

DEAN OF MEDIA: Job Packet

PARSONS THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DESIGN

DEAN OF MEDIA*

Nomenclature of School to be determined

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I. PARSONS AND THE NEW SCHOOL: OVERVIEW

Parsons The New School for Design prepares students to creatively and critically address the complex conditions of contemporary global society. Our core values include a commitment to critical thinking, reflective practice, and the creation of meaningful, usable, and sustainable contributions to the world. Our curriculum is geared toward synthesizing rigorous craft with cutting-edge theory and research methods, and encourages collaborative and individual approaches that cut across a wide array of disciplines. We continuously connect the local to the global by drawing upon New York City's diverse resources as a world capital of art, culture, business, and intellectual debate. Internship opportunities and partnerships with the biggest names in industry afford a vast network of possibilities for innovation, entrepreneurship, and professional success. In the 2007-08 academic year, Parsons offers 22 degree programs, enrolls over 4000 degree-seeking students, and employs over 125 full-time and 1000 part-time faculty.

A division of The New School, Parsons is undergoing a transformation that builds upon the university's unique history of civically engaged progressive education, but updates it to face the challenges of an increasingly complex world. What has always differentiated Parsons and The New School from other institutions higher learning is the pedagogical imperative to seek out the most relevant and pressing challenges facing society--and our willingness to engage them in ways that structurally transform the curriculum and how we teach. Our goal is to educate and inspire individuals whose ideas and innovations forge new paths of progress, not only in the fields of art and design, but also the humanities, public policy, social sciences, and beyond.

Parsons' distinctive tradition of supporting radical thinking in the academy traces back to the early days of industrialization. Driven by new ideas about the democratizing potential of mass-produced goods in consumer culture, Parsons was the first school in America to revolutionize its curriculum by introducing design. This commitment to exploring art and design as agents of social change was only strengthened when Parsons became part of The New School university. Established in 1917 in response to the repression of academic freedom during the First World War, The New School was founded as an educational venue where ideas could be discussed without censure, where dialogue could take place between intellectuals and the general public, and where an education would include theory, practice, and performance. Since then, its history has been a continuous narrative of transformation and civic engagement.

Today, Parsons and The New School share a unique vision based on the understanding that both the form and content of education must be rethought in the context of globalization. We are rethinking what a "practice-oriented education" means in a world where the challenges facing humanity are increasingly non-linear, socially complex, and riddled with feedback loops that change the nature of the problem even as solutions are enacted. These initiatives are founded on the belief that a contemporary school of art and design has to critically engage and continuously reframe the problems that it is designed to solve, even while drawing from the lessons of the past.

At Parsons, we strive to live up to the driving ideal of modernism that gave rise to the defining notion of design and inspired our founders--that conscious, critical, creative activity can and should have a positive, democratizing impact on the lives of people everywhere. We are committed to engaging with these issues in ways that create radically new, dynamic, and transformative learning experiences for our all our students, whether they are interested in becoming artists, designers, managers, or scholars.

II. THE FIVE-SCHOOL STRUCTURE AT PARSONS

Parsons is currently undergoing one of the most ambitious and exciting periods of growth in our long history. This growth is happening on a variety of levels: the creation of a broader, more flexible curriculum; the development of new innovative programs; the expansion of facilities; and an evolving academic mission that addresses the growing influence of art and design in today's global world.

Our ambitious academic agenda is underpinned by the recruitment of a diverse community of full time academics and practitioners to lead Parsons through the curricular and organizational transformations necessary to create a more responsive, integrated, and agile learning environment. Even as we are continuing to build the faculty, we are undertaking of three major inter-related projects. The first is a substantial review of the undergraduate programs; the second is the development of a comprehensive suite of graduate programs; the third is to build a more robust organizational structure. Essentially, we are re-grouping what had been a dozen idiosyncratic "departments" into five thematic, cohesive structures that will better facilitate an interdisciplinary approach and provide a more rational and consistent support structure for faculty and students.

The decision to structure Parsons around five academic schools is driven by the intersecting academic goals. The proposed networked, dialogical model culminates in an organizational structure and progressive pedagogical agenda that better facilitates shared programming between fields of study, integrated course structures, and intellectual exchanges across Parsons and the University. One of the primary aims for the new infrastructure and curricular revision is to enable Parsons to establish itself as a more dynamic site of cutting-edge practices in a variety of traditional and emerging fields. This new structure seeks to advance a vital and vigorous exchange not only within but across the five schools.

The five-school model represents a networked educational system rather than a static grid structure. It includes the provisionally named schools of Media (comprising Fine Art, Photography, Illustration, Communication Design, and Design and Technology); Materials (Architecture, Interior Design, Lighting Design, and Product Design); Fashion (Fashion Design, Fashion Studies, and Fashion Marketing); Methods (Foundation, Integrated Design Curricular, Design & Management, and proposed thematic graduate programs in Sustainability, Urbanism, Entrepreneurship); and Theory (Art & Design Studies). Each of the five schools will offer a range of degree programs: undergraduate, graduate, and professional (AAS degrees). The schools will be empowered through a Director of Curriculum, a Director of Faculty, a Director of Operations, a Director of Academic Initiatives, and a Director of Advising, all of whom will work together as a team, in conjunction with a designated head. While significant steps have already taken place toward the realization of this new model, the five-school structure will be officially launched for the 2008-09 academic year.

III. THE MEDIA SCHOOL

The new Media "school" will come into being for the 2008-09 academic year. The Media school will be home to a diverse range of visual art and design practices, including BFA programs in illustration, photography, fine art, communication design and technology, an AAS program in graphic design, as well as MFA programs in photography, fine art, and design and technology. It is anticipated that the adjacencies of the various professional domains will promote cross-disciplinary dialogue within the college and across the school and university, with new curricular spaces arising and new programs being proposed.

IV: DEAN OF MEDIA

The Dean of the Media at Parsons will provide academic and administrative leadership for the Media unit as it comes into being. The Dean will be responsible for bringing together the four departments within the unit and playing a leadership role within the School and the University. A central agenda for the unit will be the development and delivery of a range of new University BA programs and a suite of Graduate programs. The specific duties of the unit leadership at Parsons include (but are not limited to) the following:

Managerial & Administrative Responsibilities

- Build a sense of community within the college, establishing communication networks between departments, faculty, students and staff, and involving all constituents in meaningful participation in decision-making and planning;
- Provide academic leadership and actively participate in the shared work and mission of the school and the university;
- Actively participate in strategic planning for the Media unit, Parsons, and the University;
- Develop and implement the college budget and management of resources;
- Support the academic leadership of the department chairs and the academic careers of faculty within the college;
- Lead the general administration of the college, including management of support staff and oversight of facilities;
- Actively and effectively participate in special projects, collaborative efforts, public outreach, alumni affairs, development, and fundraising efforts on behalf of the school;
- Work consistently and effectively as a school and university citizen to strengthen school and university life.

Academic Responsibilities

- Participate in classroom activities on a regular basis (e.g., critiques, juries, review panels, thesis supervision, independent study, internship supervision, etc.);
- Generate research, scholarship and/or creative practice as well as sharing this work within the academic and/or professional communities;
- Actively participate in relevant department, school, and university committees and task forces.

Selection Criteria

For appointment, the successful candidate should have:

Management and Administrative

- A record of effective academic and professional leadership and positive, consultative dialogue;
- Demonstrated expertise in administrative leadership, including strategic and fiscal planning, and human resource management;
- Experience with change management and infrastructure development in a complex environment;
- A commitment to collaborate with the other heads of colleges and to collectively work with the Parsons Deans' Office to develop and realize the school's academic and strategic vision;
- The qualifications, experience, and standing to develop and lead programs of international reputation;
- Excellent writing and interpersonal communication skills;

- A strategic vision for the college's academic and public programs that is relevant and achievable within the school and university context;
- A commitment to work with the schools within the The New School to facilitate ongoing efforts to establish joint degrees and integrated and inter-disciplinary study opportunities across the school and university.

Teaching and Scholarship

- A graduate degree in a related field of study;
- Practice, scholarship and/or research of national and international significance;
- A strong commitment to innovation in curriculum design and teaching methods;
- An interest in theory and criticism in the field as well as in the studio learning environment;
- The ability to help further develop the school's critical public programs in this field, both in terms of exhibitions and public lecture/seminar programs.

V. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

A letter of application relating experiences and interests to the opportunities and requirements for this position, together with Curriculum Vitae, should be submitted online at <http://careers.newschool.edu>. Please also complete online the Application for Employment.

Interviews Begin: *February 2008*

Position Start Date: *Fall 2008*

Salary: *Competitive*

Benefits: *Comprehensive university benefits package including health and retirement plans, tuition remission.*

The New School, as well as its individual academic divisions, is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in all its activities and programs, including employment and promotion. The New School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, veteran or marital status.