

2021 Fellow



Denise Lujan

Entering Student Experience

The University of Texas at El Paso

Dr. Denise Lujan is the inaugural Director for the Entering Student Experience unit at The University of Texas at El Paso. Created in 2020, ESE includes the UTEP University Studies Courses, Developmental Math, Developmental English and a host of other programs aimed at helping students transition to UTEP. She is focused on creating a holistic experience for entering students at UTEP by increasing student engagement, agency, and belonging, as well as academic success and professional preparation. Dr. Lujan has taught developmental math to underprepared students who enter UTEP for over twenty years. She was the Director for Developmental Math for thirteen years and transformed the department to one where student success is at the heart of its mission. In recognition of this, the department received the coveted Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Star Award in 2014. Additionally, she was awarded the Developmental Educator of the Year in 2016 for Texas College Reading and Learning Association, the Entering Student Faculty Outstanding Advocate for Entering Students, and the UT System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award in 2019. In 2021, Dr. Lujan was admitted to the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers. Dr. Lujan is involved in both state and national organizations focused on developmental education holding board positions for both the Texas Association for Developmental Education, TADE, and the National Association for Developmental Education, NADE. She is currently the President of the National Organization for Student Success (NOSS) and will hold that office until 2022. She received her bachelor's degree in math and physical science from West Texas A&M University, her master's degree in higher educational leadership from UTEP and her doctorate in Higher Educational Leadership from Ferris State University in Michigan in May 2021.