

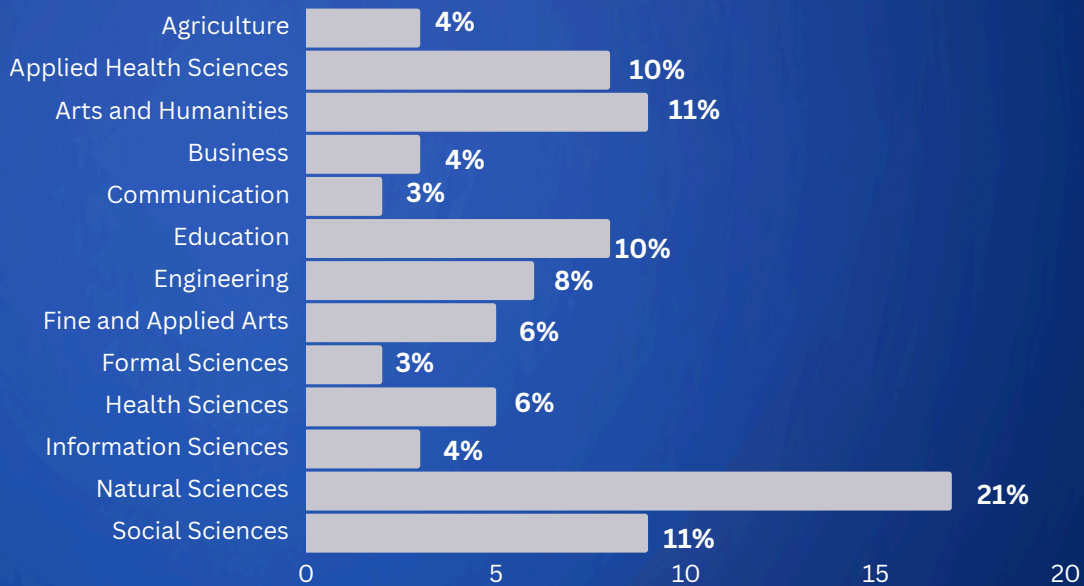
**Department Executive Officers  
(DEO)  
Participant Directory  
2025**

# DEO BY THE NUMBERS

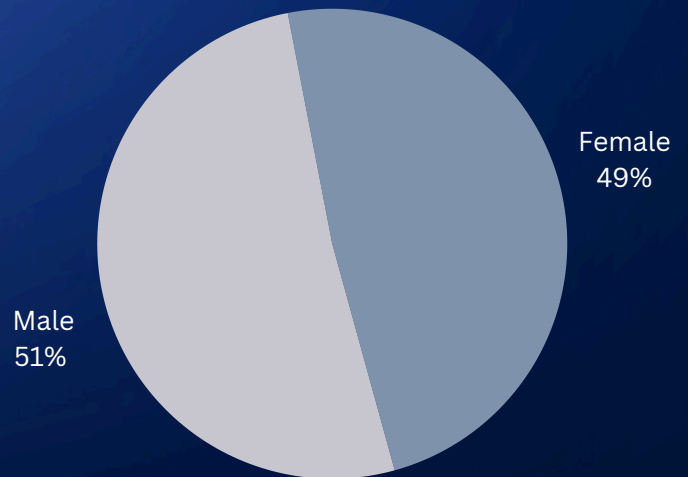
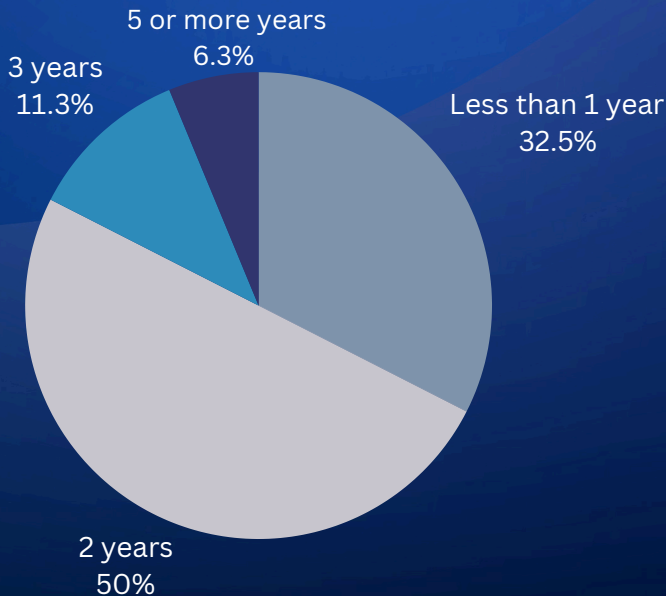


80 Fellows  
2025 - 2026 Cohort

## College Representation



## Years as DEO



# Dave Abler

Penn State University



Department Head

College of Agricultural Sciences

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Dave Abler's research interests include the economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture, global food and agricultural markets, natural resource economics, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. His country expertise includes work in China, Costa Rica, France, India, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Peru, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela. He is the J. Lossing Buck Visiting Professor at Nanjing Agricultural University in China.

# John Affleck

Penn State University



Department Head and Chair

Bellisario College of Communications

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John Affleck is the department head for journalism in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications at Penn State, where he also serves as the Knight Chair in Sports Journalism and Society and director of the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism. Affleck spent 22 years as a reporter and editor for The Associated Press, the majority of it as a national manager in news and sports. In 2013, he pivoted to academic life, having been recruited by Penn State for its Knight chair position in sports journalism and society. Affleck's degrees are from Notre Dame (bachelor's in American Studies); the University of Dundee (postgraduate diploma in 20th century British literature); and, Northwestern (master's in journalism). He's a lifelong runner, originally from Syracuse, New York.

# John Allen

Purdue University



Professor and Department Head

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

John M. Allen, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, FCCM, FCCP, FNAP is Professor and Marvin and Melanie Richardson Department Head of the Department of Pharmacy Practice at the Purdue University College of Pharmacy. Originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. Allen earned his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Florida A&M University. He completed postgraduate residency training at Tampa General Hospital (PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice, PGY-2 Critical Care) and holds dual board certifications in Pharmacotherapy and Critical Care Pharmacy. Dr. Allen's research interests include medication use disparities, antibiotic dosing in sepsis, and the development of evidence-based strategies to diversify the pharmacy workforce.

# Jenny Asmus

University of Wisconsin-Madison



Professor and Department Chair

School of Education

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Jennifer Asmus is a Professor in the School Psychology Program and since 2024, has served as Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research utilizes single-case designs and evidenced-based practice and interests include applied behavior analysis, developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, challenging behavior, and social skills difficulties. She has served as PI and co-PI of directed research and training grants funded through the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Institute of Education Sciences, and the National Institutes of Health.



# Luis F. Ayala

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Professor and Department Head

Earth and Mineral Sciences

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Luis F. Ayala is the Department Head and William A. Fustos Family Professor in the John and Willie Leone Family Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University. His research focuses on advanced computational fluid dynamics modeling applied to multiphase flow in porous media, multiphase well performance, natural gas engineering, and multicomponent thermodynamics. He is a Fulbright Scholar and recipient of the Fulbright-Colciencias Innovation and Technology Award, and has received awards including Outstanding Teaching, Outstanding Faculty Advisor, Outstanding Faculty Mentoring, the Charles Hosler Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Faculty Award, and the Howard B. Palmer Faculty Mentor Award from Penn State.

# Danielle Benoit

University of Oregon



Professor and Department Chair

Bioengineering

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Danielle S.W. Benoit is the Inaugural Lorry Lokey Chair and Professor in the Department of Bioengineering at the University of Oregon. Prof. Benoit directs an internationally recognized research program focused on therapeutic biomaterials with emphasis on challenging clinical problems and translational solutions involving cell transplantation and drug delivery. As a leader in the field of therapeutic biomaterials, her work has provided insights into development and translation of engineered extracellular matrices for bone allograft repair, hydrogel depots, pH-responsive nanoparticles for nucleic acid and small molecule drug delivery, novel targeting strategies, and development of tissue mimetics for the salivary gland and macula.

# Bhaskar Bhattacharya

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Department Head

Statistics

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Bhaskar Bhattacharya is the Head of the Department of Statistics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Previously, he led the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Southern Illinois University. He earned his Ph.D. in Statistics from the University of Iowa under the mentorship of Professor Richard Dykstra, following his B.S. and M.S. degrees from the Indian Statistical Institute. Dr. Bhattacharya has served as a research advisor to 20 M.S. and Ph.D. students and has contributed as a committee member on over 70 dissertations across the sciences and engineering. His research centers on methodological statistical inference, especially the incorporation of prior information and principles from information theory, with a strong emphasis on applied statistics.

# Kevin Black

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Professor and Department Chair

Letters and Science

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Dr. Kevin Black is Professor and Chair of Physics as well as an experimental Particle Physicist at UW Madison.



# Bénédicte Boisseron

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Professor and Department Chair

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African Studies  
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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Bénédicte Boisseron is Professor and Chair of the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS) at The University of Michigan. Her interdisciplinary research brings into conversation Global Black Studies, Caribbean Studies, Critical Animal Studies, and Environmental Humanities. Her first book, *Creole Renegades: Rhetoric of Betrayal and Guilt in the Caribbean Diaspora* (University Press of Florida, 2014) received awards from the Caribbean Philosophical Association and the Caribbean Studies Association. Her second book, *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (Columbia University Press, 2018), draws on current debates about black life and animal rights in the history and cultures of the Americas and the Black Atlantic.

# Gary Christensen

University of Iowa



Department Executive Officer

Engineering

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Gary E. Christensen, D.Sc. is the department executive officer and professor of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Iowa. He has a joint appointment in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the University of Iowa. Dr. Christensen is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE), and Asia-Pacific Artificial Intelligence Association (AAIA). He is a lifetime member of SPIE. He was awarded the 2025 President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence, the University of Iowa's highest teaching award. He has published over 180 journal and conference papers and has four patents.

# Susan Cole

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Professor and Department Chair

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Susan Cole is Professor and Department Chair in the Department of Molecular Genetics at Ohio State University. She earned a B.S. in Molecular Biology from the University of Rochester in 1991 and a Ph.D. in Human Genetics and Molecular Biology from Johns Hopkins in 1998. She came to Ohio State following postdoctoral work at Princeton. Her research explores cellular communication during embryonic development, and she is a member of the Cancer Center and the Center for RNA Biology at Ohio State.

# Cynthia Colen

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Cynthia Colen is a social demographer whose research intersects the fields of public health and sociology. She is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology and a research affiliate of the Institute for Population Research at Ohio State University. Dr. Colen received her Ph.D. in Health Behavior & Health Equity from the University of Michigan and was a Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholar at Columbia University. Broadly defined, her work examines the causes and consequences of racial disparities in health within the United States, with a particular emphasis on middle-class African Americans. She is interested in examining the intricate ways that socioeconomic status and race interact to produce health disparities.



# Serena Connolly

Rutgers University-New Brunswick

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Professor and Department Chair

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Serena Connolly received her Ph.D. in Classical Philology from Yale University. She is Professor and Chair in the Department of Classics at Rutgers - New Brunswick, where she has worked since 2007. Her research is characterized by her use of a wide range of texts from across the Roman world to understand Roman social and political history. More recently, she has turned to the history of science and technology and its intersection with Roman politics. She is the author of *Lives Behind the Laws: The World of the Codex Hermogenianus* (2010), *Wisdom from Rome: Reading Roman Society and European Education in the Distichs of Cato* (2022), and *Learned Emperors: Science, Technology, and Power at the Roman Imperial Court* (forthcoming, 2025).

# Uli Dangel

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Uli Dangel is a professor, Stott Chair, and the director of the School of Architecture & Environment (SAE) at the University of Oregon. He joined the SAE in 2024 after 19 years at The University of Texas at Austin, where he taught graduate and undergraduate courses in design, construction, architectural detailing, and structural design. Dangel received a Diploma in Architecture from Universität Stuttgart in Germany and a Master of Architecture from the University of Oregon. His professional career began in London, where he worked for internationally renowned architecture firms Foster Partners as well as Grimshaw. He is a registered architect in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Texas.

# Katie Donahue

Michigan State University



Chairperson

Osteopathic Medicine

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Catherine Donahue, DO, Chairperson and Assistant Professor, Department of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine, Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, East Lansing, Michigan; board certified by the American Board of Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine. She graduated from MSUCOM in 2012 and completed Osteopathic Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine (ONMM) residency training at MSUCOM in 2015. Dr. Donahue served as former MSUCOM International Director Medical Education in Merida, MX in 2015-2016. Dr. Donahue is a course director in the OMM course series for MSUCOM osteopathic medical students, a teaching faculty member for the ONMM residency training program, and continues to enjoy seeing patients of all ages.

# Andrea Donnellan

Purdue University



Professor and Department Head

College of Science

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Dr. Donnellan is head and professor at the Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Science at Purdue. Previously she was a Senior Research Scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and managed the Instrument Systems Section. Donnellan studies earthquakes and crustal deformation using geodetic imaging and computational modeling and leads NASA's Surface Topography and Vegetation Study. She has degrees in Geology (BS Ohio State University), Geophysics (MS and PhD Caltech), and Computer Science (MS USC). She held a postdoctoral fellowship at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Donnellan is a fellow of the American Geophysical Union, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and The Explorers Club.



# Evan Economo

University of Maryland



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Entomology

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Evan Economo is a Professor and Department Chair of Entomology at the University of Maryland. He is a biodiversity scientist who focuses on the evolution and global ecology of insects. Before moving to Maryland in 2024, he was a Professor at the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology since 2012. From 2019-2022 he served as Associate Ombudsperson, and from 2023-2024, he was the Dean of Faculty Affairs at OIST. He also held fellowships from the Society of Fellows at the University of Michigan and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

# Lauren Feldman

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Lauren Feldman is a Professor and Chair of Journalism & Media Studies in the School of Communication & Information at Rutgers University. She is a leading scholar in the areas of political, science, and environmental communication. Her current research emphasizes three primary areas of interest: climate change communication, partisan media and misinformation, and comedy and social change. Feldman's research has been published in more than forty peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as in several edited volumes, and has been widely covered in major media outlets. She is co-author, with Caty Borum, of the book, *A Comedian and an Activist Walk into a Bar: The Serious Role of Comedy in Social Justice* (University of California Press, 2020).



# Nate Fethke

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Professor and Departmental Executive  
Officer

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Nathan Fethke is Professor and Departmental Executive Officer in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Iowa College of Public Health. He is a biomedical engineer and a certified professional ergonomist, whose research addresses musculoskeletal problems associated with the physical demands of work. Most of his research been funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, or NIOSH, within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At the University of Iowa, he directs the Ergonomics Training Program in the NIOSH-funded Heartland Center for Occupational Health and Safety, and he leads research on whole-body vibration within the NIOSH-funded Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health.

# Liza Finestack

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Liza Finestack is a professor and chair in the Department of Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Her research is focused on identifying effective assessments and interventions for children with language impairment.

# Emily Finzel

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Officer

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Emily Finzel is a Professor and Department Executive Officer of the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability at the University of Iowa. She received her BS from UW-Milwaukee, an MS from UA-Fairbanks, and her PhD from Purdue University. She joined Iowa after spending two years in industry working at ExxonMobil as a senior geoscientist. Emily's research focuses on sedimentary processes in modern and ancient settings to unravel the tectonic and paleogeographic history of different regions on Earth.

# Alex Flammini

Indiana University



Professor and Chair

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and Engineering  
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Dr. Flammini is Professor and Chair in the Dept. of Informatics, Luddy School of Informatics, Computing and Engineering at Indiana University. He married with two children. He is PhD in Statistical Physics from the International School for Advanced Studies, Trieste, Italy. Before joining IU in 2004, he held research positions at Cambridge University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His scientific interests are in the area of Computational Social Science and Complex Networks. He teaches I201 'Mathematical Foundations for Informatics' and I601 'Introduction to Complex Systems.'



# Kikora Franklin

Penn State University



Professor and Director

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Professor Franklin is a Professor of Theatre/Dance and the Director of the Penn State School of Theatre. With a professional career that spans more than 25 years, Franklin has established herself as a visionary leader, artist, and educator in the performing arts. Her diverse body of work includes celebrated contributions as a dancer, choreographer, director, and arts administrator. Deeply committed to the power of the arts as a tool for education and empowerment, Franklin has dedicated her career to inspiring communities and shaping the next generation of performers and creators. Her work blends artistic excellence with social engagement, using dance and theatre to spark dialogue, uplift underrepresented voices, and foster inclusive, transformative experiences.

# Kerry Green

University of Maryland



Professor and Chair

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greenkm@umd.edu

Dr. Kerry Green is the chair of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health at the University of Maryland School of Public Health. As a prevention scientist, Dr. Kerry Green's work concentrates on improving the health and well-being of disadvantaged populations. Her research focuses on identifying the causes of adverse outcomes over the life course among urban African Americans, including structural factors. Much of this work has been with the Woodlawn Study, a community cohort study that began in 1965 and includes data spanning 55 years of the cohort's lives with funding over time from NIDA, NIA and NICHD.



# Rigo Guevara

University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Department Chair

Arts and Sciences

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Guevara is Associate professor of Spanish. His areas of concentration are Latin American literature and culture, 1500-2000, with particular focus on poetry and human rights.

# Christina<sup>u</sup> Hanhardt

University of Maryland



Associate Professor and Chair

Arts and Humanities

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Christina B. Hanhardt is associate professor and chair of the Department of American Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research focuses on the history of post-WWII U.S. social movements, cities, and the politics of sexuality.

# Hilairy Hartnett

University of Washington



Professor and Director

College of the Environment

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Hilairy Hartnett is Director of the School of Oceanography. She is a chemical oceanographer with a transdisciplinary approach. Her research interests encompass field- and laboratory-based studies of carbon and nitrogen cycling, astrobiology and exoplanets, urban biogeochemistry, and geoengineering. She is working to understand the conditions that make environments habitable in the broadest sense for organisms that range from ancient microbes to future humans, and from our own seafloor to the Ocean Worlds beyond Earth. The planetary-scale approach she brings as an oceanographer is an important bridge between the astrophysical observations we will obtain and the biogeochemical systems that we hope to one day identify on exoplanets.

# Christy Haynes

University of Minnesota



Distinguished McKnight University  
Professor and Department Head  
College of Science & Engineering

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Christy Haynes is a Distinguished McKnight University Professor at the University of Minnesota and the Head of the Department of Chemistry. Her interdisciplinary research team leverages analytical and nanomaterials chemistry expertise to solve critical challenges in sensing, sustainability, and agriculture.

# Katy Heath

University of Illinois



Professor and Department Head

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Heath is an evolutionary geneticist studying plant-microbe interactions and she is the department head of Plant Biology at the University of Illinois.

# Beth Hewitt

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Dr. Hewitt is Chair and professor in the Department of English at the Ohio State University. Her research is in pre-1900 U.S. literary history, which includes belletristic genres, political and economic writing, and epistolary writing.



# Courtney Hillebrecht

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Professor and Chair

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Courtney Hillebrecht is the Hitchcock Family Chair in Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs and Professor and Chair of Political Science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She also serves as the Director of the Forsythe Family Program on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. Her research interests are in international relations, human rights and international law. She is particularly interested in understanding the nexus between domestic politics and the international governance of human rights. Dr. Hillebrecht is the author of *Saving the International Justice Regime: Beyond Backlash against International Courts* (Cambridge University Press, 2021) and *Domestic Politics and International Human Rights Tribunals: The Problem of Compliance*, (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

# Jason Huang

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Director

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Jason L. Huang is Director of the School of Human Resources and Labor Relations at Michigan State University. His research focuses on individual differences, employee adaptability, training and transfer, and response effort. Jason's work has been published in top-tier journals such as *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Management*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Psychological Bulletin*, and *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Jason is a Fellow of SIOP and the Association for Psychological Science, chair-elect of the Research Methods Division at the Academy of Management, and a former Associate Editor for *Journal of Management*.

# Andy Karduna

University of Oregon



Professor and Department Head

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Karduna is Professor and Head of Department of Human Physiology at University of Oregon.

# Stacie King

Indiana University



Professor and Department Chair

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Stacie M. King is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Indiana University, specializing in Postclassic-Colonial period Mexican archaeology. Since 2009, she has directed the Nejapa Tavela Archaeological Project. In addition to over 20 other journal articles and book chapters, in 2024, she co-edited the book, *Mesquite Pods to Mezcal: 10,000 Years of Oaxaca Cuisines*, with Veronica Pérez Rodríguez and Shanti Morell-Hart, published by the University of Texas Press. She is currently working on a second edited volume. She has been employed at IU since 2004, rising through all ranks, serving as DGS from 2013-2020, and stepping into the role of department chair in July 2023, in addition to helping on numerous other college and university wide initiatives.



# Kim Kinzig

Purdue University

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Dr. Kinzig is Professor and Head of the Department of Psychological Sciences at Purdue University, . Her research program focuses on the neurobiology of obesity, eating disorders, and stress. Dr. Kinzig's work bridges behavioral neuroscience, physiology, and endocrinology, with an emphasis on understanding how hormones and brain circuits influence appetite, metabolism, and affective states. She has contributed to our understanding of how gut-brain signals, including GLP-1 and other neuropeptides, regulate food intake and emotional behavior, with applications for both obesity and anorexia nervosa. Her research has been supported by federal and foundation grants, and her publications appear in leading journals across multiple disciplines.

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# Max Lieblich

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Dr. Lieblich is Professor and Chair of Department of Mathematics at University of Washington.

# Wendy Machalicek

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Wendy Machalicek, Ph.D., BCBA-D is Professor and Department Head of Special Education and Clinical Sciences in the College of Education at the University of Oregon. Her scholarship focuses on (a) the development of effective parent and teacher mediated interventions to decrease challenging behavior and teach social communication and other adaptive behavior to children with intellectual and developmental disability including autism, (b) telepractice intervention delivery modalities to improve access to research-based interventions for children with low-incidence disabilities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and (c) single-case research methods in special education and related fields.

# Ernesto Martinez

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Associate Professor and Department  
Head

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Ernesto Javier Martínez is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies at the University of Oregon. In children's media, he is best known for the animated kids movie Daniel Visits a New Neighborhood (PBS KIDS, 2022), the live-action short film La Serenata (HBO Max, 2020), and the bilingual queer children's book, When We Love Someone, We Sing to Them (Reflection Press, 2018). As an academic, he specializes in comparative ethnic studies, Latinx literature, and feminist theory. His books include: The Truly Diverse Faculty: New Dialogues in American Higher Education (Palgrave, 2014), On Making Sense: Queer Race Narratives of Intelligibility (Stanford UP, 2012), and Gay Latino Studies: A Critical Reader (Duke UP, 2011).

# Kevin McGraw

Michigan State University



Professor and Chairperson

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. McGraw is chairperson and professor of the Department of Integrative Biology at Michigan State University. He spent his prior two decades as a faculty member and leader at Arizona State University, where he was Director of the Undergraduate Research Program (2011-2017), Associate Director of Facilities (2017-2023), and Dean's Fellow in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (2023-2024). His research centers on the control, function, and evolution of exaggerated traits in animals, especially bright colors, and on human impacts on wildlife health and biodiversity.

# Paul Mermelstein

University of Minnesota



Department Head

Medical School

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Dr. Mermelstein is Head of Department of Neuroscience at University of Minnesota.



# Jake Messersmith

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Department Chair

Business

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Jake Messersmith is the Chair of the Department of Management at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). Prior to serving as chair, Professor Messersmith was the Executive Director of Business Graduate Programs at UNL. His research focuses on issues within the strategic human resource management domain. His work has been published in such journals as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organization Science*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Human Resource Management*, *Personnel Psychology* and the *Journal of Management Studies*. Professor Messersmith teaches a variety of courses in human resource management and leadership at the undergraduate, graduate, and executive levels.

# Michael Meyer

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Professor

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Michael R. Meyer (born 1967, A.B. Physics, Washington University in St. Louis, M.S. in Physics, University of Missouri, PhD in Astronomy, University of Massachusetts) was Chair of Star and Planet Formation at the ETH in Zürich (2009-2016) and was formerly a Professor/Astronomer at the Department of Astronomy/Steward Observatory of the University of Arizona (2000-2009). He was a Hubble Fellow at the University of Arizona (1997-2000) and did a post-doc at the Max-Planck-Institute for Astronomie (1995-1997). He has more than 30 years of international scientific research experience, in the fields of galactic and infrared astronomy, as well as the formation, evolution, and characterization of planetary systems.

# Armin Moczek

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Moczek is an evolutionary developmental biologist broadly interested in understanding why and how developmental evolution has unfolded the way it has, why and how novel complex traits originated when they did, and the future of developmental evolution on a rapidly changing planet. In all of this he pays particular attention to the mechanisms and consequences of developmental plasticity, which growing evidence implicates as a key enabler of evolutionary diversification. More recently he has also become interested in symbiosis and niche construction as additional facilitators of evolutionary change.

# Jennifer Nahrgang

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Jennifer D. Nahrgang is Professor and Henry B. Tippie Excellence Chair of Management and Entrepreneurship in the Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa. She also serves as Department Executive Officer for the Management and Entrepreneurship Department. Before her career in academia, Jennifer spent 5 years working for ExxonMobil Corporation. Jennifer's research focuses on leadership and teams, employee voice and engagement, and the future world of work. She has published numerous articles in top management journals and is a Fellow of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Jennifer served as Associate Editor for Personnel Psychology from 2020-2023 and currently serves on numerous editorial review boards.



# Steve Nesbitt

University of Illinois



Professor and Department Chair

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Steve Nesbitt is an atmospheric scientist and meteorologist with over 30 years of research experience in global cloud and precipitation processes, hydrometeorology, weather systems, regional climate, and earth observations. With a proven track record of securing and managing NASA, DOE, NOAA, and NSF-funded research projects and field campaigns, he leads projects in data-driven analysis and machine learning, predictive modeling, and use of remote sensing technologies. He has served nearly 20 years on the faculty in the Department of Climate, Meteorology & Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Illinois where he is Department Head.

# Helen Neville

University of Illinois



Professor and Department Chair

Education

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Helen A. Neville is the Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology, a professor of Educational Psychology and African American Studies, and a Center for Advanced Studies Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is past president of the Society of Counseling Psychology (APA Division 17) and the Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race (APA Division 45) and a fellow of the American Psychological Association. She is active in the Association of Black Psychologists, having served on their Board of Directors and receiving their Distinguished Psychologist award. Her research on race, racism, African American psychology, and radical healing has been published in a wide range of journal articles.



# Felix Olschofka

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Felix Olschofka is the Director of the Glenn Korff School of Music and Professor of Violin. He joined the University of Nebraska-Lincoln from the University of North Texas College of Music, where he served as Associate Dean for Operations, Director of Graduate Studies, and Professor of Violin. Born and raised in Germany, Olschofka holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin, a performance certificate from Indiana University, and a doctorate from the University of California, San Diego. In 2014, he founded the UNT International Summer Music Institute and served as both director and faculty member for the two-week workshop designed for highly talented pre-college and college students.

# Kevin Otto

Purdue University



Professor and Department Head  
Engineering

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Dr. Kevin J. Otto is the Dane A. Miller Head and Professor of the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering (BME) at Purdue University, where his research interests include neural engineering, device-tissue interfaces, and neurostimulation. He joined Purdue in 2024, coming from the University of Florida, where he was a Professor of Biomedical Engineering in the J. Crayton Pruitt Family Department of Biomedical Engineering. He received the BS degree in chemical engineering from Colorado State University (1997), and both the MS degree (2002) and PhD degree (2003) in Bioengineering from Arizona State University. From 2003 to 2004 he was a Research Fellow in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Michigan.

# Marek Oziwicz

University of Minnesota



Professor and Chair

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Development  
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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Marek Oziwicz [oz-IE-vich] is Professor of Literacy Education and Department Chair of Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. A scholar of comparative literature, story systems, and sociocultural transformation, Dr. Oziwicz holds the Marguerite Henry Professorship of Children's and Young Adult Literature from the College of Education and Human Development. He also serves as Director of the Center for Climate Literacy: In this capacity he coordinates international efforts to establish universal climate literacy education as a foundation for ushering in an ecological civilization.

# Julie Pacheco

University of Iowa



Professor and Department Chair

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Julianna Pacheco is professor of political science at the University of Iowa. She received a PhD in political science from Pennsylvania State University and postdoctoral training as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health and Society Scholar at the University of Michigan. She is currently a Carnegie Fellow 2024-2026 and part of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Interdisciplinary Research Leaders Program-Cohort 7. Her research sits at the nexus of political science and population health. She was among the first to examine how health shapes political participation, most notably finding that poor health reduces turnout.



# Atul Prakash

University of Michigan



Chair

Engineering

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Professor Atul Prakash is the Richard H. Orenstein Division Chair of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at the University of Michigan. Professor Prakash, who has been on the CSE faculty since 1989, is an expert in the areas of computer security. His work on group and distributed document editors in the early 1990s helped to pave the way for applications such as Google Docs. In the late 1990s, Prakash built on this to conduct research into enabling Internet-based collaboratories to support team science. Recognizing the emerging challenges related to security and privacy, he refocused his efforts in the 2000s on how to make these collaboratories secure and safe for users. Full CV can be found at

[https://web.eecs.umich.edu/~aprakash/cv\\_atul\\_prakash.pdf](https://web.eecs.umich.edu/~aprakash/cv_atul_prakash.pdf)

# Farshad Rajabipour

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Dr. Farshad Rajabipour is a Chaired Professor and the Head of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Penn State University. He is also the Director of USDOT's CIAMTIS university transportation center (<https://r3utc.psu.edu/>), which is focused on Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation Infrastructure. He received his Ph.D. from Purdue University in Civil Engineering with emphasis on cementitious materials. He has 24 years of teaching and research experience in support of sustainable and transformative concrete materials that are used in buildings and civil infrastructure.



# Megha Ramaswamy

University of Washington

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Professor and Department Chair

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Megha Ramaswamy, PhD, MPH serves as Professor and Chair of Health Systems and Population Health at the University of Washington School of Public Health. Dr. Ramaswamy is a long-time teacher, mentor, and researcher in the areas of sexual, reproductive health, cancer prevention, and incarceration. Dr. Ramaswamy has been continually funded by NIH/NCI since 2011 for her work on cancer prevention among people with criminal legal system involvement. Dr. Ramaswamy has followed two tracks in her career: advancing the science of sexual health and cancer prevention and advancing the careers of people from high school to clinical and faculty positions.

# Lopo Rego

Indiana University



Distinguished Professor and  
Department Chair  
Kelley School of Business

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Lopo Rego is the PetSmart Inc., Distinguished Professor in Marketing Chair at the Indiana University Kelley School of Business. Professor Rego holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. His research examines how marketing investments, strategies, and actions influence firm outcomes and ultimately contribute to creating customer, firm, and societal value. To provide comprehensive insights, his work considers a broad set of marketing strategy phenomena (e.g., advertising, customer relationship management, brand strategy, customer orientation, etc.) and firm outcomes, including customer mindset, product market, and financial performance outcomes.

# Eric Salathé

University of Washington



Professor and Division Chair

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Engineering & Mathematics  
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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Prof. Salathé earned a Ph.D. in Geology and Geophysics from Yale University and a BA in Physics from Swarthmore College. His teaching interests include climate science and applied mathematics.

# Megan Sapp-Nelson

University of Illinois



Professor and Head

University Library

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Megan Sapp Nelson is a Professor of Library Sciences and Head, Grainger Engineering Library Information Center at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She was previously Associate Head of the Department of Information Studies at Purdue University Libraries where she also served as Science and Engineering Data Librarian. Her primary research interest is in the identification of needed data management skills for successful data management and the integration of these skills into existing STEM curricula and programs. Her teaching goal is to integrate information literacy and data information literacy skills into disciplinary curricula in a scaffolded manner for the graduation of data and information fluent students.



# Jen Schmidt

Michigan State University

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Interim Chairperson

Education

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Jennifer (Jen) Schmidt is Interim Chairperson of the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education in the College of Education at Michigan State University. Prior to stepping into the Interim Chair role in July 2025, she served 1.5 years as CEPSE's Associate Chairperson, and 7 years as Director of the graduate program in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology. As Interim chairperson of one of the largest and most complex departments in the college, she supports 5 distinct program areas offering 15 degrees at the doctoral, educational specialist, masters, and undergraduate levels. She is a Professor of Educational Psychology with research interests in adolescents' motivation and engagement in formal and informal learning contexts.

# Mi Shih

Rutgers University-New Brunswick



Associate Professor

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and Public Policy

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Mi Shih is an Associate professor and the Program Director in the Urban Planning and Policy Development Program at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. Her research is centered on the intersection of the politics of land development, the state's engagement in financial and regulatory techniques of governance, democratic participation, and urban spatial-economic transformation. She employs a mixed methods approach. Her recent research focuses on how various urban land development mechanisms, such as land readjustment, air rights tools, and density bonusing, enable the state to expand the private real estate property market while simultaneously deepening its governance in several key areas in Taiwan.



# Patricia Silveyra

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Professor and Chair

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Patricia Silveyra is a Professor and Chair in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at Indiana University School of Public Health Bloomington. Her research focuses on the study of sex differences and the role of sex hormones and their receptors in mechanisms of lung inflammation. She uses a combination of in vivo and in-vitro models to assess the effects of environmental exposures such as air pollutants, allergens, and vapes in both the healthy and diseased lung, with special consideration of sex as a biological variable and gonadal hormones.

# Leslie Smith III

University of Wisconsin-Madison



Professor and Department Chair

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Leslie Smith III is a Professor of Art and Chair of the Art Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As an abstract artist, his recent works delve into the intrinsic personal and political dimensions of abstraction, with particular emphasis on their connection to broadening conceptions of Black representation. Smith obtained a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and an MFA from Yale University School of Art. His exhibitions are showcased both nationally and internationally, and his work is part of the permanent collections of the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, the Birmingham Museum of Art, and the FRAC Auvergne in France, among others.

# Mia Smith-Bynum

University of Maryland

## DEO FELLOWS 2025



Professor and Chair

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Mia Smith-Bynum, PhD is Professor and Chair of Family Science in the School of Public Health at the University of Maryland, College Park. A clinical psychologist by training, Dr. Smith-Bynum directs the Black Families Research Group and is an expert in African American mental health, family interaction and communication in ethnic minority families, parenting, and racial identity. She is also an expert in adolescent mental health, adolescent sexual behavior, and parent-adolescent communication about difficult topics. She is the author of the Theory of Racial Socialization in Action (TRSA) for Black families. She is co-author of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) and the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI).

# Antje Steinmuller

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Antje Steinmuller is chair of architecture and professor at the University of Michigan's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. She is an architectural designer and urbanist recognized for her research on alternative - and more collective - forms of housing. Prior to joining Taubman College in 2024, Steinmuller was the chair of undergraduate architecture at California College of the Arts (CCA) in San Francisco where she co-directed the Urban Works Agency, CCA's urbanism research lab. She is also a co-founder of ideal X, a collaborative practice focused on the intersections between public/urban space activation, urban research, public art design, art, and architecture.



# Kristen Syrett

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Dr. Kristen Syrett is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Linguistics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – New Brunswick, where she has a co-appointment at the Center for Cognitive Science (RuCCS). She is the Director of the Rutgers Laboratory for Developmental Language Studies, where she and her research team investigate how children acquire the meaning of words (with a focus on adjectives and nouns), and her experimental semantics and pragmatics research focuses on how we dynamically assign meaning in a discourse context. She is a regular consultant and has been featured in the media as an expert on word meaning, diversity, gender, and inclusive language.

# Todd Thompson

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A member of the Ohio State faculty since 2007, Todd Thompson is a theoretical astrophysicist with broad interests. He received a B.A. in physics and philosophy from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Arizona, Tucson. Thompson was a Hubble Fellow at UC Berkeley and a Lyman Spitzer Fellow at Princeton University before joining Ohio State. Thompson has made contributions to the theory of supernovae, the origin of the heavy elements, the physics of the gamma-ray and radio emission of star-forming galaxies, the theory of galactic winds and star formation. Thompson is a core member of the All Sky Automated Survey for SuperNovae (ASAS-SN), which monitors the entire sky nightly from telescopes around the world.



# Bryan Warnick

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Bryan Warnick is the Daniel Tanner Foundation Professor of Philosophy of Education and Chair of the Department of Educational Studies in the College of Education and Human Ecology, Ohio State University. He earned his BS degree in philosophy and psychology in 1999 from the University of Utah, graduating magna cum laude. After serving as a research associate in medical ethics at the University Of Utah School Of Medicine, Dr. Warnick completed his MA (2002) and PhD (2005) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Philosophy of Education, with Nicholas Burbules and Walter Feinberg as his primary advisors. He taught at the University of Illinois in 2005 as an adjunct assistant professor, and was hired by Ohio State University in the autumn of 2005.

# Keith Weber

Rutgers University-New Brunswick



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Dr. Weber is a professor of mathematics education at the Graduate School of Education, where he has worked since 2003. He is entering his third year as the Chair of the Department of Learning and Teaching.

# Brooke White

University of Illinois



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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Brooke White lives in Champaign, Illinois where she is Professor & Director of the School of Art & Design in the College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. White's artistic practice is characterized by a cross-disciplinary approach to image-making, incorporating both analog and digital photographic techniques, experimental processes, digital video, and bookmaking. For over two decades, her work has explored themes such as the landscape, nature, and human connection to place. Her latest projects delve into the impact of climate-related weather events on rising water levels in regions such as the Gulf South, the Caribbean, and the Maritimes. For the past two decades, she has been deeply engaged in higher education as an educator, artist, and leader.

# Nicole Widmar

Purdue University



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Nicole J. Olynk Widmar Department Head and Professor Department of Agricultural Economics |Purdue University Dr. Nicole Olynk Widmar is an Agricultural Economist specializing in farm business management and decision making under uncertainty. She received her A.A.S. from Alfred State College in Animal Science, B.S. from Cornell University in Animal Science, and M.S. and Ph.D. from Michigan State University in Agricultural Economics. Dr. Widmar's teaching, research and Extension activities focus on farm business management and production economics. She strives to conduct applied research that informs decision making on commercial agriculture operations.



# Brent Williams

University of Minnesota



Professor and Department Head

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Brent Williams serves as Professor and Department Head of Soil, Water, and Climate in the University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences. He previously served as the Raymond R. Tucker Assistant and Associate Professor at Washington University in St. Louis for 13 years within the Department of Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering. At WashU he helped to start the Center for Aerosol Science & Engineering and served as an initial center coordinator. He also helped to start the WashU Climate Change Program and served as the program's initial director.

# Andrea Wittenborn

Michigan State University



Professor and Chair

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Andrea Wittenborn, PhD, LMFT is Professor of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS), Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, and Director of the Couple and Family Therapy PhD Program at Michigan State University. She earned her PhD in HDFS from Purdue University and completed an internship in psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. As Director of Graduate Studies, her transformational leadership led to her department winning the 2020 Outstanding Graduate Program Community Award. Her research, funded by NIH and foundations, aims to improve treatment for depression.



# Marci Ybarra

University of Wisconsin-Madison



Professor and Director

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Marci Ybarra, MSW, PhD, is Director and Professor at the Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research examines the socioeconomic well-being of low-income families in the U.S., with a particular focus on lone mothers and immigrant families with young children. She investigates how safety net programs and other public policies, such as means-tested assistance, social insurance, and immigration policies, and nonprofit services influence outcomes for low-income families. Using mixed methods, Ybarra combines state administrative data, surveys, qualitative interviews with frontline staff and clients, and participant observation in much of her research.

# Brenda Zierler

University of Washington



Professor and Chair

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Brenda K. Zierler, PhD, RN, RVT, FAAN Professor & Chair, Department of Biobehavioral Nursing and Health Informatics UW School of Nursing's Kaiser Permanente Endowed Nursing Professorship in Chronic Illness Care. Dr. Zierler's professional background is in nursing with a clinical focus on cardiovascular disease, innovative technologies, and a research focus on health systems/health services related to interprofessional collaborative practice for improving team functioning and patient and systems outcomes. Her primary appointment is in the School of Nursing at the University of Washington, but she holds three adjunct appointments – two in the School of Medicine and one in the School of Public Health.

# William G.J. Halfond

USC



Professor and Department Associate  
Chair  
Viterbi School of Engineering

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

William Halfond is a professor of computer science at the University of Southern California. He received his Ph.D. in 2010 from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Halfond's research is in software engineering in the area of program analysis and software testing. His research work focuses on improving quality assurance for web applications, ensuring the accessibility of software user interfaces, developer-oriented techniques for reducing the power consumption of smartphone mobile applications, and software security.

# Michael Hurlburt

USC



Associate professor and Associate Dean

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Michael Hurlburt is associate dean for faculty affairs, and an associate professor. His career is devoted to scholarship that advances research and conceptually guided strategies for improving the reach and impact of behavioral health interventions designed to improve the relationships and emotional health of children and families, with an emphasis on maltreatment prevention. With support from grants from the National Institute of Mental Health, his initial work in clinical epidemiology helped to provide a uniquely detailed understanding of services that families receive in mental health and child welfare settings.



# Naomi Levine

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Gabilan Distinguished Professor

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Naomi M. Levine is the Gabilan Distinguished Professor of Science and Engineering at the University of Southern California where she holds joint appointments in Marine and Environmental Biology, Quantitative and Computational Biology, and Earth Sciences. She received her BA in Geosciences from Princeton University and her PhD in Chemical Oceanography from the MIT-WHOI Joint Program. Naomi's research focuses on understanding the interactions between climate and marine microbial ecosystem composition and function. The Levine Lab is developing innovative, interdisciplinary numerical models that allow them to understand how dynamics occurring at the scale of individual microbes impact large-scale ecosystem processes such as rates of global carbon cycling.

# Jinchi Lv

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Jinchi Lv is Kenneth King Stonier Chair in Business Administration, Department Chair, Professor in Data Sciences and Operations Department of the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California, and Professor in Department of Mathematics at USC. He received his Ph.D. in Mathematics from Princeton University in 2007. He was McAlister Associate Professor in Business Administration at USC from 2016-2019. His research interests include statistics, data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and business applications as well as blockchain and large language models. His papers have been published in journals in statistics, economics, business, computer science, information theory, neuroscience, and biology.



# Barry Thompson

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Professor and Chair

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## DEO FELLOWS 2025

Barry Thompson is a Professor of Chemistry and Chair of the Chemistry Department at the University of Southern California. His research is focused on the design and synthesis of electroactive polymers. Developing sustainable strategies for polymer synthesis and applying novel materials for alternative energy solutions are key aspects of his research.

# Greg Polites

University of Illinois



Executive Vice Dean

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Dr. Gregory M. Polites is the Executive Vice Dean of the Carle Illinois College of Medicine at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In this role, he provides oversight for academic and student affairs, admissions, accreditation, strategic partnerships (including international collaborations), the college's strategic plan, and post-baccalaureate programs. He also advises the dean on educational initiatives and represents the college within the community, across the state, and nationally. Dr. Polites joined Carle Illinois following a distinguished 20-year career at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, where he is a Professor of Emergency Medicine.

# Petra Christmann

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Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Dr. Christmann is the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at Rutgers University-New Brunswick and Director of the Rutgers Center for Faculty Success. Working closely with campus, school and department leaders she provides strategic leadership in faculty recruitment, retention, mentoring, and development. She oversees a variety of university-wide programs focused on professional growth, leadership preparation, and faculty satisfaction and plays a pivotal role in shaping and implementing a strategic vision for faculty development. Prior to taking on this role in July 2025 she held administrative positions at Rutgers Business School as Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs and Research and as Chair of the Department of Management and Global Business.

# Ann Clements

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Associate Vice Provost

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Ann C. Clements, Ph.D. is Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs - Faculty Development at the Pennsylvania State University where she oversees university-wide professional development for Penn State's 6,500+ faculty across 24 campuses. She leads faculty success initiatives including those related to new faculty orientation, promotion and tenure, mentoring, leadership training, teaching effectiveness, transition and retention, and emeritus engagement. Additionally, she oversees the Administrative Fellows program, the Penn State Laureate program, and the President's Award for Excellence in Academic Integration. In conjunction with the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, she engages with the Big Ten Academic Alliance and the Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities.



# Kelly Conforti Rupp

University of Wisconsin-Madison



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Staff Affairs  
Office of the Provost

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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Kelly Conforti Rupp is the Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She plans and facilitates leadership development opportunities for faculty, staff, and department chairs. She also supports faculty recruitment and retention initiatives. In her spare time she is a certified life and leadership coach who helps people find greater purpose and joy in their lives and careers.

# Sierra Dawson

University of Oregon



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Leadership Development  
Office of the Provost

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Sierra Dawson's work focuses on faculty and leadership development, with a specific emphasis on support during career transition moments. As a member of the academic affairs team in the office of the provost at the University of Oregon, Sierra coordinates and facilitates numerous programs for faculty and staff, such as new faculty programming, mid-career peer mentorship and coaching programs, new academic unit head onboarding & leadership development, and the UO Leadership Academy. Sierra is committed to supporting UO's goal to create a flourishing community. Originally from the faculty in the Department of Human Physiology, Sierra continues to value and design inclusive and interactive learning experiences that build community while helping participants to learn and grow.



# Amanda Diekman

Indiana University



Associate Vice Provost for Faculty and  
Academic Affairs  
College of Arts & Sciences

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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Amanda Diekman is Provost Professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Indiana University. Her research investigates how stereotypes stem from and reinforce the social structure, with a particular focus on disparities in STEM, system change, and organizational trust. She received her B.A. (English and psychology) from Kenyon College, and her Ph.D. (social psychology) from Northwestern University.

# Beth Lewis

University of Minnesota



Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic  
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Dr. Lewis has been a faculty member at the University of Minnesota for 17 years. Her research has involved conducting randomized trials to examine the effect of exercise on mental health. She served as the chair of the School of Kinesiology from 2017-2023 and took on the role of Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in July, 2023.

# Chris Marks

University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty  
Affairs

The Office of the Executive Vice  
Chancellor  
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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Christopher Marks is Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Professor in the Glenn Korff School of Music at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In this role, he provides leadership on activities, initiatives, and policies that support the university's faculty. He served as Associate Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts from 2015 to 2024, during which time he also served as Interim Director of the School of Art, Art History & Design, Interim Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre & Film, and Interim Dean. As a professor, he has taught organ, music theory, and performance practice. He previously taught organ and served as University Organist at Syracuse University.

# Teresa Mastin

Michigan State University



Professor and Chairperson

Office of the Provost

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Teresa Mastin is a professor and the chairperson for the Department of Advertising Public Relations. Her primary research interests include media advocacy and media coverage of health issues related to women, and vulnerable populations. She has introduced media advocacy to non-governmental organizations in Rwanda, Kenya, and Vietnam. As Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine (2015 - 2018), Mastin presented diversity and inclusion and cultural competency talks/workshops/grand rounds, and taught sustained dialogue courses.



# Sascha Matish

University of Michigan



Sascha was appointed Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs and Senior Director of Academic Human Resources at the University of Michigan in June 2019. Sascha initially joined Academic Human Resources in June of 2008. Prior to coming to University of Michigan, Sascha worked as an assistant general counsel at Wayne State University, where she focused on labor and employment law. Sascha also worked as a union-side attorney in a law firm specializing in public sector labor law in educational settings.

Associate Vice Provost for Academic and  
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Academic Human Resources

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# Lisa Mauer

Purdue University



Lisa Mauer joined the provost's office as associate vice provost for faculty affairs in 2019. In this role, she provides leadership for initiatives that support faculty recruitment, hiring, retention, development, and success at all career stages. Mauer is a professor of food science, a member of the Whistler Center for Carbohydrate Research, and was the director of the Center for Food Safety Engineering for 10 years.

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# Jan Neiger

Ohio State University



Assistant Vice Provost

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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Assistant Vice Provost focusing on academic policies and procedures; faculty hiring initiatives, development, and conduct; training and leadership opportunities; and conflicts of interest and ethics. Prior to joining the Provost Office, served as Associate General Counsel at Ohio State and the University of Cincinnati. Began legal career in higher education at the Ohio Attorney General's Office serving as assistant chief and chief of the Education Section. Received B.A. and J.D. from Ohio State and Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Bowling Green State University.

# Deepa Rao

University of Washington



Associate Vice Provost for Faculty  
Development

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Deepa Rao, Ph.D., M.A. is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Professor in the Department of Global Health at the University of Washington, Seattle. She is currently the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Faculty Development at the University of Washington. Her professional interests are in implementing and disseminating effective behavioral interventions to improve mental health, reduce stigma, and help people function better at work and home.



# Laura Rosenthal

University of Maryland



Director for Faculty Leadership

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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Laura J. Rosenthal is the Director for Faculty Leadership and a Professor in the English Department. In the Office of Faculty Affairs, she leads projects on faculty development and leadership development. Dr. Rosenthal previously served as the ADVANCE Professor for the College of Arts and Humanities, advancing women and faculty of color. She is the author or editor of five books on Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century British literature and editor of the journal 'Restoration: Studies in Literature and Culture.' Her scholarship focuses on theater, the novel, gender, empire, and histories of emotion.

# Amy Santos

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Rosa Milagros Santos is the Associate Provost for Faculty Development. In this role, she assists with processes and policies related to faculty development and success, including faculty mentoring, support for pre-tenure and mid-career faculty, career paths for specialized faculty, and leadership development. She also oversees the new faculty orientation, mid-career faculty programming, and the dual-career academic couples program.

# Barry Thomas

University of Iowa



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## DEO LIAISONS 2025

Barrett (Barry) W. Thomas was appointed associate provost for faculty and strategic operations in January 2025. Previously, Dr. Thomas served as senior associate dean and the Gary C. Fethke Research Professor of Business Analytics in the Tippie College of Business. He joined Tippie in 2002 after earning MS and PhD degrees in Industrial and Operations Engineering from the University of Michigan and BA degrees in Mathematics and Economics from Grinnell College. Dr. Thomas has extensive experience in faculty development and policy. He also has been a leader regarding the use of artificial intelligence and has served on many campus-wide committees.

# Donna Garcia

USC



Assistant Vice Provost for Academic  
Affairs and Faculty Development  
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Donna Garcia is the Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Development at USC. She brings over 20 years of expertise in higher education, primarily in academic and faculty affairs administration. Donna has focused on leading key initiatives under the Provost's office. Her responsibilities include overseeing the university's process for academic program review, faculty development programs such as Dean Onboarding, Department Chair Initiative, mentorship development for newly tenured associate professors, awards and recognition. Donna has integrated her extensive education and training into empowering and providing support to faculty leaders.



# Charity Farber

Big Ten Academic Alliance



Associate Director

Programs Team

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## BIG TEN ACADEMIC ALLIANCE STAFF

Charity Farber has been with the Big Ten Academic Alliance since 2008. With each role she has held, she has continued to build on her commitment to strengthening academic collaboration and advancing leadership development. She now leads the newly established Leadership Institute team, dedicated to advancing faculty leadership across the consortium. Charity is responsible for the strategic design, delivery, and facilitation of programs that prepare faculty for leadership roles and foster collaboration among the member institutions. In addition to leading the Leadership Institute, Charity also facilitates the collaboration of one of the Big Ten Academic Alliance's core groups, the Vice Provosts for Faculty Affairs.

# Laney Staehlin

Big Ten Academic Alliance



Program Manager

Programs Team

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Laney Staehlin joined the Big Ten Academic Alliance in 2025 as the Program Manager for the Leadership Institute. She leads the Department Executive Officers (DEO) program, overseeing its planning and execution to support leadership development across the consortium. Laney also serves as the primary liaison for program participants and hosts universities, ensuring clear communication and seamless experience across all Leadership Institute initiatives. She manages a broad range of logistics to ensure the smooth and effective delivery of programs and events. In addition, Laney contributes to the strategic planning and ongoing refinement of program content in collaboration with the Director and campus partners.