

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

FALL 2026

TOGETHER, WE THRIVE



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to The University of Texas at Arlington. Thank you for choosing to bring your talents, expertise, and passion for learning to our campus.

You are now part of a shared commitment that unites us all: expanding opportunity, advancing knowledge, and improving the lives of our students

and our community through education, discovery, and innovation. We are all engaged in the same important work: helping students learn and grow, solve problems, and imagine new possibilities.

What started as a private primary school has evolved from a military academy to an agricultural junior college to a world-class research university with an outsized impact on Texas. We're one of just 13 R-1 universities in the nation that Carnegie also recognizes for expanding access, producing outstanding graduate outcomes, and staying engaged with the community.

UTA is a special place. We are building futures with every lecture, laboratory experiment, creative performance, field experience, and mentoring moment. The work you do will shape not only individual lives, but also the communities, industries, and institutions our graduates will serve for years to come.

Our strategic plan, *UTA 2030: Shared Dreams, Bright Future*, provides a framework for how we teach, discover, learn, and serve. It challenges us to think boldly, act with purpose, and pursue excellence in ways that create meaningful impact. As you become part of our dynamic faculty community, I look forward to your contributions to our academic, entrepreneurial, and cultural life. Your ideas, scholarship, creativity, and engagement will help strengthen UTA and enrich the experiences of the students we serve.

As you settle into your new role, please know that you are joining a faculty body that values collaboration, curiosity, and a sense of care for one another. Thank you for joining us. I am excited to see all that we will accomplish together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jennifer Cowley".

JENNIFER COWLEY, PhD

UTA President

A LETTER FROM THE PROVOST



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the academic community at UTA, I am delighted to welcome you to Maverick Country. We are fortunate that you have chosen to join our vibrant academic community. At UTA, we value innovation, creativity, and curiosity—qualities you bring with you and that will undoubtedly enrich

our academic programs and prepare students for career success.

You are joining a supportive and collaborative community of academic professionals committed to excellence. We have curated a comprehensive suite of resources to help you acclimate to UTA and support your ongoing professional growth. Regardless of your role, you will find a wide range of tools and programs designed to help you achieve your goals.

I encourage you to connect with the Division of Faculty Success and the dedicated team working on your behalf. Its website offers a wealth of information about professional development opportunities, faculty resources, and more. You will also find that our faculty and staff are deeply committed to supporting your success. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your peers, college leadership, or campus administrators with any questions or concerns.

I also invite you to explore the **Maverick Promise**, our institutional commitment to helping students stay enrolled, graduate on time, and enter the workforce prepared to thrive. As you review our student success goals and reflect on our strategic plan, I encourage you to ask yourself: What is one thing I will commit to doing to play my part in advancing student success?

Our collective success depends on our ability to collaborate, remain flexible and adaptable, and bring out the best in one another as we navigate opportunities and change together. I am confident that you will make meaningful contributions to our community, our partnerships, and our academic and instructional mission. I look forward to celebrating what we achieve together and seeing how your leadership advances student success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tamara L. Brown'.

TAMARA L. BROWN, PhD

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

UTA GUIDING THEMES

SHARED DREAMS, BRIGHT FUTURE

UTA 2030

The University of Texas at Arlington has launched its strategic plan, *UTA 2030*, guided by the five themes outlined in these pages. Together, we will realize our goals and accomplish big dreams together.



PEOPLE AND CULTURE

At UTA, we are committed to creating a culture that celebrates and values the unique contributions of each individual. We believe that a genuinely supportive environment is one where every person, from employees to students to our partners to beyond, feels engaged and empowered to be their authentic selves.



STUDENT SUCCESS

UTA is committed to delivering exceptional experiences that lead to positive outcomes for our students. The University empowers students from all walks of life to succeed. Emphasizing enriched learning environments and best practices for academic innovation, UTA equips its graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the ever-evolving demands of a rapidly changing world.

UTA GUIDING THEMES



ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The University's future successes will be underpinned by the vitality of our renewed and future external relationships. We must foster positive alumni and community engagement, and extend and deepen our partnerships in the community.



FINANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

As a University, we have created and continue to develop ambitious and forward-looking goals as part of our vision for the future. It's imperative to our success that we develop our resource strategies and align our infrastructure plans to achieve our goals.



RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

UTA is an R-1 doctoral research university that fosters innovation, research, and entrepreneurship to drive societal progress. We are committed to fostering an environment of collaboration and excellence, propelling UTA to the forefront of discovery.

DIVISION OF FACULTY SUCCESS

We are here to support you in every step of your career journey at UT Arlington.

Here's how: real programs, built for every stage.



NEW FACULTY INSTITUTE

Tenure-track & APT faculty, years 1-3

Year-long series to help you settle into your role and build community with peers



NEW FACULTY MENTORING

Tenure-track & APT faculty, years 1-2

Year-long, one-on-one mentoring designed specifically for your first two years



PROJECT-BASED MENTORING

All faculty

Focused, short-term support—from two weeks to a semester—for proposals, grants, and navigating University culture



FACULTY WRITING GROUP

Pre-tenure faculty

Year-long community for protected writing time, accountability, and cross-disciplinary connection



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Tenured or full-time APT faculty

Semester-long cohort program building practical leadership skills for higher education



T&P AND ANNUAL REVIEW SUPPORT

All faculty

Workshops and drop-in office hours to help you prepare strong promotion dossiers and annual reviews

MEET OUR TEAM

JACQUELINE FAY, PhD

*Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Success
Professor of English*



Jacqueline Fay supports faculty excellence and career success at UTA by overseeing promotions, policy reviews, and professional development. Reporting to the provost, she guides academic leaders, supervises

the Center for Research on Teaching and Learning Excellence to improve teaching, and collaborates UT System-wide to advance University goals.

SHANNA BANDA, PhD

*Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty Success
Professor of Instruction of Mathematics*



Shanna Banda supports Academic Professional Track faculty through career-long professional development, promotion reviews, and awards. She manages faculty profile systems, updates academic policies, and

coordinates campus-wide communications. Globally, she represents UTA as a UT System liaison to champion faculty success.

NALI KIM, EdD

Director of Faculty Engagement



Nali Kim manages faculty career development from onboarding to retirement, focusing on community and retention. She leads mentoring programs, orientation, and leadership training for aspiring

academic leaders. Additionally, she resolves professional roadblocks, analyzes employment data, and serves as the DFS project manager.

SAMANTHA BAKER MOORE

Director of Faculty Management Systems



Samantha Moore manages the Watermark database to ensure compliance with Texas state regulations. She integrates campus data systems, conducts user training, and builds workflows for annual reviews

and promotions. Additionally, she generates custom reports on faculty activity for the UT System and University leaders.

DENISE COBBS

Administrative Manager



Denise Cobbs manages financial and human resource operations for the Division of Faculty Success, ensuring compliance with UTA policies. Working closely with leadership, she directs budgeting, space

resources, and business administration. Additionally, she supports the Center for Research on Teaching and Learning Excellence to optimize its operational efficiency.

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MING-HAN LI, DEAN



UDDAY DATTA

Assistant Professor,
Landscape Architecture

PhD, Human & Community Development, West Virginia University

MLA, Landscape Architecture, West Virginia University
BArch, Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology

RESEARCH INTERESTS: The intersection of landscape architecture, public health, and ecological resilience, focusing on how built environment and policy interventions impact health outcomes and physical activity. This work identifies critical barriers to environmental equity. The ultimate goal is to provide actionable design and policy solutions that reduce health disparities and foster resilient, equitable communities.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Cultivating critical thinking, technical proficiency, and intellectual curiosity through an inclusive and collaborative studio environment where students actively engage with ideas and connect theory to real-world applications.



JENIFER REINER

Assistant Professor of
Practice, Public Affairs &
Planning

MUEP, Urban Planning, University of Virginia
BA, Architecture, University of California–Berkeley

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Housing attainability, manufactured housing, community development and engagement, municipal entitlement process.

TEACHING INTERESTS: City planning.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

BRIAN KLAAS, DEAN



**DANYELLE
ACKALL**

Associate Professor of
Instruction, Management

PhD, Leadership, Texas Christian University
MS, Human Resources, UT Arlington
BS, Environmental Science, Texas A&M University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Job satisfaction.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Broad management topics,
like organizational behavior and just about every field
within human resources.



DIANA CHOI

Assistant Professor,
Accounting

PhD, Accounting, Ohio State University
MPA, Accounting, UT Austin
BS, Business Administration, Yonsei University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Financial reporting,
financial institutions, corporate governance, accounting
regulation, debt contracts.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Financial accounting.



HUGH KIM

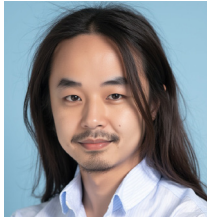
Assistant Professor,
Finance & Real Estate

PhD, Finance, UT Dallas

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Asset management and
institutional investors, focusing on mutual funds,
trading behavior, market liquidity, and artificial
intelligence in finance.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Investments, asset
pricing, portfolio management, and derivatives, with
applications to artificial intelligence in finance.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



KAIYUE LIU

Visiting Assistant Professor,
Information Systems &
Operations Management

PhD, Information Systems, UT Arlington
MS, Business Analytics, UT Dallas
BBA, Decision Sciences, University of North Texas

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Human behavior within complex information systems, spanning human-AI collaboration, digital engagement, and Open Source Software adoption; sociotechnical theory and the limitations of AI; and computational methods like deep learning and generative AI for intelligent artifacts and analytics.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Information systems education built on structuring knowledge into a coherent, connected narrative and grounding abstract concepts in real-world application. Emphasizes relentless, accessible support to ensure every student has the resources to succeed.



JOSEPH NKETIA

Assistant Professor of
Instruction, Accounting

PhD, Business Administration, Oklahoma State University
MBA, Finance, Case Western Reserve University
BBA, Accounting, Howard University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Small business finance in developing economies, corporate finance, private equity finance, earnings management, corporate governance.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Financial accounting, cost accounting, taxation.



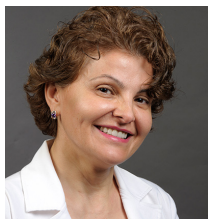
SAMANEH SAMIEE

Visiting Assistant Professor,
Information Systems &
Operations Management

PhD, Business Administration, UT Arlington
BS, Computer Engineering, University of Science & Culture

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Tech startups, AI, blockchain, esports.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Business analytics, data science, supply chain management



ASLI TASCI

Professor, Management

PhD, Tourism & Hospitality, Michigan State University
MS, Tourism & Hospitality, Michigan State University
BA, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Middle East Technical University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How people perceive and develop relationships with places, organizations, and experiences, drawing from hospitality, tourism, marketing, and psychology. Explores destination image, branding, transformative experiences, and well-being, with recent expansion into immersive technologies, virtual/augmented reality, and space hospitality.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Hospitality and tourism management, consumer behavior, marketing, destination management, and strategic management, along with research methods and doctoral seminars. Emerging interests include immersive technologies, virtual/augmented reality, and space hospitality.



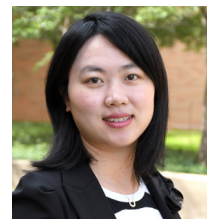
HORATIO TRAYLOR

Assistant Professor,
Management

PhD, Management & Leadership, University of Houston
BS, Psychology, Louisiana State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: When and under what circumstances employee identities become assets or liabilities in the workplace.

TEACHING INTERESTS: The employee experience in the workplace and how organizations can be more equitable and inclusive.



SUYUE WANG

Assistant Professor of
Instruction, Accounting

PhD, Accounting, UT Arlington
MA, Accounting, UT Arlington
MS, Finance, UT Arlington
BA, Economics, Nankai University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Corporate governance, financial accounting, forensic accounting, economic damages.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Managerial accounting, financial accounting, accounting theory and research, forensic accounting.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

PETER E. CROUCH, DEAN



AURELIE AZOUG

Associate Professor,
Mechanical & Aerospace
Engineering

PhD, Mechanical Engineering, Ecole Polytechnique
France

MS, Mechanical Engineering, Université de
Technologie de Compiègne

BS, Mechanical Engineering, Université de
Technologie de Compiègne

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Viscoelastic mechanical behavior of liquid crystal elastomers, smart elastomers in general, soft robots, deformation mechanisms in soft materials, damping; biomechanics of pregnancy, risk of falling, gait, musculoskeletal modeling; mechanical deformation and inflammation of soft tissues.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Solid mechanics and mechanics of materials, coding, supporting neurodiverse students learning, promoting women in science.



STAV HALDAR

Assistant Professor, Electrical
Engineering

PhD, Physics, Louisiana State University

MS, Physics, Harish-Chandra Research Institute

BS, Physics, Birla Institute of Technology–Mesra

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Quantum technologies, quantum optics, quantum information theory, quantum networks and communication, distributed quantum computing, reinforcement learning.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Quantum mechanics, reinforcement learning, information theory, quantum optics.



JESSICA LAL

Assistant Professor,
Bioengineering

PhD, Molecular Medicine, Case Western Reserve
University

MS, Biomedical Science, Tufts University

BA, Biology, Baylor University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Translational oncology, clinical informatics, and computational biology, integrating tumor multi-omics and health records. Building predictive models to advance personalized pediatric cancer care, survivorship, and safer, more effective treatments.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Tissue engineering.



SHARAD SHARAN

Assistant Professor,
Mechanical & Aerospace
Engineering

PhD, Aerospace Engineering, Pennsylvania State University

MS, Aerospace Engineering, Pennsylvania State University

BE, Aeronautical Engineering, Anna University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Orbital mechanics, spacecraft trajectory design, and multi-body gravitational dynamics, integrating optimal control and differential games for autonomous guidance, navigation, and control. Also explores space situational awareness and space systems for next-generation Earth-orbiting and cislunar missions.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Astronautics, system dynamics and control, advanced orbital mechanics, and space mission design. Emphasizes integrating theoretical foundations with practical applications through problem-solving, simulation, and industry-standard software to prepare students for academia and industry careers.



SOPHIE STEPHENSON

Assistant Professor,
Computer Science &
Engineering

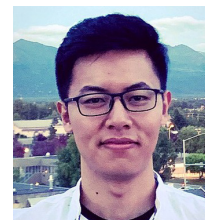
PhD, Computer Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison

MS, Computer Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison

BA, Mathematics, Vassar College

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Interpersonal security and privacy, focusing on combating technology-facilitated abuse, hate, and harassment while supporting digital safety within relationships. Uses a context-sensitive, interdisciplinary approach with qualitative methods and community-engaged design.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Courses broadly within human-computer interaction and security and privacy. Also interested in teaching a course on ethics.



ZHEN WANG

Assistant Professor,
Computer Science &
Engineering

PhD, Computer Science & Engineering, Ohio State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Algorithmic foundations of open-ended machine reasoning for discovery, unified through the LAW (Language, Agents, World Models) framework. Stress-tests methods on frontier scientific problems—cancer genomics, single-cell biology, materials science—treating reliability, interpretability, and verifiability as core principles.

TEACHING INTERESTS: AI/machine learning, NLP, data mining, LLMs, AI agents, information retrieval.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

ELIZABETH T. NEWMAN, DEAN



LAURA BRAY

Assistant Professor,
Sociology & Anthropology

PhD, Sociology, North Carolina State University
MS, Sociology, North Carolina State University
BA, Sociology, Austin College
BA, Political Science, Austin College

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Environmental justice and climate resilience/adaptation in rural and Indigenous communities, using qualitative and community-engaged methods. Current projects examine Muskogee Indigenous knowledge of climate-sensitive species and water insecurity in Southwest tribal communities.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Environmental justice, climate change and adaptation, and social science theory and methods.



**SAMANTHA
CHAPA**

Assistant Professor,
Political Science

PhD, Political Science, University of Houston
MA, Political Science, University of Houston
BA, English, Rice University
BA, History, Rice University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How policy affects the political behavior of minoritized and marginalized communities. Focuses specifically on local inclusion policies—such as sanctuary policies and municipal IDs—and their impacts on immigrant communities.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Public policy and data science courses, as well as courses related to political participation and civic engagement.



EMILY CHESLEY

Assistant Professor,
History & Geography

PhD, History, Princeton University
MA, History, Princeton University
MDiv, Princeton Theological Seminary
BA, Christian Ministries, Azusa Pacific University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Social and religious history of the late antique Mediterranean, women in the ancient world, and Syriac Christianity.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Ancient and medieval history, history of religions, Christianity and Islam, women's history, material culture, Roman Empire, medieval studies, Mediterranean and Middle East.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS



JULIE CHILDERS

Lecturer, Criminology &
Criminal Justice

PhD, Public Affairs, University of Central Florida
MS, Criminal Justice, University of Central Florida
BA, Liberal Studies, University of Central Florida

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Juvenile justice systems, criminal justice policy, evidence-based corrections, program evaluation, research methods, recidivism and risk assessment, data-driven criminal justice reform.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Juvenile justice systems, community corrections, criminal justice statistics.



KATIE FISHER

Lecturer, Art & Art History

PhD, Visual & Performing Arts, UT Dallas
BFA, Graphic Design, Concordia University Nebraska

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Environmental humanities, information design, and critical data practice, examining slow violence against landscapes—wetland degradation, sinkholes, and erasure of surface water—through counter-cartography and data visualization. Current book project counter-maps undead wetlands in New Orleans, with related work on Mexico City's surface water.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Community-engaged, project-based learning through iterative cycles moving students between analysis and action. Develops technical skills, critical thinking, and deep engagement with the historical and cultural significance of students' work.



RACHEL RAIMIST

Professor, Art & Art History

PhD, Women & Gender Studies, University of Minnesota–Minneapolis
MFA, Directing, University of California–Los Angeles
MA, American Studies, University of Minnesota–Minneapolis
BA, Film & Television, University of California–Los Angeles

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Creative practice-based research in television directing, centering narratives on complex women, family dynamics, and adolescence across genres spanning drama, comedy, and fantasy. Also engaged in advocacy-driven research on equity and representation in the entertainment industry, including diversity initiatives within the Directors Guild of America.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Filmmaking, television directing, Hollywood industry, independent cinema, narrative and documentary storytelling, digital storytelling, film industry careers, films and film festivals.



LANIE RICHARDS

Assistant Professor of
Instruction, Political Science

PhD, Political Science, University of North Texas
MA, Political Science, University of North Texas
BA, Political Science & Psychology, University of
Arkansas

RESEARCH INTERESTS: American politics, political
institutions, Congress, representation.

TEACHING INTERESTS: American national
government, Congress, women in politics.



LAUREN SANTORO

Assistant Professor,
Political Science

PhD, Political Science, Ohio State University
MA, Political Science, Ohio State University
BA, Government, UT Austin

RESEARCH INTERESTS: American political
behavior, focusing on the social and psychological roots
of political decision-making and how social networks,
place, and information environments shape political
views. Central finding: People often “choose to be
changed” by selecting into social environments that
shape their politics, even when not consciously thinking
about politics.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Misinformation, political
psychology, social network analysis, and state and local
government.



OLIVIA SHAW

Assistant Professor,
Criminology & Criminal
Justice

PhD, Criminology & Criminal Justice, Arizona State
University
MS, Criminal Justice, University of North Carolina–
Charlotte
BA, Sociology, California State Polytechnic
University–Pomona

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Incarceration and reentry,
focusing on rehabilitation and punishment within the
criminal legal system. Examines how these processes
shape and are shaped by gender and racial disparities,
centering the lived experiences of justice-involved
populations and structural inequalities in justice
outcomes.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Criminology and criminal
justice, with emphasis on corrections, reentry, and
lived experiences of justice-involved populations. Also
covers race, gender, and inequality in the criminal legal
system, mental health and crime, and research methods,
emphasizing active learning and application of theory to
policy-relevant questions.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS



HANNAH WELLER

Assistant Professor, Music

DMA, Wind Conducting, University of North Texas
MM, University of North Texas
BS, Music Education, Messiah University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Conducting pedagogy, Carl Orff, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, dance, and commissioning new band works.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Wind band ensembles, conducting, music research.



ANNE WINGERT

Assistant Professor,
Criminology & Criminal
Justice

PhD, Criminal Justice, Sam Houston State University
MA, Criminal Justice & Criminology, Sam Houston
State University
BS, Psychology, Texas A&M University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Life course criminology, the relationship between early life trauma and offending, and connections between victimization and substance use. Uses quantitative and longitudinal methodologies to advance scholarship in these areas.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Helping students gain empirically based knowledge about crime-related topics through critical thinking. Teaching philosophy centers on three pillars: knowledge retention, critical thinking, and mentorship, preparing students for academic or practitioner careers.

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION

JAMES P. GROVER, INTERIM DEAN



**CRYSTAL
ALVAREZ**

Clinical Assistant Professor,
Kinesiology

PhD, Kinesiology, UT Arlington
MS, Kinesiology, UT Arlington
BS, Kinesiology, New Mexico State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Motor development and postural control in neurodivergent children and adolescents, with a focus on autism spectrum disorder, developmental coordination disorder, and co-occurring conditions. Work spans improving assessment methods, developing evidence-based interventions, and translating research into clinical, educational, and community settings to support lifelong participation and quality of life.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Motor behavior (development, learning, and control), adapted physical activity, and exercise prescription for special populations, alongside biomechanics and pediatric exercise science.



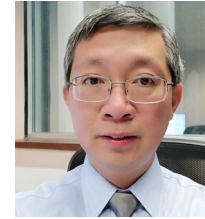
KET HARRIS

Clinical Assistant Professor,
Graduate Nursing

DNP, UT Arlington
MSN, Grambling State University
BSN, Grambling State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Bridging academia and clinical practice to strengthen the nurse practitioner role. Advocates for full practice authority and supports new graduates through mentorship, residency opportunities, and enhanced clinical preparation.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Preparing competent, confident, and compassionate nurse practitioners equipped for diverse populations' evolving healthcare needs. Focus on bridging academic preparation and clinical practice through evidence-based teaching strategies, simulation, and case-based learning.



JIANHUA WU

Department Chair &
Professor, Kinesiology

PhD, Biological Systems Engineering, University of California–Davis

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Biomechanics of human movement, effect of early intervention on the development of children with disabilities.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

MORTEZA G. KHALEDI, DEAN



JINGBIAO CUI

Department Chair &
Professor, Physics

PhD, Physics, University of Science & Technology of China

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Semiconductors, nanomaterials, photonics, optoelectronic properties, and applications in photovoltaics, LEDs, memory, and detectors.



SHASHANK GANDHI

Assistant Professor, Biology

PhD, Developmental Biology, California Institute of Technology
MS, Systems Biology & Bioinformatics, New York University
BE, Biotechnology, Panjab University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How functional organs form during early development, focusing on gene regulatory programs guiding neural crest cell contributions to the cardiovascular and gastrointestinal systems. Combines developmental biology, genomics, stem cell models, and microscopy to understand organ formation and inform prevention or treatment of congenital disorders.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Developmental biology, stem cell biology.



RUI HE

Professor, Physics

PhD, Applied Physics, Columbia University
MPH, Applied Physics, Columbia University
MS, Applied Physics, Columbia University
BS, Light Sources & Illuminating Engineering, Fudan University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Optical spectroscopy of quantum materials, with a focus on two-dimensional materials and magnets for nanodevice applications.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Undergraduate- and graduate-level physics major courses and general physics courses for non-physics majors.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE



SHAWAL KHALID

Assistant Professor of
Instruction, Mathematics-
Data Science

PhD, Computer Science, Virginia Tech
MS, Computer Science, Virginia Tech
BS, Computer Science, Comsats Abbottabad

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Data science, AI, machine learning, and software engineering, with particular focus on cybersecurity, blockchain, and smart contract security. Especially interested in responsible and trustworthy AI, AI-assisted software development, multi-agent systems, and data-driven approaches to improving software reliability and security.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Data science, AI and machine learning, software engineering, cybersecurity, programming, data structures and algorithms, and computing ethics. Uses project-based learning, real-world datasets, and hands-on activities to connect theory with practical application.



ZONGRUI PEI

Assistant Professor, Physics

PhD, Computational Materials Science, Max-Planck-Institut für Eisenforschung GmbH
MS, Material Science, RWTH Aachen University
BS, Materials Physics, University of Science & Technology Beijing

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Developing physics-based methods and AI-for-science models, combined with high-performance computing, to investigate materials properties. Expertise spans computational materials science, high-performance computing, classical/quantum machine learning, and mathematical physics.



ELENA PERRY

Assistant Professor, Biology

PhD, Biology, California Institute of Technology
BS, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Yale University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How plant microbiomes assemble and function, integrating microbial physiology, ecology, natural product chemistry, and functional genomics. Explores bacterial colonization, interspecies nutrient exchange, and natural antibiotics' role in microbiome dynamics and antibiotic resistance, aiming toward rational microbiome engineering for agriculture and health.

TEACHING INTERESTS: General microbiology, microbial genetics, microbial ecology and evolution, and how microbiomes affect agriculture, human health and the environment.



YOSEOP YOON

Assistant Professor, Biology

PhD, Integrative Biology, University of Chicago
BS, Systems Biology, Yonsei University
BA, Political Science, Yonsei University
BA, English Language & Literature, Yonsei University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How the spatial organization of the cell nucleus controls RNA processing and how this regulation is disrupted in cancer. Integrates RNA biology, biomolecular condensates, and 3D-genome organization to understand how tumor cells rewire RNA processing through altered nuclear architecture.

TEACHING INTERESTS: RNA biology, gene expression.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

GOUTHAM MENON, INTERIM DEAN



TYLER ARGUELLO

Associate Professor,
Social Work

PhD, Social Welfare, University of Washington
MSW, Health & Mental Health, University of Washington

BSW, Social Welfare, University of Washington
BA, Spanish Language & Literature, University of Washington

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Communication practices and their role in shaping identities and mental/health disparities, with focus on HIV-informed and Queer-affirmative prevention and care.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Preparing social work graduates as scholar-practitioner-leaders equipped to serve marginalized communities and reduce health disparities. Focus on trauma-informed, Queer-affirmative, justice-oriented models of care and developing curriculum affirmative to marginalized communities.



MARCUS BROWN

Assistant Professor,
Social Work

PhD, Social Work, University of Houston
MSW, Washington University in St. Louis
BSW, Southern Illinois University–Carbondale

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Qualitative research, serious mental illness (SMI), black adults with SMI, formal and informal mental health service use, social support networks, mental health recovery and wellness, help-seeking intentions and behaviors.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Assessment and diagnosis, introduction to social work, human behavior and the social environment, social work generalist practice and clinical courses, research methods, qualitative research.



MAIMA FANT

Assistant Professor of
Practice, Social Work

DSW, University of St. Thomas
MSW, University of Wisconsin–Madison
BS, Social Welfare, African American Studies,
University of Wisconsin—Madison

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Perinatal mental health, racial equity, and culturally responsive clinical practice, with a focus on diagnosis and treatment of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders among Black and African American women. Also explores trauma-informed care, neurodivergent motherhood, and modalities including EMDR, IFS, and Somatic work.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Clinical social work practice, emphasizing culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches across the lifespan. Committed to Universal Design for Learning as a framework for accessible pedagogy, integrating real-world clinical experience to bridge theory and practice.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



CRAIG KEATON

Assistant Professor of
Practice, Social Work

PhD, Social Work, UT Arlington
MSW, UT Arlington
BS, University Studies, UT Arlington

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Holistic health practices for better mental health, holistic, health and the health mental-health relationship, physical health and natural and nature-based therapies, student-centered and student-ready teaching and mentorship, psychological well-being for personal development and professional success.



**KRISHNA
KIRAN KOTA**

Assistant Professor of
Research, Social Work

PhD, Public Health, Georgia State University
MS, Biotechnology, Georgetown University
BTech, Biotechnology, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad

RESEARCH INTERESTS: HIV-related outcomes, social determinants of health, health disparity metrics, health services research.



MANSI PATEL

Assistant Professor of
Practice, Social Work

PhD, Social Work, UT Arlington
MSW, UT Arlington
MBA, Healthcare Administration, Benedictine University
BA, Psychology, Pittsburg State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Intersection of criminal justice, behavioral health, and structural inequities among justice-involved populations, examining reentry, access to care, and recidivism reduction. Uses qualitative methods (IPA, meta-synthesis) and mixed-methods approaches in translational, community-engaged work to inform equity-focused policy and practice.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Preparing practice-ready social workers through applied, skills-based learning across mental health, social policy, program evaluation, and criminal justice.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



SHAHNAZ SAVANI

Assistant Professor,
Social Work

PhD, Social Work, University of Houston
MSW, University of Houston
MA, Education, University of London
BA, Ancient Indian Culture, University of Bombay

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Suicide prevention and intervention in low-income contexts, closing the mental health treatment gap.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Suicide assessment and intervention, research methods, global mental health, study abroad in social work.



CHARLES WILLIAMS II

Assistant Professor,
Social Work

PhD, Sociology & Social Work, University of Michigan
MSW, Community & Social Systems, University of Michigan
BA, Political Science, Eastern Michigan University
BA, African American Studies, Eastern Michigan University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: How community institutions, particularly Black churches, promote health equity and address structural disparities, using community-based participatory research and mixed methods to develop culturally grounded interventions. Explores Black health equity, community leadership, mental health, and the role of faith-based organizations in advancing social determinants of health.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Macro social work education emphasizing community practice, organizational leadership, research methods, program evaluation, and health and social policy.



BETHANY WOOD

Assistant Professor,
Social Work

PhD, Social Work, UT Austin
MSW, Brigham Young University
BS, Sociology, Brigham Young University

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Neighborhood and built environment, low-income neighborhoods, social determinants of youth mental health, poverty and mental health, community mental health services, advanced statistical methodologies.

TEACHING INTERESTS: Community practice, social policy, behavioral health, research methods, quantitative methods, social determinants of health, advanced statistics.

WE ALSO WELCOME...

ALI AHMED

Assistant Professor of Instruction, Information Systems & Operations Management

CHAOFAN CHEN

Assistant Professor, Computer Science & Engineering

DULCE FREITAS

Visiting Assistant Professor, Teacher & Administrator Preparation

SUYASH GUPTA

Assistant Professor, Computer Science & Engineering

ERNESTO HERNANDEZ HINOJOSA

Assistant Professor, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering

RASHMI KUMAR

Assistant Professor, Chemistry & Biochemistry

MOHAMED MALKI

Assistant Professor, Electrical Engineering

SPENCER SANDBERG

Assistant Professor, Social Work

SIDDHARTHA KUMAR SHAKYA

Associate Professor of Instruction, Mathematics-Data Science

ZACHARY SHAW

Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering

GARRETT SHOST

Assistant Professor, Economics



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