



ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY

2021 New Faculty Brochure – Addendum

Updated 8/29/22



Tonya Chacón, Psy.D.

Dr. Chacón joins [The School of Education](#) at St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Curriculum and Instruction](#) and as the Site Coordinator of the [New York City Coalition for Teacher Preparation](#).

Beginning her career as a childhood education teacher, she earned a Master of Science degree in Educational Psychology and a Doctorate in School Psychology, both from the University at Albany, State University of New York. Her background is in childhood education, instructional methods, and literacy.

Dr. Chacón's research interests include critical literacy and social justice, school-university partnerships, and the relationship between culturally responsive pedagogy and learning environments.



Ali El-Kerdi, Ph.D., PT, DPT, FAAOMPT, LAT, ATC, CAT(C), CSCS, EMT

Dr. El-Kerdi joins the [College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences](#) at St. John's University as an Associate Professor/Industry Professional for the [Doctor of Physical Therapy](#) program in the [Department of Clinical Health Professions](#). He holds a Ph.D. in Health Science, specializing in biomechanical and movement science, from Seton Hall University. Dr. El-Kerdi is a fellow of the [American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists](#), having completed a rigorous course of study at Regis University. He has taught numerous courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as presented at various conferences, educational events, and institutions. He has held many clinical positions working alongside athletes at virtually every level of sports from professional, international, and Olympic athletes to local youth clubs and programs.

Dr. El-Kerdi's research focuses on athletic performance and injury prevention, biomechanics, exercise physiology, and manual therapy. He is an avid rugby fan, having played and coached for more than 25 years at almost all levels of the game. He gives back to the community by serving as the medical director for [National Collegiate Rugby](#) and by performing various physical therapy screenings related to falls and injury prevention in assisted living communities.



Jordan González '17CERT, '21Ph.D.

Dr. González joins St. John's University as an Assistant Professor of TESOL and Bilingual Education in the [Department of Education Specialties](#) in [The School of Education](#). He earned his Ed.M. from Teachers College, Columbia University, and an Advanced Certificate in [School Building Leadership](#) and a Ph.D. in [Literacy](#) from St. John's University.

Dr. González teaches graduate coursework to prepare the next generation of K–12 educators for New York State teaching certification and instruction within culturally and linguistically diverse schools and classrooms. He also serves as the Chairperson for the [New York State Education Department](#) English Language Learner Graduation



Improvement Taskforce and Conference Chairperson for the [New York State Association for Bilingual Education 2023 Conference](#), and is a Lead Resource Specialist for the [Long Island Regional Bilingual Resource Network](#). Dr. González also serves as an advisor for the St. John's University Chapter of [Kappa Delta Pi](#), the international honor society in education.

His research interests include feedback in second language (L2) writing development, education policies regarding English language learners, and technology integration for L2 development.



Cynthia Leone, PT, DPT

Dr. Leone comes to St John's University as an Associate Professor in the [Doctor of Physical Therapy](#) program within the [College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences](#). She earned her doctorate degree in 2005 from Stony Brook University. Dr. Leone earned her certification as a board-certified specialist in neurological physical therapy.

Prior to joining St. John's University, Dr. Leone worked as a clinician at [Mt. Sinai Hospital](#), [Burke Rehabilitation Hospital](#), and [Northwell Health](#). She has experience in inpatient, outpatient, and in-home care settings treating both orthopedic and neurological patients. Dr. Leone has held an adjunct teaching position for the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Stony Brook University and for the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Suffolk County Community College. Dr. Leone's research interest is focused on neurological rehabilitation and educational research.



Ekaterina Midgette, Ph.D.

Dr. Midgette comes to St. John's University as an Associate Professor in the [Department of Education Specialties](#). She earned a Ph.D. in Literacy from the University of Delaware.

As a former English as a New Language teacher, Dr. Midgette enjoys working with the adult and preschool–12th grade refugee population. Her other research interests include the revision processes in writing, argumentative writing, and the use of humor in persuasive and argumentative writing.



Elaine A. Tontoh, Ph.D.

Dr. Tontoh comes to St. John's University as an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Economics and Finance](#) in [The Peter J. Tobin College of Business](#). She is a maternal feminist theorist and a development economist, having earned her doctoral degree in Economics at the New School for Social Research, with a specialization in Development Economics.

Dr. Tontoh's research theoretically investigates the capability perspective and economics of motherhood by respectively theorizing maternal capability suppression and maternal economic oppression. Her work develops an integrated Marxist-feminist-capability theory of motherhood which investigates maternal capability failures and maternal labor exploitation, the result of which is an original concept she advances as the triple-day problem: the lack of maternal self-reproduction.



Dr. Tontoh seeks to use her path-breaking theoretical research as the basis to seek compensation for mothers and as a radical approach to achieve social and economic justice for mothers.