions around ethics, privacy, and accessibility, amongst other critical social questions.

Ethnic Studies Education

Higher education needs to transform and respond to the rapidly shifting landscape of teaching and learning, particularly as it has been impacted by the emergence of Ethnic Studies Education over the last fifty years. More than an “accounting” of histories that are “outside the historical canon,” Ethnic Studies

education creates a challenge to the historical onto-epistemological framing of how teaching and learning should work. Thought this way, Ethnic Studies Education is a theme that can inform the hiring of faculty across not only the traditional “liberal arts” and “education” but science, engineering, and health sciences, as well. Working up from cultural experiences to frame new social understandings of how students learn and how we teach is an essential part of what SJSU should do and wants to do toward the future.

Health Equity and Health Infrastructures

When it comes to the human experience, what is not about health? From child development to elder care and everything in between, questions of health care equity and access sit at the forefront of many global conversations today. Despite the rapid evolution of pharmaceutical sciences, surgery systems, alternative therapies, and integrative medicine, there remain massive gaps in health outcomes across communities small and large. This broad theme seeks to recruit faculty with a commitment to addressing the health outcomes gap through strategies to enhance public health and social welfare systems as it relates to infectious diseases, for example, as well as providing alternative and less invasive therapies for those who live with a wide range of chronic diseases, among other issues. This theme should recruit faculty who work in health science, the physical and life sciences and engineering as well as the social sciences, education, and humanities.

Social Robotics and Human-Robotic Technology Relations

Robots and robotic technologies are becoming ubiquitous in our everyday lives. From the emergence of natural language processing (e.g., Siri and Alexa) to contact assistive robots in recuperative therapy (e.g., physical therapy robotics) and socially assistive robots in mental health research (e.g., QTrobot for autism support), there are few spaces that robots might dare to go – or that humans might dare to bring them – in the future. With this in mind, SJSU should be on the leading edge in not only thinking about robotic design but also about human-robot relations, including human-computer interactions (what many might call human-robotic technologies relations). From the hardware to the software and from the ethics to the politics, more organizations are looking for research partners and students trained in the “work of robots” and the “social complexity” of using robots and robotic technologies. Moreover, they are asking questions about how such advances either contribute to or mitigate the widening gap between those who have access to such technologies and those who do not.

Sustainable Futures and Earth Systems Science

Some would argue we have entered a new “geologic era,” the Anthropocene, a period of time where human-induced change to the environment has outstripped the historical physical and life science processes that we know to have changed Earth over millions of years. While the concept of “sustainability” has become somewhat opaque over time – meaning everything and nothing – the science of sustainability and Earth Systems remain critical to our understanding of not only anthropogenic change but the human ability to mitigate that change and adapt to new resilient systems that will allow us to sustain human and nonhuman populations on this planet. Hiring within this theme can come from all parts of the campus, from those who are interested in studying environmental racism to those interested in modeling long-term climatic change, to those who examine the marketing and/or supply chain as it relates

to sustainable food products. The focus, however, in each of these hires is to identify colleagues interested in the larger interdisciplinary conversations that ask not only what does the science tell us about climate change, but how is that science received, interpreted, and re-imagined in the various socio-spatial contexts in which they are interrogated.

[1] This definition of “contact” and “socially” assistive robotics comes from the research of the Robotics Research Lab at the University of Reno-Nevada (<https://rrl.cse.unr.edu/en/pubs/?pub=15/>).