



# New Faculty

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN  
2017-2018



## 2017–2018 NEW FACULTY

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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### COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE



**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



**Miyoung 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



**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

### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



**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.

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**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



**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 am an anthropological archaeologist specializing in the prehistory of western North America, especially the Southwest, Great Basin and Great Plains. I am interested in the role of conflict and warfare in shaping human society and to diverse prehistoric technologies, particularly as they relate to learning networks and enculturation.

**Hometown:** Rapid City, South Dakota



**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



**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

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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

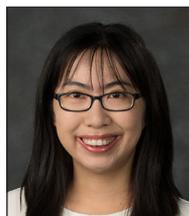
Psychology; Women's and Gender Studies

**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

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### 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:** Port Washington, Wisconsin



### 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:** Plainview, Texas

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### **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

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### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



**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, 1996; M.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

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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  
**Degrees:** B.A., Dartmouth College, 1984; M.A., The Wharton School of the University of

Pennsylvania, 1989; Ph.D., The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, 1991.

**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  
**Degrees:** B.Tech., Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, 2000; M.A., University of Pennsylvania, 2008;

Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2008.

**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,

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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:** Hoshiarpur, Punjab, India



**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



**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:** Elk Grove, California



**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),

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social network analysis, Bayesian analysis, and more recently, the application of big data and machine learning in behavioral science.

**Hometown:** Cangnan, Wenzhou, Zhejiang, China



**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

### 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



**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



**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

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interventions for individuals, families, and communities impacted by chronic and complex trauma.

**Hometown:** Rigby, Idaho



**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



**Johanna Taylor**

Special Education  
and Communication  
Disorders  
**Degrees:** B.A., College  
of Wooster, 2005;  
M.Ed., University

of Pittsburgh, 2007; Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 2014.

**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/

professionals that treat children with autism.

**Hometown:** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING



**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



**Mona Bavarian**

Chemical and  
Biomolecular  
Engineering  
**Degrees:** B.S.,  
Sharif University of  
Technology, 2006;

Ph.D., Drexel University, 2012.

**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

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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,  
2002; M.S., University

of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004.

**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

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face in our health environments today by applying what I have learned, in innovative ways, to reduce cost and improve performance of our health facilities.

**Hometown:** Chennai (Madras), Tamil Nadu, India



**Jena Shafai Asgarpour**

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



**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



**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

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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

### 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



**John Shrader**

Journalism and Mass  
Communication

**Degrees:** B.J., University  
of Nebraska–Lincoln,  
2006; M.S., San Jose  
State University, 2008.

**Professional Interests:** I work in broadcasting and journalism, after spending about 30 years as a radio and TV sportscaster in San Francisco. I study the best practices of sports media, social media, ethics and the national identity of sport. I produce documentary films, including one on the media coverage of baseball superstar Barry Bonds, and have written extensively about media coverage and national identity of soccer in America.

**Hometown:** Neligh, 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.

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**Professional Interests:** I am a scenographer, a theatrical designer that specializes in multiple areas of design, primarily costume and scenic. I find the teaching and mentoring of students to be the most fascinating discipline. It's a reciprocal process that makes me better at what I do, while I get to experience a tiny window in their development as an artist and a person.

**Hometown:** Mt. Airy, North Carolina



**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:** Chicago, Illinois



**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

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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



### 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



### 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



### 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

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### **Sruti Das Choudhury**

Natural Resources  
**Degrees:** B.Tech., West Bengal University of Technology, 2005; M.Tech., University of Calcutta, 2009; Ph.D.,

University of Warwick, 2013.

**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 the phenotypes regulated by genotypes.

**Hometown:** Calcutta, West Bengal, India



### **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



### **Austin Duerfeldt**

Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.A., Northwest Missouri State University, 2010; M.B.A., Northwest Missouri State

University, 2012.

**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



### **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

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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



### **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



### **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



### **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

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### 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



### Therese Laux

Nebraska Extension  
**Degrees:** B.M., University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1985; M.M., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 1994; Ed.D.,

Creighton University, in progress.

**Professional Interests:** I facilitate creative learning opportunities for youth so that they may discover what they are good at, what they love to do, and how they can use their skills, talents, and knowledge to be their best self and amazing contributors to our world. Embracing today's technology tools to create, communicate, and collaborate in the realm of 21st century learning is my passion. My research interests include youth and leadership, and teaching and learning theories. Developing educational strategies to address how people learn, fostering

student-centered learning, and developing youth leadership in an educational setting are how I realize my interests.

**Hometown:** Omaha, Nebraska



### 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

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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



### 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



### 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



### 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

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### 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



### 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



### 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



### Xin Qiao

Biological Systems Engineering

**Degrees:** B.S., South China University of Technology, 2009; M.S., Clemson University,

2012; Ph.D., Clemson University, 2015.

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**Professional 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



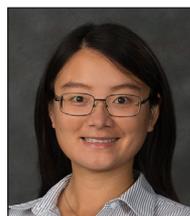
**Linda Reddish**

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

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quantity, quality and hazard mitigation as it relates to use and management of Nebraska's water and natural resources.

**Hometown:** Martell, Nebraska



### 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



### 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



### 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

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### **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, 2005; Ph.D., 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

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### **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



### **Vanessa Wielenga**

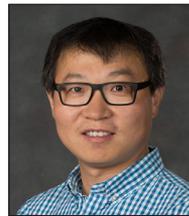
Nutrition and Health Sciences  
**Degrees:** B.S., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2011; M.S., University of Nebraska–

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



### **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

## 2017–2018 NEW FACULTY

### UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



**Patrick Blake Graham**

University Libraries  
**Degrees:** B.A., Auburn University, 2010; M.A., University of South Alabama, 2013; M.L.I.S., University of

Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016.

**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





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