Great universities have great professors who combine passion for their discipline with a focused determination to do important work. These new members of our faculty embody the transformative goals of the campus. They were specifically selected for their ability to teach and inspire today’s students, focus their scholarship on issues of contemporary global significance, and engage with Nebraska’s citizens on our state’s most pressing needs. We hope that each of them enjoys a long and satisfying career at Nebraska.

The entire campus community shares responsibility for the success of our newest colleagues. We ask each of you to join us in pledging your support and encouragement to this exceptional group of faculty.

Donde Plowman  
Executive Vice Chancellor and  
Chief Academic Officer

Mike Boehm  
Vice Chancellor of the  
Institute of Agriculture and  
Natural Resources
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Ellen Donnelly  
**Architecture**  
**Degrees:** B.A., New York University, 2000; M.Arch., University of Michigan, 2008; M.Sc., University of Michigan, 2009.  
**Professional Interests:** My research and design interests lie at the intersection of the politics of property ownership and institutional authority relative to our increasingly transient and mobile culture. Through design interventions addressing material histories, construction assemblies and fabrication techniques, I reconsider our preconceived notions about architecture’s stability and permanence, and propose alternatives through speculative design. My exhibition experience and archival work inform my working methodologies, while my personal experiences of cross-country roadtrips, transatlantic ocean cruises and 500-mile pilgrimages inspire new avenues for research.  
**Hometown:** Atlantic Beach, New York

David Newton  
**Architecture**  
**Degrees:** B.S.D., Arizona State University, 2001; M.Arch, Rice University, 2006; M.Sc., McGill University, 2017.  
**Professional Interests:** My research agenda explores the application of artificial intelligence and machine-learning frameworks to the field of architecture. Specific research areas include the research and development of next generation computer-aided design tools, design interfaces, fabrication processes, and intelligent environments. The central goal of the research is to contribute knowledge and develop technologies that will make for a more environmentally and socially sustainable built environment, while pushing the boundaries of architectural research beyond its current disciplinary boundaries and paradigms.  
**Hometown:** Tempe, Arizona

Miyoug Hong  
**Interior Design**  
**Degrees:** B.S., Oklahoma State University, 2004; M.S., Oklahoma State University, 2006; Ph.D., Arizona State University, 2015.  
**Professional Interests:** I engage in creative, interdisciplinary projects and research in partnership with market leaders committing to evidence-based design. Interdisciplinary aspects embracing design pedagogy, student development, sustainability, and healthcare design define my scholarly work. My research focuses on the impact of the designed environment on human and organizational health, with focus on perception. I have practiced professionally in Asia and the United States with focus on hospitality, corporate, and healthcare design.  
**Hometown:** Seoul, South Korea

Matt Cohen  
**English**  
**Degrees:** B.A., Oberlin College, 1988; M.A., College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1995; M.A., College of William and Mary in Virginia, 2002.
**2017–2018 New Faculty**

**Professional Interests:** I teach American and Native American Literature. But I’m more broadly interested in questions of methodology in the humanities: how do we decide what counts as evidence, and how do we link evidence to argument? That’s led me to an interest in the history of media and communications, as well as to work in the computational humanities.

**Hometown:** Murray, Kentucky

---

**Robin Gauthier**

Sociology

**Degrees:** B.A., McGill University, 2008; M.A., Duke University, 2010; Ph.D., Duke University, 2014.

**Professional Interests:** I use concepts, theory and methods from network analysis to examine how social roles constrain and enable action. I apply this approach to several substantive areas including: family, where I examine roles such as motherhood (what does a mother do?, are all “mothers” mothers?); domestic violence (what kinds of relationships enable women to seek help); and most recently, gender and STEM (are friendships between youth with the same science career aspirations more likely than between those with differing aspirations, and if so, does this inhibit girls aspirations?).

**Hometown:** Canoe Cove, PEI, Canada

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**Phil Geib**

Anthropology

**Degrees:** B.A., Ohio Wesleyan University, 1978; M.A., Northern Arizona University, 1985; Ph.D., University of New Mexico, 2016.

**Professional Interests:** I teach American and Native American Literature. But I’m more broadly interested in questions of methodology in the humanities: how do we decide what counts as evidence, and how do we link evidence to argument? That’s led me to an interest in the history of media and communications, as well as to work in the computational humanities.

**Hometown:** Rapid City, South Dakota

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**Frank Golf**

Physics and Astronomy

**Degrees:** B.S., University of Notre Dame, 2003; M.S., University of California, San Diego, 2007; Ph.D., University of California, San Diego, 2011.

**Professional Interests:** I am an experimental particle physicist and a member of the CMS collaboration which operates one of several large detectors at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN. My group analyzes data obtained from high energy proton-proton collisions to study the standard model of particle physics, including measuring properties of the Higgs boson that was discovered in 2012, and to investigate possible explanations of dark matter. My group also builds detectors for future collider experiments.

**Hometown:** Lockport, Illinois

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**Anna Hiatt**

Biological Sciences

**Degrees:** B.S., Presbyterian College, 2007; Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, 2013.

**Professional Interests:** I am a biology education researcher focused on developing tools and resources that help instructors implement practice-based...
approaches to teaching and learning across the undergraduate biology education continuum. This includes faculty development, assessment development, and nationwide collaboration with university, community college, and AP Biology instructors.

**Hometown:** Lugoff, South Carolina

**Kristen Hoerl**  
Communication Studies  
**Degrees:** B.A., Penn State University, 1997; M.A., University of Texas at Austin, 2000; Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 2005.  
**Professional Interests:** With an emphasis in rhetoric and critical media studies, my research looks at how popular media have addressed contemporary public controversies over a variety of social issues including racial justice, women’s rights, and political violence. That is, I note how portrayals in film and television provide and delimit resources for civic engagement. For example, my recently completed book analyzes fictionalized portrayals of late Sixties protest movements in film and television. I argue that many depictions of Sixties-era dissent are forms of public memory that have affirmed political discourse that has vilified left-of-center dissent and dismissed critics of late-capitalist democracy.

**Hometown:** Denver, Colorado

**Kathryn Holland**  
Psychology; Women’s and Gender Studies  
**Degrees:** B.A., University of Illinois at Chicago, 2008; M.S., University of Michigan, 2012; Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2017.  
**Professional Interests:** I am an interdisciplinary scholar in Psychology and Women’s and Gender Studies. I investigate how peoples—and especially women’s—health and wellbeing are influenced by their social environments and relationships. I am primarily interested in wellbeing in relation to sexual violence and sexual health. For instance, I study the implementation, use, and effectiveness of formal support systems for sexual assault survivors. I also study how social norms around gender and sexuality affect women’s sexual health. An overarching goal is to use my research to promote social justice and change—for example, advocating empirically informed policies and promoting healthy interpersonal relationships.

**Hometown:** Woodridge, Illinois

**Peisi Huang**  
Physics and Astronomy  
**Degrees:** B.E., Tsinghua University, 2008; Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2013.  
**Professional Interests:** I work in theoretical particle physics. The basic idea is to understand the fundamental particles and their interactions. The most powerful tool to understand that is the large hadron collider at CERN in Geneva. My work is to calculate how the particles would behave, build models to explain what we have observed, and predict where the new physics may show up. I am also interested in the connection with cosmology, such as the nature of dark matter, and matter anti-matter asymmetry.

**Hometown:** Fuxin, Liaoning, China
Casey Kelly
Communication Studies
**Degrees:** B.A., Gonzaga University, 2001; M.A., Wake Forest University, 2003; Ph.D., University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, 2009.

**Professional Interests:** As a rhetorical critic and critical media studies scholar, my research explores how culture wars over race, nationality, and sexuality migrate between political discourse and popular entertainment media. My work on gender and masculinity explores the influence of conservative culture on rhetorics and representations of sexual identity, while my research in postcolonial criticism examines indigenous rights movements and discourses of contemporary imperialism. My books include *Abstinence Cinema: Virginity and the Rhetoric of Sexual Purity in Contemporary Film* (Rutgers University Press), *Food Television and Other in an Age of Globalization* (Lexington Books) and *Decolonizing Native American Rhetoric: Communicating Self-Determination* (Peter Lang).

**Hometown:** Coeur D’Alene, Idaho

Dawn Kopacz
Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2006; M.S., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2009; Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2015.

**Professional Interests:** I have investigated paths to climate model improvement by using observations and global climate models in order to improve our understanding of the physical mechanisms driving abrupt climate change, particularly in the Arctic region. I am also part of a working group of atmospheric science educators and education researchers working to create an atmospheric science community that will be used to promote the study of questions relating to atmospheric science education as well as the application of peer-reviewed teaching practices within the atmospheric science community.

**Hometown:** Plainview, Texas

Kathleen Lyons
Biological Sciences
**Degrees:** B.S., Wayland Baptist University, 1991; M.S., Texas Tech University, 1994; M.S., University of Chicago, 1997; Ph.D., University of Chicago, 2001.

**Professional Interests:** I am interested in the factors affecting and controlling species diversity at multiple scales across both space and time. Moreover, I am particularly interested in the effects of global climate change on species diversity and use the fossil record of mammals to evaluate how current changes in global climate may affect diversity patterns in the future. Because it provides a useful way to compare modern species and communities to fossil species and communities, I focus on the similarities and differences in macroecological patterns across space and time.

**Hometown:** Port Washington, Wisconsin
José Ángel Maldonado  
Communication Studies  
**Degrees:** B.A., University of Texas at El Paso, 2008; M.A., University of Texas at El Paso, 2011; Ph.D., University of Utah, 2017.  
**Professional Interests:** I approach critical and cultural studies using communication and rhetorical theory. I am interested in rhetorics of contemporary violence in Latin America.  
**Hometown:** Cuauhtmoc, Chihuahua, Mexico

Robert Schub  
Political Science  
**Degrees:** A.B., Brown University, 2006; A.M., Harvard University, 2012; Ph.D., Harvard University, 2016.  
**Professional Interests:** My research is on international politics, especially international security and American foreign policy. I focus on leaders and their senior advisers, examining how uncertainty affects their decisions about war and peace. To address these topics, I employ a variety of tools including game theory, statistics, automated text analysis, survey experiments, and archival research.  
**Hometown:** Morristown, New Jersey

Ashley Votruba  
Psychology  
**Degrees:** B.S., Arizona State University, 2009; M.A., Arizona State University, 2013; Ph.D., Arizona State University, 2017; J.D., Arizona State University, 2017.  
**Professional Interests:** My scholarship leverages social psychological theory and empirical research methodology to help inform legal scholars and policymakers understanding of how human psychology affects policy and legal judgment and decision-making. More specifically, I examine how cognitive biases and heuristics influence policy and legal decision-making in the areas of torts, criminal law, and family law. Currently, I am exploring how cultural influences on cognition such as attributional tendencies and environmental influences such as resource availability affect perceptions of legal responsibility and punishment objectives in torts and criminal law.  
**Hometown:** Tempe, Arizona

Peter Wagner  
Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; Biological Sciences  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1986; M.S., Michigan State University, 1990; Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1995.  
**Professional Interests:** I focus on both phylogenetic methods and sampling theory, in order to construct phylogeny-based tests of macroevolutionary hypotheses using fossil data either about or accounting for the complexities of anatomical evolution and the inconsistent nature of fossil sampling rates over time and across geography. To date, I have applied these approaches largely to early Paleozoic molluscs (particularly gastropods), but in recent years I have engaged in studies of numerous other taxonomic groups.  
**Hometown:** Chicago, Illinois
Wesley Boyce
Supply Chain Management and Analytics
Degrees: B.S., Missouri State University, 2007; M.B.A., Missouri State University, 2008; Ph.D., University of Missouri–St. Louis, 2014.
Professional Interests: I teach courses related to supply chain management, quantitative analysis, and operations management. My research interests include a broad array of topics related to supply chain management and transportation, with specific interest to date focused on supply chain relationships and external costs of logistics.
Hometown: Springfield, Missouri

Nikolaos Dimotakis
Management
Degrees: B.A., University of Macedonia, 2003; M.B.A., Michigan State University, 2005; Ph.D., Michigan State University, 2011.
Professional Interests: I am interested in affective and motivational processes at work. I want to understand how employees experience their work, and how these experiences influence the way they feel, behave, and interact with others around them.
Hometown: Chania, Crete, Greece

Tawnya Means
Management
Degrees: B.S.Ed, University of Missouri, 1998; M.S.Ed, University of Missouri, 2003; Ph.D., University of Missouri, 2009.
Professional Interests: My research interests are in online and blended teaching and learning, active learning, learning space design, technology for teaching, access to digital learning resources, and faculty preparation to teach. I have taught courses in computing and telecommunications, a doctoral seminar on teaching in the business school, and have co-taught courses in entrepreneurship and strategy and decision-making.
Hometown: Columbia, Missouri

Shane Moser
Finance
Degrees: B.B.A., University of Kansas, 1996; B.A., University of Kansas, 1997; M.A., Oregon State University, 2005; Ph.D., University of Kansas, 2010.
Professional Interests: I have taught a multitude of finance courses, including investments, corporate finance, financial management, applied regression analysis, and entrepreneurial finance. My research interests include venture capital and corporate bonds; I received a Kauffman Dissertation Fellowship in 2007 and have published articles in the Journal of Financial Research and The Financial Review. Prior to joining Nebraska in 2017, I served as an assistant
professor of finance at The University of Mississippi and an assistant professor of finance at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont, where I helped launch a student investment fund.

Hometown: Olathe, Kansas

Laura Poppo
Management

Professional Interests: I work in an applied area, corporate strategy, which draws from economics, law, psychology, and institutional economics to examine phenomenon, such as outsourcing, alliances, vertical integration, contracting, and trust, including the context of doing business in China. The goal of this work is to translate strategy into a set of decision frameworks and logics that makes hard decisions easier. I enjoy working at the interface of theory and practice, and use interviews, surveys, and experiments as a basis for this research.

Hometown: Longmeadow, Massachusetts

Blake Runnalls
Marketing
Degrees: B.A., Marist College, 2003; MBA, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2009; M.A., University of South Florida, 2011; Ph.D., Michigan State University, 2017.

Professional Interests: My research interests include topics related to personal selling and sales management, the customer-firm interface, and organizational learning and knowledge management. Currently I am working on a variety of topics related to sales training. More specifically, my work focuses on measuring the impact that blended learning and social networks have on the effectiveness of various sales training programs.

Hometown: Otisville, New York

S. Sajeesh
Marketing

Professional Interests: My research focuses on understanding firms strategic choices using quantitative models under two broad contexts: (1) influence of consumer behavior characteristics on optimal firm strategies (e.g. positioning and pricing strategies), and (2) influence of market and firm characteristics on firms marketing strategies as well as its implications for social welfare and public policy. My work lies at the intersection of economics, math and marketing.

Hometown: Palakkad, Kerala, India

Sunil Singh
Marketing
Degrees: B.Tech., Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, 2001; MBA, Xavier Labor Relations Institute, 2005; Ph.D., University of Missouri, 2017.

Professional Interests: I focus on how to effectively implement marketing strategy (sales management, services marketing) at the firm-customer interface. Specifically,
I study both—frontline employees (salespeople, customer service employees) behaviors during customer-firm interactions as well as firms actions targeted towards managing customer interactions. To address my research interest methodologically, I pair tools and techniques conducive for text-analysis and econometric methods such as panel models. Further, I use grounded approach to address new problems in the domain of firm-customer interface.

**Hometown:** Elk Grove, California

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**Todd Thornock**  
Accountancy  
**Degrees:** B.S., Brigham Young University, 2002; M.S., University of Texas at Austin, 2009; M.Acc., Brigham Young University, 2002; Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 2011.  
**Professional Interests:** I am an accountant by training and a management accountant at heart. Understanding how and why individuals respond to and make decisions based on information available within an organization drives my curiosity. In essence, I research human behavior within organizations, particularly how individuals (with their unique personalities) respond to management control systems such as compensation systems, performance feedback, and monitoring.

**Hometown:** Hoshiarpur, Punjab, India

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**Jia Yu**  
Management  
**Degrees:** B.A., University of Nottingham, 2010; M.Sc., London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011; Ph.D., University of Iowa, 2017.  
**Professional Interests:** My research focus is on the intersection of teams, social networks/capital, and leadership. One major theme of my research is using social network technique to study different configurations that promote overall team effectiveness. The second stream of my research focuses on exploring how social capital is developed and utilized. I also have a strong interest in research methods, such as meta-analytical structural equation modeling (MASEM),

**Hometown:** Samsun, Turkey

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**Erkut Sonmez**  
Supply Chain Management and Analytics  
**Degrees:** B.S., Middle East Technical University, 2004; M.S., Carnegie Mellon University, 2007; Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon University, 2009.  
**Professional Interests:** I study capacity management problems that arise with the development of new business models and/or technologies, with specific applications in industries including food and energy supply chains and service/banking operations. I use models and theoretical tools such as queueing theory, simulation, and stochastic optimization to examine the decision-making by individuals and organizations in problems motivated by various industry practices. The findings of his research have revealed many industry-specific counter-intuitive managerial insights that aid in decision-support at the strategic and tactical levels.

**Hometown:** Samsun, Turkey
Shengchao Zhuang
Finance
Degrees: B.Sc., Nanjing University, 2010; Ph.D., Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2014.
Professional Interests: I work in the area of insurance and mathematical finance. The basic idea is to use mathematical models to illustrate the insurance or finance observation or to design some products for the companies.
Hometown: Jin Tan, Jiangsu, China

Matthew Gormley
Educational Psychology
Degrees: B.A., State University of New York College at Geneseo, 2008; M.Ed., Lehigh University, 2011; Ph.D., Lehigh University, 2016.
Professional Interests: My goal is to develop and evaluate individual interventions, intervention packages, and service delivery models to provide individualized and continuous treatment for individuals at-risk for and diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Specifically, I aim to develop supports for students across both major and minor transitions within, to, and from academic settings, through the engagement of multiple stakeholders (i.e., child, parents, teachers, medical professionals, friends, significant others), focusing on individuals from underserved populations (e.g., rural communities). My long-term goal is to develop a comprehensive evidence-based service delivery system grounded in the chronic care model to enhance outcomes for individuals with ADHD.
Hometown: Buffalo, New York

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Marc Brennan
Special Education and Communication Disorders
Degrees: B.S., University of Wisconsin, 1999; M.A., University of Wisconsin, 2001; Ph.D., University of Washington, 2011.
Professional Interests: I work on improving our understanding of auditory perception, with the goal of using this information to improve the speech and language outcomes of children and adults with hearing loss. To do this, I measure the ability of human listeners to hear out sounds and then investigate methods to improve the encoding of this information with rehabilitative devices.
Hometown: Neenah, Wisconsin

Carrie Hanson-Bradley
Child Youth and Family Studies
Degrees: B.A., Brigham Young University, 2004; M.S., University of Kentucky, 2007; Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 2015.
Professional Interests: I am a social scientist and a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. My work focuses on the impact physical and mental health issues have on children, adults, families, and communities. I am particularly interested in clinical...
2017–2018 New Faculty

Professionals that treat children with autism.
Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Nick Pace
Educational Administration
Degrees: B.A., University of Northern Iowa, 1992; M.S.E., Drake University, 1997; Ed.D., University of Northern Iowa, 2005.
Professional Interests: Most of my work in higher education has been focused on the principalship and preparing PK-12 principals. I’ve researched and written about the school experiences of gay and lesbian students, as well as the use of role plays and case studies in preparing school leaders. My most recent project was a fictional account of a high school principals first year on the job. Going forward, I’d like to examine the impact it may have, if any, on the ways principals understand and apply school leadership standards.
Hometown: Cedar Falls, Iowa

Mona Bavarian
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Degrees: B.S., Sharif University of Technology, 2006; Ph.D., Drexel University of Technology, 2006;
Professional Interests: My research interest lies in the area of process systems engineering, process and product design, and model-based control and optimization. I develop mathematical models in the domain of chemical and electrochemical processes, particularly for polymerization reactions and energy storage systems. I apply both computational and experimental methods to understand the underlying phenomena and their impact on the dynamics of processes. Smart manufacturing for the microelectronics materials and continuous flow chemistry are

Johanna Taylor
Special Education and Communication Disorders
Professional Interests: I work in the area of early childhood special education and early intervention (children ages 0-5 with disabilities). My research and professional interest lies in the areas of autism, behavior analysis, and supporting parents/

Matthew Barrows
Architectural Engineering and Construction
Degrees: B.S.C.E., University of Missouri-Rolla, 1999; M.S.Eng., University of Colorado-Denver, 2017.
Professional Interests: I was in the construction industry for 16 years and have a passion for teaching. I have accepted a professor of practice position and I am currently working on expanding my higher education teaching skills.
Hometown: Independence, Missouri

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
among the subjects that I have been working on for the past couple of years.  
**Hometown:** Tehran, Iran

**Brandon Kreiling**  
Architectural Engineering and Construction  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2000.  
**Professional Interests:** My professional career has revolved around structural concrete. I have spent the last 10 years working with drilled pier foundations. I am interested in working with the advancement of concrete mix designs and admixture development. As a professor of practice, I have an interest in the practical application of these improvements to actual field use.  
**Hometown:** Gering, Nebraska

**Jae Sung Park**  
Mechanical & Materials Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.S., Hanyang University, 2006; M.S., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2008; Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012.  
**Professional Interests:** I work in a wide range of fluid mechanics, from complex fluids, colloidal suspensions, electrokinetics, to turbulent flows. Most of my research centers around techniques for energy-saving engineering and nanotechnology using computational fluid dynamics. I have been developing advanced computational algorithms and mathematical models to investigate various problems in fluid mechanics.  
**Hometown:** Wonju, South Korea

**Ryan Pedrigi**  
Mechanical & Materials Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.S., Kansas State University, 2003; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 2008.  
**Professional Interests:** I work in mechanobiology. My research employs experimental and computational methods to quantify how disturbances to the tissue mechanical environment promote pathological cellular behaviors. The goal is to translate an understanding of mechanobiological mechanisms of disease to develop mechano-therapies, identify new pharmaceutical targets, create prognostic indicators of disease progression, and improve the design of implantable medical devices. The primary applications of my work are in cardiovascular medicine and ophthalmology.  
**Hometown:** Olathe, Kansas

**Vish Reddi**  
Architectural Engineering and Construction  
**Degrees:** B.E., University of Madras, 2004; M.S., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002.  
**Professional Interests:** I work at the crossroads where construction and engineering meet operational excellence. The basic idea is to improve an existing facility/process and drive it toward excellence. I have applied my skill set to assist various brands such as Kellogg’s, Medtronic, Target, Excedrin, Theraflu, Smithfield and Nestle Purina to achieve excellence in their operations. My passion lies in solving some of the challenges we
Jena Shafai Asgarpoor
Architectural Engineering and Construction
Degrees: B.A., Texas A&M University, 1980; M.S., Texas A&M University, 1982; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 1989.
Professional Interests: I have extensive experience in online course and program development and teaching. In fact, 21 years ago, I developed and taught the first course in the first fully-online MBA program in the nation. I bring that experience and my engineering management and industrial engineering education with me to Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction and the College of Engineering to serve as the director and associate professor of practice in the Master of Engineering Management Program. My interests lie in quality control and management, and I am the education chair for the American Society for Quality (ASQ) Nebraska Section.
Hometown: Lincoln, Nebraska

Stephanie Valentine
Computer Science and Engineering
Degrees: B.A., Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, 2011; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 2016.
Professional Interests: I work in the intersection of human-computer interaction, social network analysis, machine learning, and K-12/higher education. I am particularly interested in elective technologies for casually teaching children aged 7-12 years in social and connected virtual environments.
Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Christine Wittich
Civil Engineering
Degrees: B.S., Lafayette College, 2010; M.S., University of California-San Diego, 2012; Ph.D., University of California-San Diego, 2016.
Professional Interests: My research focuses on structural engineering for natural hazards. This incorporates full-scale testing of structural systems (e.g. buildings and components), numerical simulations, and remote sensing (e.g. laser scanning) to

Ali Tamayol
Mechanical & Materials Engineering
Degrees: B.Sc., Shiraz University, 2003; M.Sc., Sharif University of Technology, 2005; Ph.D., Simon Fraser University, 2011.

Professional Interests: I am interested in developing tools for solving medical challenges. My research involves design, fabrication, and characterization of microsystems and fibrous biomaterials for emerging applications such as tissue engineering and drug delivery platforms. In addition, I have developed a number of innovative platforms for treatment of chronic wounds.
Hometown: Shiraz, Iran

Jena Shafai Asgarpoor
Architectural Engineering and Construction
Degrees: B.A., Texas A&M University, 1980; M.S., Texas A&M University, 1982; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 1989.
Professional Interests: I have extensive experience in online course and program development and teaching. In fact, 21 years ago, I developed and taught the first course in the first fully-online MBA program in the nation. I bring that experience and my engineering management and industrial engineering education with me to Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction and the College of Engineering to serve as the director and associate professor of practice in the Master of Engineering Management Program. My interests lie in quality control and management, and I am the education chair for the American Society for Quality (ASQ) Nebraska Section.
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Hometown: Shiraz, Iran

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Degrees: B.A., Texas A&M University, 1980; M.S., Texas A&M University, 1982; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 1989.
Professional Interests: I have extensive experience in online course and program development and teaching. In fact, 21 years ago, I developed and taught the first course in the first fully-online MBA program in the nation. I bring that experience and my engineering management and industrial engineering education with me to Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction and the College of Engineering to serve as the director and associate professor of practice in the Master of Engineering Management Program. My interests lie in quality control and management, and I am the education chair for the American Society for Quality (ASQ) Nebraska Section.
Hometown: Lincoln, Nebraska

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Professional Interests: I work in the intersection of human-computer interaction, social network analysis, machine learning, and K-12/higher education. I am particularly interested in elective technologies for casually teaching children aged 7-12 years in social and connected virtual environments.
Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Christine Wittich
Civil Engineering
Degrees: B.S., Lafayette College, 2010; M.S., University of California-San Diego, 2012; Ph.D., University of California-San Diego, 2016.
Professional Interests: My research focuses on structural engineering for natural hazards. This incorporates full-scale testing of structural systems (e.g. buildings and components), numerical simulations, and remote sensing (e.g. laser scanning) to
enhance the resilience of civil infrastructure systems to natural hazards. Recent projects have focused on the dynamics of rocking systems, earthquake mitigation for historic structures, seismic hazard estimation based on fragile geologic structures, and remote sensing in post-disaster reconnaissance.

**Hometown:** Staten Island, New York

**Kuan Zhang**

Electrical and Computer Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.A.Sc., Northeastern University, 2009; M.S., Northeastern University, 2011; Ph.D., University of Waterloo, 2016.

**Professional Interests:** I work in security and privacy for wireless networks, which lies at the intersection of electrical and computer engineering, computer science, and mathematics. The basic idea is to develop secure and efficient networking protocols and applications for cyber physical systems. My work uses tools from cryptography, information theory, optimization, and embedded system design.

**Hometown:** Shenyang, Liaoning, China

**Colleges and Degrees:**

**College of Journalism and Mass Communications**

**Kelli Britten**  
Advertising and Public Relations  
**Degrees:** B.S., Peru State College, 2006; M.A., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2013.  
**Hometown:** Lincoln, Nebraska

**College of Law**

**Chelsi Hayden**  
Law  
**Degrees:** B.A., University of Kansas, 1998; J.D., University of Kansas, 2001.  
**Hometown:** Lawrence, Kansas

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts**

**Jamie Bullins**  
Theatre and Film  
**Degrees:** B.A., Campbell University, 1989; M.F.A., University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1993.
**Megan Elliott**  
Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts  
**Degrees:** B.A.S., University of Canberra, 1994.

**Professional Interests:** I am the founding director of the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts: Emerging Media, Emerging Arts, Media Arts, Emerging, Media, Arts. Media is an industry-building industry and we’re exploring the boundaries where storytelling (meaning making) and technology intersect with science, engineering, agriculture, the arts, the humanities and other disciplines. I have the best job in the world.  
**Hometown:** Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

**Andrew Park**  
Theatre and Film  
**Degrees:** B.S., Indiana State University, 2000; M.F.A., Roosevelt University, 2004.  
**Professional Interests:** I’m a theater artist and will serve Nebraska Repertory Theatre as artistic director. I have a strong interest in the arts as a means for social change. I love collaboration and discovering new ways to use theater to inform, delight, inspire and unite.  
**Hometown:** Mt. Airy, North Carolina

**Sergio Ruiz**  
Music  
**Degrees:** B.A., Santa Clara University, 1991; M.M., Cleveland Institute of Music, 1996; D.M.A., Rice University, 2004.  
**Professional Interests:** I have been on the International Steinway Artist roster since 2012 and have performed in more than 20 countries with various orchestras and musicians around the world. Performances in an interdisciplinary setting is most satisfying, such as with scientists, historians, writers, visual artists, dancers, actors, etc. I enjoy using music as a vehicle to bring people and cultures together.  
**Hometown:** San Jose, California

**INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Vikas Belamkar**  
Agronomy and Horticulture  
**Degrees:** B.E., Sir M. Visvesvaraya Institute of Technology, 2007; M.S., Texas Tech University, 2010; Ph.D., Iowa State University, 2015.  
**Professional Interests:** I am a plant geneticist with specialized training in genomics, bioinformatics, and statistical genetics research. I explore innovative
ways of utilizing the big data (genomics, transcriptomics, phenomics) to increase the efficiency and accuracy of cultivar development and decipher the underlying genetic mechanism of important traits that influence crop health and adaptation. My research combines the use of programming languages, statistical software, bioinformatics tools, and high-performance computing resources at the Holland Computing Center to improve line selection and is closely tied to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln small grains breeding program. **Hometown:** Hubli, Karnataka, India

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**John Benson**

Natural Resources

**Degrees:** B.S., Humboldt State University, 2001; M.S., Louisiana State University, 2005; Ph.D., Trent University, 2013.

**Professional Interests:** I pursue basic and applied questions in wildlife ecology by integrating aspects of population, behavioral, molecular, and landscape ecology. I am interested in small population biology, demographic consequences of hybridization and inbreeding, predator-prey dynamics, animal movement behavior, and many other things. I have studied wildlife species across North America including wolves, mountain lions, black bears, moose, and white sharks. Most of my research involves studying small, threatened populations to inform conservation efforts while also contributing to basic ecology. **Hometown:** New England

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**Kyle Broderick**

Plant Pathology

**Degrees:** B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2009; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.

**Professional Interests:** Knowing ones enemy is the first step towards beating it. With plant pathology, accurate diagnosis allows us to know what’s causing the disease and guides proper management. I look forward to working with industry professionals, growers, and the general public across the state of Nebraska to properly manage disease in agronomic, horticultural, and landscape plants. **Hometown:** Seward, Nebraska

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**Mary-Grace Danao**

Food Science and Technology

**Degrees:** B.S., University of Florida, 2000; M.S., University of Kentucky, 2001; Ph.D., University of Kentucky, 2005.

**Professional Interests:** I am a food and bioprocess engineer with a strong interest in value-added processing of food and agricultural wastes and instrumentation for food quality and safety assessment. My recent research projects involved spectral characteristics of agricultural and energy crops and mitigation strategies for postharvest loss of cereal grains and oilseeds. I have taught a wide range of courses (e.g., introductory engineering courses, transport phenomena, unit operations, and humanity in the food web). **Hometown:** Arcadia, Florida
Sruti Das Choudhury
Natural Resources
Professional Interests: I develop software systems for image-based plant phenotyping analysis which lies at the intersection of computer vision, statistics and plant science. The basic idea is to develop novel computer vision-based algorithms to compute new phenotypes and perform time series analysis to demonstrate the temporal variation of these phenotypes regulated by genotypes.
Hometown: Calcutta, West Bengal, India

Austin Duerfeldt
Nebraska Extension
Professional Interests: I work with producers to provide them with the necessary financial management skills to succeed. I focus on federal, state and local tax planning, public accounting, cost accounting, financial analysis, and commodity marketing.
Hometown: Falls City, Nebraska

Matthew Douglass
Master of Applied Science Program, Science for Educators
Degrees: B.A., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2002; M.A., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2005; Ph.D., University of Auckland, 2010.
Professional Interests: I am involved in several interdisciplinary research collaborations in Australia, Africa, and the U.S. studying long-term trends in prehistoric human land use, especially as this relates to past environmental variability. Basically, we use geological/geomorphological mapping to develop landscape scale sampling units of artifacts and features eroding from ancient sediments. Using these data, I developed methods for tracking changes in human/hominin-ranging behavior through the analysis of flaked stone artifacts. I am also actively engaged in public heritage/citizen science projects with the U.S. Forest Service and the Center for Great Plains Studies and science educator training through the Nebraska MAS program.
Hometown: Columbus, Nebraska

Byron Chaves Elizondo
Food Science and Technology
Degrees: B.S., University of Costa Rica, 2008; M.S., Clemson University, 2010; Ph.D., Texas Tech University, 2015.
Professional Interests: I am a microbiologist with expertise in food safety. My research and extension programs focus on mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of pathogen transmission along the farm-to-table continuum, particularly for foods of animal origin. My research also concentrates on designing and evaluating methodologies to better detect foodborne pathogens in food and animal matrices, and on the
phenotypical and genotypical characteristics that allow pathogens to survive, multiply, and even thrive in food processing environments.

Hometown: San Jose, Costa Rica

**Kinsey Freeman**
Nebraska Extension

Degrees: B.A., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2014; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.

Professional Interests: As an extension educator, I focus on 4-H and youth development in Arthur and Keith counties. I am passionate about preparing youth for their futures, no matter their desired path. I have a special interest in developing young people for the agricultural industry. This is an industry I hold dear to my heart, so I’m always eager to help spark young people’s interest in it as well.

Hometown: Cheyenne, Wyoming

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**Emily Gratopp**
Nebraska Extension

Degrees: B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2011; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2013.

Professional Interests: I work to address health disparities in the areas of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and obesity. My primary focus is working with families in poverty and the communities in which they live to address personal health behavior change as well as policy, system, and environmental strategies to reduce health disparities.

Hometown: Norfolk, Nebraska

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**Morgan Hartline**
Nutrition and Health Sciences

Degrees: B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2010; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2012.

Professional Interests: I work with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) through Nebraska Extension, specializing in food environments. With my colleagues and partners across the state, I manage staff in 32 counties working with community donation gardens, healthy food retail (including independent grocers and emergency food access sites), and youth gardening curricula.

Hometown: Hartington, Nebraska

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**Juan Diego Hernandez Jarquin**
Agronomy and Horticulture

Degrees: B.S., Chapingo Autonomous University, 2004; M.S., Colegio de Postgraduados, 2006; Ph.D., Colegio de Postgraduados, 2012.

Professional Interests: Development of statistical learning methods to analyze and predict complex traits by considering not only genetics but also incorporating environmental factors in interaction with high dimensional genomic data.

Hometown: Tlacotepec, Zacualpan de Amilpas, Morelos, Mexico
Clinton Krehbiel
Animal Science
Degrees: B.S., Kansas State University, 1988; M.S., Kansas State University, 1990; Ph.D., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 1994.
Professional Interests: I am the Marvel Baker Head and Professor of the Department of Animal Science. My research interests include understanding relationships involving ruminal fermentation, gut metabolism, and nutrient absorption to improve health, growth, feed efficiency and end-product quality of beef cattle. I also study the impact of bovine respiratory disease on immune function, gene expression, nutrient metabolism, animal performance, and carcass merit.
Hometown: Moundridge, Kansas

Mei Lu
Food Science and Technology
Degrees: B.S., Jiangnan University, 2008; M.S., Jiangnan University, 2011; Ph.D., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.
Professional Interests: My research interests mainly include the identification and detection of food allergens, the allergenicity assessment of the genetically modified crops, and the effect of food processing on allergens. In addition, I am also interested in the extraction and identification of phytonutrients from various food sources. Beyond research, I am passionate about teaching and will start teaching food chemistry and nutrition related courses in Fall 2017.
Hometown: Shenyang, Liaoning, China

Kaustav Majumder
Food Science and Technology
Degrees: B.Tech., West Bengal University of Technology, 2006; M.Sc., University of Alberta, 2009; Ph.D., University of Alberta, 2014.
Professional Interests: I am a protein chemist with a particular interest in bioactive peptides from food proteins and their health beneficial effects. It is an interdisciplinary area comprised of food chemistry, biochemistry, molecular and cell biology, immunology, and physiology. The primary focus of the research program is student-centered learning, and developing youth leadership in an educational setting are how I realize my interests.
to explore the potentials of food proteins to produce bioactive peptides through enzymatic digestion, fermentation or food processing. These bioactive peptides can act above and beyond the known nutritional value. The research program will explore the beneficial effect of these bioactive proteins and peptides and evaluate their therapeutic potential for the treatment, prevention, and management of hypertension, type-2 diabetes, and associated metabolic disorders. Moreover, the research will also delineate the molecular mechanisms of these food-derived peptides to reduce the pathogenesis of metabolic disorders through a vast array of techniques from in-vitro biochemical assays to cell culture studies to in-vivo animal studies to in-silico analysis.

**Hometown:** Barrackpore, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

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**Steven Melvin**  
Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Nebraska, 1984; M.S., University of Nebraska, 1985.  
**Professional Interests:**  
My work focuses on teaching farmers and others involved in crop production how to conserve irrigation water, effectively manage their irrigation equipment, and how water stress at different growth stages effects yield. One of my biggest passions in life is to learn about a topic that I am interested in, understand it at a deep level, develop what I consider the best methods to follow, and then teach it to others. I feel blessed to be able to apply that passion to production agriculture for my professional career, specifically focusing on Irrigated Cropping Systems for the past 15 years.  
**Hometown:** Nelson, Nebraska

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**Yulie Meneses Gonzalez**  
Food Science and Technology  
**Degrees:** B.S., Zamorano University, 2008; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2010; Ph.D., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.  
**Professional Interests:**I work in designing water conservation strategies for food processing operations. Such strategies include the assessment of water usage for optimization, application of reconditioning treatments in wastewater for nutrient recovery and improvement of water quality for reuse. The reconditioning approaches include membrane filtration and microalgae treatment.  
**Hometown:** Quito, Ecuador

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**Tiffany Messer**  
Biological Systems Engineering; Natural Resources  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Kentucky, 2008; M.S., North Carolina State University, 2010; Ph.D., North Carolina State University, 2015.  
**Professional Interests:** My research focuses on contaminants of emerging concern and nutrient fate and transport in surface waters, primarily in wetland and stream environments residing in agroecosystems. My research interests reside at the intersection of engineering, ecology, and agriculture with an emphasis on environmental biogeochemistry and water resources in agricultural landscapes.  
**Hometown:** Winchester, Kentucky
Kurt Piepenbrink
Food Science and Technology
Degrees: B.A., Johns Hopkins University, 2005; Ph.D., University of Notre Dame, 2011.

Professional Interests: I study the structure and function of bacterial extracellular appendages. I am particularly interested in their roles in bacterial adherence and motility and how these characteristics contribute to the differences between pathogenic bacteria and their commensal counterparts.

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

John Porter
Nebraska Extension
Degrees: B.S., Marshall University, 2004; M.S., West Virginia University, 2008.

Professional Interests: My work as the Urban Agriculture Program Coordinator for Extension in Douglas-Sarpy Counties involves providing education and outreach to individuals interested in producing food or becoming an urban farmer in the Omaha Metro area. I have a passion for teaching people how to grow fruits and vegetables, ensuring access to local foods, and helping people realize their goals of becoming urban farmer entrepreneurs.

Hometown: Genoa, West Virginia

Toshihiro Obata
Biochemistry
Degrees: B.Sc., University of Tsukuba, 2000; M.Sc., University of Tsukuba, 2002; Ph.D., University of Tsukuba, 2005.

Professional Interests: I study the regulation of plant metabolism. Plant metabolism is fine-tuned in the developmental and environmental contexts to maintain physiological homeostasis and closely related to the resilience and yield of crops. I use metabolomics and metabolic flux analysis to understand plant metabolic responses to environmental inputs and their relationship with plant performance. I am also interested in molecular mechanisms of metabolic regulation and try to establish the functions of enzyme protein complex formation in metabolic network regulation.

Hometown: Tokyo, Japan

Eric North
Natural Resources
Degrees: B.S., University of Minnesota, 2012; M.S., University of Minnesota, 2013; Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 2017.

Professional Interests: I work in community forestry, arboriculture, and tree ring analysis. Basically, I am interested in how trees grow and respond to urban environments and their ability to provide benefits to people. I have created models to project tree growth and predict the impact of drought and construction activities on tree growth.

Hometown: Minneapolis, Minnesota

Xin Qiao
Biological Systems Engineering
Degrees: B.S., South China University of Technology, 2009; M.S., Clemson University, 2012; Ph.D., Clemson University, 2015.

Professional Interests: I work in community forestry, arboriculture, and tree ring analysis. Basically, I am interested in how trees grow and respond to urban environments and their ability to provide benefits to people. I have created models to project tree growth and predict the impact of drought and construction activities on tree growth.
Professionals Interests: My work focuses on efficient use of water resources for agricultural production systems using technologies such as sensor-based irrigation, modeling, and remote sensing images. The ultimate goal is to provide farmers and stakeholders with timely and relevant information/tools to assist them to improve yields and profits while conserving limited water resources.

**Hometown:** Yuncheng, Shanxi, China

**Juan Ignacio Rattalino Edreira**  
Agronomy and Horticulture  
**Degrees:** B.Sc., University of La Pampa, 2007; Ph.D., University of Buenos Aires, 2013.

**Professional Interests:** I work in crop physiology, which is the response of crops to the environment. I am especially interested in crop response to abiotic stresses, yield potential, and yield-gap analysis, and resource-use efficiency.

**Hometown:** Ingeniero Luiggi, La Pampa, Argentina

**Linda Reddish**  
Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.A., Kendall College, 2007; M.Ed., Concordia University, 2011.

**Professional Interests:** I work in early childhood care and education. My focus is on identifying solutions to increase high-quality online professional development for early childhood professionals, so that professional development can be accessible in urban and rural communities. I am also the state coordinator of Co-parenting for Successful Kids which is a parent education course designed for families experiencing divorce, separation, or custody modification. The program’s goal is to help parents understand the impact divorce can have on children and gain strategies on how to support children during the transition.

**Hometown:** Bellevue, Nebraska

**Yeyin Shi**  
Biological Systems Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.S., Nanjing Forestry University, 2007; M.S., Oklahoma State University, 2009; Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, 2014.

**Professional Interests:** I work in agricultural automation and information system technologies, which lies at the intersection of agriculture science, electrical and mechanical engineering, computer and information science. The basic idea is to automate and facilitate the agricultural research and production and realize sustainable agriculture at the same time. My current focus is on the applications of unmanned aerial systems, related information system and machine learning in agriculture.

**Hometown:** Nanjing, Jiangsu, China

**Meghan Sittler**  
Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.A., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2000; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2003.

**Professional Interests:** I work in domestic water and wastewater management to develop and implement training, education, and planning efforts to help address water
Crystal Stiles  
Natural Resources  
**Degrees:** B.S., Western Kentucky University, 2005; M.S., Western Kentucky University, 2009; Ph.D., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2014.  
**Professional Interests:** I am an applied climatologist and stakeholder engagement specialist for the High Plains Regional Climate Center. I work with groups that have interests in obtaining and analyzing climate information to enhance decision making. In particular, I direct the Center’s tribal engagement program and have provided climate data training and developed decision support tools for tribes in the Missouri River Basin. I have special interests in communicating climate information effectively to the general public. As such, I write regional climate summaries and develop content for social media. I am also a drought specialist and dedicate part of my time to working on special projects for the Drought Risk Management Research Center, which is a part of the National Drought Mitigation Center.  
**Hometown:** Frankfort, Kentucky

Judith Turk  
Natural Resources  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Maryland, College Park, 2004; M.S., University of California, Riverside, 2007; Ph.D., University of California, Riverside, 2012.  
**Professional Interests:** I am a pedologist. I study the morphology, genesis, classification, and mapping of soils. I am interested in the weathering processes that form soils, the relationship between soils and landforms, and the ways in which soils are described and characterized by soil scientists.  
**Hometown:** Frederick, Maryland

Kristen Ulmer  
Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.S., Virginia Tech, 2014; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.  
**Professional Interests:** I work as a beef systems extension educator based out of the ENREC. I am located in Saunders County but accountable for the southeast region of the state.  
**Hometown:** Broadway, Virginia

Jeffrey Stokes  
Agricultural Economics  
**Degrees:** B.S., Purdue University, 1988; M.S., University of Missouri, 1990; Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 1994.  
**Professional Interests:** My teaching and research programs are in the areas of agricultural banking and finance. I conduct research on credit risk measurement, stress testing, and asset valuation. Mathematically, my research makes use of linear and nonlinear optimization, Markov chains and maximum entropy econometrics.  
**Hometown:** LeRoy, Indiana
Dagen Valentine  
Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.A., Mount Marty College, 2000; M.A.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2016.  
**Professional Interests:** I work in youth development in the areas of entrepreneurship and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). My work revolves around technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. I’m interested in the intersection of makerspaces and entrepreneurship and supporting youth skill development and application in these areas.  
**Hometown:** Arthur, Nebraska

Brian Vander Ley  
Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences  
**Degrees:** B.A., Dordt College, 2005; D.V.M., Iowa State University, 2008; Ph.D., Iowa State University, 2012.  
**Professional Interests:** I work as a veterinary epidemiologist at UNL’s Great Plains Veterinary Educational Center and I focus primarily on beef cattle. My efforts, including research, extension, and teaching, are directed toward improving beef production by mitigating disease and other causes of production loss.  
**Hometown:** New Holland, South Dakota

Rebecca Wachs  
Biological Systems Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.S., Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2003; M.E., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 2013.  
**Professional Interests:** My research interests include using tissue engineering approaches to create solutions for orthopedic pain.  
**Hometown:** Guilderland, New York

Yongjun Wang  
Nutrition and Health Sciences  
**Degrees:** B.S., Nanjing University, 1992; M.S., Nanjing Agricultural University, 1997; Ph.D., Nanjing Agricultural University, 2001.  
**Professional Interests:** I have worked in nuclear hormone receptors and human diseases for more than ten years, focusing on metabolism, cancer, drug development, circadian rhythm and assay development. As the director of Biomedical and Obesity Research Core, I’ll contribute to the integrated research in Nebraska Center for Prevention of Obesity Diseases as well as at the University of Nebraska, providing research services to principle investigators, helping them to succeed in research and grant application, supporting student recruitment, and serving as a committee member.  
**Hometown:** Handan, Hebei Province, China
John Westra
Nebraska Extension

**Degrees:** B.A., Grinnell College, 1984; M.S., University of Maine, 1991; Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 2001.

**Professional Interests:** My professional work has focused on agricultural production and environmental economics. Primarily, I have investigated how land managers (producers) respond to policy, how that affects their mix of cropping and livestock systems, agricultural output, the resulting environmental products and services, and economic values associated with those systems. My extension and outreach work has focused on facilitating increased production and consumption of local foods with Web-based local food programs and by teaching best practices that support local food systems.

**Hometown:** Lincoln, Nebraska

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Jinliang Yang
Agronomy and Horticulture

**Degrees:** B.S., China Agricultural University, 2005; M.S., China Agricultural University, 2008; Ph.D., Iowa State University, 2014.

**Professional Interests:** I work on quantitative genetics and statistical genomics of crop species. Our lab focuses on bridging the gap between genotypes and phenotypes. At a broader scale, I am keen to integrate various large-scale biological datasets to increase the power of genomic-enabled selection, and ultimately to boost crop improvement.

**Hometown:** Cangzhou, Hebei Province, China

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Vanessa Wielenga
Nutrition and Health Sciences

**Degrees:** B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2011; M.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2014.

**Professional Interests:** Unhealthy environments encourage unhealthy decisions, contributing to poor health outcomes. As Extension faculty, my objective is to provide communities across Nebraska with the resources and expertise they need to improve their retail, food service, and emergency food environments. My interests lie in PSE interventions and strategies—policy, systems and environment—vs. direct education. An important aspect of what I do is learning, networking, connecting and facilitating. I work with state and local leaders, county Extension staff, local public health departments and others to enhance program impact through partnerships. I love doing community work!

**Hometown:** Riverside, California

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Lincoln, 2014.

**Professional Interests:** Unhealthy environments encourage unhealthy decisions, contributing to poor health outcomes. As Extension faculty, my objective is to provide communities across Nebraska with the resources and expertise they need to improve their retail, food service, and emergency food environments. My interests lie in PSE interventions and strategies—policy, systems and environment—vs. direct education. An important aspect of what I do is learning, networking, connecting and facilitating. I work with state and local leaders, county Extension staff, local public health departments and others to enhance program impact through partnerships. I love doing community work!
Patrick Blake Graham
University Libraries
Professional Interests: I work on developing and managing digital archives programs. My area of work combines concepts and practices found in library and information science, diplomatics, and cultural heritage studies.
Hometown: Montgomery, Alabama

Catherine Riehle
University Libraries
Degrees: B.A., Saint Louis University, 2004; M.S.I.S., The University of Texas at Austin, 2006.
Professional Interests: My interests focus on the intersection of information literacy, scholarly communication, and undergraduate education. In particular, I seek to collaboratively design pedagogy that supports learners in becoming informed citizens, critical thinkers, and active participants in processes involving the creation and communication of new knowledge.
Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska