



How I Got Here: Rodney Terry

Rodney L. Terry, Ph.D. is a social science analyst at the Center for Behavioral Science Methods at the U.S. Census Bureau. With nearly 15 years of experience applying qualitative and mixed methods in survey research, he began his career at the Census Bureau conducting research to help improve the measurement of race and ethnicity. Most recently, he leads projects that address equity and inclusion in the workplace, including qualitative research to identify barriers to workplace inclusion for first-generation professionals, and survey research addressing general employee retention issues. Dr. Terry also enjoys professional service as the elected Chair of the Inclusion and Equity Committee on AAPOR's Executive Council.

When you were a student, what was your original plan?

Right after I completed my master's degree in psychology and began working on my Ph.D., I remembered thinking I wanted to work at a world class research institution. Although I appreciated teaching, I did not see academia as my career path. I wasn't sure where or how it would happen, but that was the plan.

How did you end up in your current position?

I browsed postdoc opportunities and found out that the Census Bureau offered a comprehensive postdoctoral fellowship program. I applied for the fellowship as a way to continue my research on racial identity by studying race and ethnicity reporting on the decennial census. I applied for a permanent staff position when the fellowship ended.

In short, what do you do and why does it matter?

Whether working to improve the measurement of race and ethnicity or equity and inclusion in the workplace, a common thread is giving a voice to underserved populations. Understanding their experiences and needs requires equitable practice in all phases of a survey or census.



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