



ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY

# NEW FACULTY



2021

Success through  
Student Engagement



Dear Colleague,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to St. John's University. You have been invited to join our faculty in recognition of your outstanding scholarly achievements, commitment to the University's mission, and dedication to your students.

As faculty, you join a vibrant academic community built upon a strong foundation of Catholic and Vincentian values, where student success is our main priority. You join collegial and innovative faculty who are dedicated to creating an engaging and inspiring learning environment, and who work with students on research and scholarly projects, engage in service to the University as well as the community, and so much more.

St. John's University offers many professional development programs. I encourage you to take advantage of these, as well as the numerous educational and social events on campus. It will not only enrich your life, but also the lives and engagement of our students.

As you embark on your career at St. John's University, I wish you great success. We, as faculty, have a great responsibility because what we do every day changes lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon G. Møller'.

Simon G. Møller, Ph.D.  
*Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University  
Distinguished Professor, and Provost Endowed Chair*





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES



“The strength of St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is our excellent faculty—as outstanding scholars, innovative educators, and dedicated community members, their work advances our mission, grows knowledge, serves society, and transforms the lives of students. An education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences at St. John’s affords students the intellectual experiences necessary to become critical, creative, and practical thinkers, problem solvers, engaged global citizens, and lifelong learners.”

**Gina M. Florio, Ph.D., *Interim Dean***  
St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



## **Brendan T. Conuel, Ph.D.**

Dr. Conuel comes to St. John’s University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy. He earned his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Stony Brook University. His research interests include Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Physics, Metaphysics, and the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead.

His current work explores possible applications of Whiteheadian event-realist metaphysics to the hard problem of consciousness. Future research will focus on building out a metaphysical toolkit for better describing the relation between structure and event in nature.



## **Samira Fargali, Ph.D.**

Dr. Fargali comes to St. John’s University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences. She earned her Ph.D. in Biological Science from the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research in Braunschweig, Germany. During that period, she worked in the field of Biotechnology on 3-D cultivation and the monitoring of bone tissue scaffolds in the novel prototype bioreactor systems with continuous medium exchange.

After earning her Ph.D., Dr. Fargali was a postdoctoral fellow in the Neuroscience Department at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, where she was responsible for the investigation of the role that the neuronal and endocrine protein VGF plays in the central and peripheral nervous system neurons to regulate glucose, energy balance, depression, and memory. Her research interests include obesity, adipose, brain, chromogranins and secretogranins, cognitive neuroscience, depression, diabetes, growth factors and receptors, memory, neuropeptides, neurotrophins, protein trafficking and sorting, and signal transduction.



### **Tianchan Jiang, Ph.D.**

Dr. Jiang comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry. She earned her Ed.M. in Science Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and Ph.D. in Chemistry from the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Her Ed.M. research was on comparing language learners in science education in traditional and online classroom settings. Her doctoral and postdoctoral research was on novel electrode materials in Li-ion batteries under the guidance of the Nobel laureate, M. Stanley Whittingham, D.Phil.

Before joining St. John's University, she was a research scientist in the industrial field working on high-performance batteries for military and other applications. Her future research interests will include synthesis and characterization of electrode materials in batteries.



### **Omar Montana, Ph.D.**

Dr. Montana earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at The Graduate Center, City University of New York, in 2021. He joins the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at St. John's as an Assistant Professor of Criminology.

His research interests are grounded in the power dynamics of race, class, and gender found within a matrix of criminalization in American social life.



### **Prof. Brandie S. Pugh**

Professor Pugh joins St. John's University as a criminology faculty member in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. She earned her M.A. in Sociology in 2014, and will complete her dissertation (which focuses on the prevention of sexual violence) and receive a Ph.D. in Sociology in

2022. Her research interests include critical criminology, decolonial criminology, peacekeeping criminology, intergenerational transmission of violence, history and philosophy of science, transformative justice, prevention of harm, and theory.

While her research generally centers on the micro-level, she conducts her research with the knowledge that the micro-level is nested within additional levels of society, and advocates for an examination of social phenomenon from multiple levels—individual, interpersonal, institutional, community, national, and global and perspectives (e.g., history, ideology, and culture).



### **Anne Vázquez, Ph.D.**

Dr. Vázquez comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry. She earned her Ph.D. in Chemistry and M.S. in Postsecondary Science Education from the University of Michigan.

Her research interests are in environmental analysis, specifically investigating the binding of organic pollutants in soil, and in chemistry education, studying the effects of peer-learning programs.



# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



“Education, compassion, and faith are the keys to success in a complex world.”

Aliya E. Holmes, Ph.D., *Interim Dean*  
The School of Education



## Joan Birringer-Haig '14Ed.D.

Dr. Birringer-Haig joins St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership. She earned her Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership from St. John's University.

Her graduate work focused on principals' leadership practices that inspired teachers to improve student achievement. Her current research focuses on online learning that integrates active learning, case studies, simulations (experiential learning), and credible feedback opportunities for adult learners in higher education. As adult learners have distinctive and diverse needs when compared to undergraduate students, establishing a sense of belonging is a priority.





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

THE PETER J. TOBIN  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



**“The Tobin College of Business provides a curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning and areas of study including sustainability, FinTech, risk management, and analytics—all essential for understanding risk and uncertainty in our global economy.”**

**Norean R. Sharpe, Ph.D., *Dean,***  
*Joseph H. and Maria C. Schwartz Distinguished Chair,*  
*and Professor of Decision Sciences*  
The Peter J. Tobin College of Business



## **Geeta Ali, Ph.D. Candidate**

Ms. Ali comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Accountancy. She earned a Master of Philosophy degree and is a Candidate for the Ph.D. in Information Studies from Long Island University's College of Education, Information, and Technology.

Her dissertation research involves the control and dissemination of financial information. More specifically, her work focuses on the effectiveness of accounting information systems and the financial reporting of publicly held corporations during the 2008 financial crisis. Her future research interests include information systems, machine learning, and data analytics.



## **James Minas, Ph.D.**

Dr. Minas comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Business Analytics and Information Systems. He earned his Ph.D. in Operations Research and Statistics from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia.

His research interest is the use of quantitative methods to gain insights into complex management problems. His current work focuses on disaster preparedness and response, supply chain resilience, and health-care systems.



**Xin Zhao, Ph.D.**

Dr. Zhao comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Accountancy after completing her Ph.D. in Accounting at Temple University's Fox School of Business. She also holds an M.B.A. from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Her research interests are auditing, firm risk, law enforcement, and corporate governance. She will teach Accounting Information Systems and Financial Accounting courses in the fall semester.





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

## College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences



**“It is our mission to train health-care professionals to work in diverse urban environments, to provide culturally competent care, and to help those who need it the most.”**

**Russell J. DiGate, Ph.D., *Dean***  
College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences



### **Colleen Carmody, Ed.D., R.N., C.N.S.**

Dr. Carmody comes to the faculty of St. John's University as the Senior Associate Dean for Nursing Programs and tenured Associate Professor-Industry Professional in the Clinical Health Professions Department of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Dr. Carmody's

40-year career in nursing spans clinical practice in pediatrics, 17 years of service as a United States Air Force nurse, and 13 years in academia.

She earned her Ed.D. in Executive Leadership and Education from St. John Fisher College, in Rochester, NY, and her master's degree in Nursing from the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center (funded by an Air Force Institute of Technology full scholarship). She earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from Niagara University.

Dr. Carmody's career demonstrates a strong commitment to teaching, service, and scholarship. Her areas of teaching and scholarly interest include nursing simulation education, interprofessional education, and disaster preparedness.



### **Sheryl Comet, PT, DPT**

Dr. Comet comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor and Assistant Director of Clinical Education in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program in the Department of Clinical Health Professions. She earned her Doctor of Physical Therapy from Long Island University and is a double board-certified orthopedic and sports specialist.

Prior to joining St. John's University, she worked as a full-time clinician for nine years in Manhattan, NY, at an outpatient orthopedic physical therapy clinic, where she treated pre- and postsurgical patients, degenerative orthopedic injuries, and sports injuries. She was also an adjunct professor at Long Island University for nine years in the Department of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy, where she focused her teaching in the musculoskeletal and orthopedic courses.

She has published research on an ACL tear in a five-year-old and the rehabilitation in a patient with adhesive capsulitis. She is currently working on research related to joint arthroplasties and outcomes amongst different ethnicities.



### **Sunil Kumar '09GP, '14Ph.D.**

Dr. Kumar joins St. John's University as an Assistant Professor of Pharmacology in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences from St. John's University, after which he joined Louis Ragolia, Ph.D.'s lab as a postdoctoral

fellow at NYU Langone Hospital Long Island, where he studied the role of L-PGDS protein in diabetes, obesity, and related metabolic disorders using L-PGDS knockout mice model.

Before joining St. John's University, he worked as an Assistant Professor at Molloy College for three years. His current research interest is to study L-PGDS protein regulation in obesity-induced fatty liver disease, lean NAFLD (Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease), and diabetes-induced fatty liver disease. The ultimate goal of his research is to find the cure of fatty liver disease, which has no treatment available currently.



### **Gregory Torsiello '16P**

Professor Torsiello comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Radiologic Sciences. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from St. John's in Radiologic Sciences and earned his Master of Science in

Business Leadership from Concordia College New York. He is a licensed Radiologic Technologist, holding dual certification in both radiography and computed tomography.

Professor Torsiello has more than nine years of experience in the medical imaging industry, specializing in emergency and trauma radiography, computed tomography, fluoroscopy, and surgical imaging. His future research interests include studying the potential biological impact of modern protective shielding practices on radiosensitive organs and tissues.





**ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY**

**THE LESLEY H. AND WILLIAM L.  
COLLINS COLLEGE OF  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**



**“CCPS delivers career-focused educational programs, taught by talented scholars and industry professionals, that provide our students with sound theoretical and practical knowledge through innovative instruction, local and global service-learning opportunities, and career-focused experiential learning experiences.”**

**Glenn Gerstner, Ed.D. '81SVC, *Dean and  
Lesley H. and William L. Collins Distinguished Chair***  
The Lesley H. and William L. Collins College of Professional Studies



**Christopher Mercado, Ph.D.**

Dr. Mercado comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Criminal Justice, Legal Studies, and Homeland Security. He earned his Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from the Graduate Center, City University of New York.

His research interests include reforming police policies, law enforcement behavior, and police culture. His graduate work includes expertise in performance measurement, oversight, and analysis. His extensive experience allows him to thoroughly examine the major policy, procedural, and operational issues facing policing today.

In addition to his research and teaching pursuits, Dr. Mercado completed a 28-year career in law enforcement where he worked on reducing crime, ending domestic violence, extending community outreach, engaging juveniles, ensuring student safety, drafting 21st-century policing policy, and managing large-scale emergency events.



**Regina K. Stuart '10L**

Professor Stuart comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Criminal Justice, Legal Studies, and Homeland Security. She earned her J.D. from St. John's School of Law and her B.A. from Fordham University.

After graduation, she worked as a litigator at Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP and then as a law clerk to the Honorable Denis R. Hurley in the Eastern District of New York. Prior to joining St. John's, she served as the Director of Public Service Career Planning at Hofstra Law School. Her research interests include the religion clauses of the First Amendment and the law in popular culture.



# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

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## SCHOOL OF LAW



“The success of our graduates is what defines St. John’s Law, and that success comes from the strength of our faculty: outstanding scholars, dedicated teachers, and experienced lawyers.”

**Michael A. Simons, J.D., Dean**  
*and John V. Brennan Professor of Law and Ethics*  
School of Law



### **Adrian Alvarez, J.D.**

Professor Adrian Alvarez joins St. John’s University as an Assistant Professor. He holds a B.A. in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, an M.P.A. from the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and a J.D. from

American University Washington College of Law. His primary research interests include the intersection between disability and immigration law.



### **Marissa Jackson Sow, J.D.**

Marissa Jackson Sow comes to St. John’s University as an Assistant Professor. She earned her J.D. from Columbia Law School and an LL.M. in Human Rights from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Professor Jackson Sow’s research focuses on the intersections of commercial law, international, and human rights law, and the ways liberal democracies use private ordering to perpetuate atrocity and systems of oppression.





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



“Today’s rapidly transforming information ecosystem brings both challenges and opportunities to our students, who must actively engage with a variety of resources while honoring the contributions of a diversity of voices, past and present, in order to fully participate in the creation of new knowledge. The University Libraries empowers our students to succeed by providing access to an open, inclusive environment.”

Caroline Fuchs '04MLS, *University Librarian*  
St. John's University Libraries





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

# VISITING FACULTY



## Viswanathan Kumar, Ph.D.

Dr. Kumar (VK) is a passionate academic who recently joined St. John's University as a Visiting Fellow in The Peter J. Tobin College of Business.

He has been honored as a Legend in Marketing through the Legends in Marketing series published by Sage Publications, and as the Distinguished Term Professor, and Senior Fellow, ISB, India; Chang Jiang Scholar, HUST, China; Lee Kong Chian Fellow, Singapore Management University; Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study, TAMU, College Station, Texas; HUL Visiting Chair Professor, IIM Ahmedabad, India; and Distinguished Fellow, MICA, India.

Dr. Kumar's research focuses on rigor (developing new methods) and relevance (solving business problems). VK has published more than 250 scholarly papers and 25 books and has received more than 25 research and teaching excellence awards.

Dr. Kumar has served as the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Marketing* (2014–18) and serves as the Department Editor of *Production and Operations Management*, and as the Consulting Editor of the *Journal of International Business Studies*. His latest book, *Intelligent Marketing*, demonstrates how new-age technologies such as artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, machine learning, robotics, blockchain, and drones influence marketing.

Global Fortune 500 firms have implemented several of VK's ideas and models, which have resulted in revenue gains of more than two billion dollars. For more details, please visit [www.drvkumar.com](http://www.drvkumar.com) and [www.vkclv.com](http://www.vkclv.com).



## Rev. Franklin "Danny" Pilario, C.M., Ph.D.

Fr. Pilario comes to St. John's University as a Visiting Professor and the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice 2021–22.

He earned his Ph.D. in Theology and Religious Studies and Sacra Theologia Doctor from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium.

His dissertation was published as *Back to the Rough Grounds of Praxis: Exploring Theological Method with Pierre Bourdieu* (2005), and was awarded "Best Research in Humanities."

Prior to joining St. John's, he was professor and the recent Dean of St. Vincent School of Theology at Adamson University, Philippines. His recent publications and research focused on Asian theologies, justice, liberation, inculturation, political theology, Catholic social teaching, human rights, and ecology.

As the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice, Fr. Pilario will deliver four lectures on the theme "The Summons of Social Justice: Perspectives from Asian Christianities." He is also authoring a book with the working title, *Between Victimization and Hope: Narratives of Resistance*, and will teach a graduate course in theology.



ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY

# VISITING FACULTY



## Peter Ward, Ph.D.

Dr. Ward comes to St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as Visiting Professor and the Paul E. McKeever Chair in Moral Theology. He is a Professor of Practical Theology at Durham University and at NLA University College in Bergen, Norway.

Dr. Ward coordinates the international research network for The Network for Ecclesiology & Ethnography ([www.ecclesiologyandethnography.net](http://www.ecclesiologyandethnography.net)). He is currently editing *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Theology and Qualitative Research* (2022). His research combines theology and the study of popular culture.

His latest book, *Celebrity Worship*, was published by Routledge in 2020. His latest research focuses on the religious and theological dimensions of bluegrass music.





# ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

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This brochure reflects all new faculty members at the time of publication.  
For the latest list, please visit [www.stjohns.edu/newfaculty](http://www.stjohns.edu/newfaculty).