

# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2019

VOLUME VI ISSUE I

## A Word from our Academic Affairs VP



This fall we welcomed a record class of freshmen to the Tech Family! In addition, we are delighted to welcome 20 new faculty to ATU!

Academic year 2019-20 will be a busy one as we are in Year 4 of the strategic plan and just over a year away from our HLC accreditation visit. Student success will continue to be a priority this year as we collaborate with different stakeholders to examine what is working well and explore how we can ensure our students have an optimal experience in and out of the classroom. Specifically, we will begin discussions on how we can support the advising function for professional staff and faculty. Additionally, we want to create a repository of our high-impact practices so that we are able to capture all of the awesome activities and programs faculty and staff are providing for students. While the focus of these initiatives will support the success of our students, they will also provide documentation for HLC about how we are engaged in continuous improvement.

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As I mentioned during my update in August, I will meet with faculty and staff in academic affairs and related areas across the campus to not only get to know you, but also to hear what we are doing well and how we can enhance what we are doing.

Fight on!

# New Faculty 2019-2020



**From left to right:** Mehmet Kelestemur, Bethany Swindell, William Morelan, Hye Sun You, Brett Stone, Shelley Koone, Xinli Xiao, Frances Roberson, Chiraz Soumia Amrine, Angelina Perrotti, Syed Imran Ali Meerza, Lynnette Gilbert, and Jerry the bulldog, front and center.

Not pictured: Anindya Ambuj

## *Arts & Humanities*

Dr. Lynnette Gilbert, Assistant Professor of Art Education

Dr. Angelina Perrotti, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Ms. Frances Roberson, Assistant Professor of Theatre & Film/Technical Director of Theatre

## *Education*

Dr. William Morelan, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership

Mr. Brock Hime, Instructor of Health and Physical Education

Mr. Kyle Shipp, Instructor of College Student Personnel

Mr. Brett Stone, Visiting Professor of Health and Physical Education

Mr. Frank Crayton, Instructor of Health and Physical Education

Ms. Krystal Shipp, Visiting Instructor of Curriculum and Instruction

## *Engineering & Applied Sciences*

Dr. Mehmet Kelestemur, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering

Dr. Syed Imran Ali Meerza, Assistant Professor of Agriculture Business

Mr. Christopher Sheach, Visiting Instructor of Emergency Management

Ms. Bethany Swindell, Visiting Instructor of Emergency Management

## *Natural Health & Sciences*

Dr. Anindya Ambuj, Visiting Assistant Professor of Physics

Dr. Azin Sanjari Pirmahaleh, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Dr. Xinli Xiao, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Dr. Hye Sun You, Assistant Professor of Physical Science

Ms. Chiraz Soumia Amrine, Assistant Professor of Chemistry

Ms. Misaki Kaku, Visiting Assistant Professor of Nursing

Ms. Shelley Koone, Visiting Instructor of Mathematics

# New Faculty Highlights

## Education

**Dr. Bill Morelan** is ATU's new Educational Leadership Program Director. An experienced administrator, teacher, and author, he has a passion for quality education - a process he believes should not only be meaningful, but also FUN! Over the course of his career, he has served as a high school principal, an elementary school principal, and a district curriculum administrator. He has been a popular speaker at educational conferences nationwide, authored a best-selling book on relationships, and created both an elementary reading and science series. His academic blog offers a wealth of information for Arkansas educators. To learn more visit <https://blogs.atu.edu/morelan/>.



**Krystal Shipp** was born and raised in Russellville, AR, and graduated from Russellville High School in 2003. She received her Bachelor of Science in early childhood education in 2007 from UCA, her master's in educational leadership in 2013 from Arkansas Tech University, and has a National Board Certification in Elementary Education-Generalist with 12.5 years of teaching experience in public schools. Krystal is married to Kyle Shipp, Head football coach, and they have one daughter, Emmie Lu.

*"Education is the key to success in life, and teachers make a lasting impact in the lives of their students." - Solomon Ortiz*



# New Faculty Highlights Continued

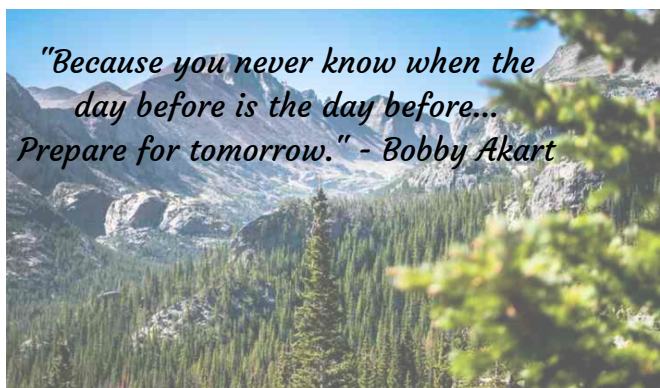
## Engineering & Applied Sciences

### Emergency Management and Homeland Security

**Bethany Swindell** began her career with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management in 2005, and then moved to the Arkansas Department of Transportation (DOT). After seven years at the DOT, Bethany became a private contractor for the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Bethany now bridges her strong background in emergency management field work with classroom theory as she is currently an Instructor at Arkansas Tech University in the Emergency Management Department. She will complete her PhD in 2020 and her research interests include UAVs, risk communication, and critical infrastructure prioritization.

As a firm believer in giving back to the community, Bethany enjoys volunteering and is actively involved in numerous community organizations and activities including serving on the ATU Alumni Board, the Arkansas River Valley Boys and Girls Club Mistletoe Market Executive Board, the River Valley Food 4 Kids Executive Board, and as President for Junior Auxiliary.





# New Faculty Highlights Continued

## Engineering & Applied Sciences Continued

### Mechanical Engineering

**Dr. Mehmet Kelestemur** has extensive experience teaching in the fields of Mechanical and Materials Engineering. He received his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees for Mechanical Engineering at Firat University in Turkey and his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Research engagement and research supervision have played an important role throughout his career. He is an instructor for several undergraduate and graduate level courses. Additionally, he has consulted with two manufacturing companies in terms of research and project management, and has many national and international grant research projects. He has conducted 10 research projects that were funded for a total of \$1.4 million, published 50 papers (over 350 citations) and filed 2 patents in 2014, supervised 3 Ph.D. and 10 M.S. theses and several undergraduate senior projects, and has collaborated with several labs, universities, and industries.



*"Scientists study the world as it is;  
engineers create the world that has  
never been." - Theodore Von Karman*

# New Faculty Highlights Continued

## Natural and Health Sciences

### Mathematics



**Shelley Koone** is a visiting instructor in the Mathematics Department and will be teaching College Algebra with a lab this semester. She was born and raised in Central Louisiana. She received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA and a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, LA. She has roughly 10 years of teaching experience at three institutions and as an adjunct for the ATU Ozark campus. When she is not working, she likes to play video games, read books, and hang out with friends.

*"Mathematics as we know it and as it has come to shape modern science could never have come into being without some disregard for the dangers of the infinite." - David Bressoud (A radical approach to real analysis, MAA, 2007, p. 22)*

### Nursing

**Misaki Kaku** first came to the United States as an international student from Japan. She graduated from ATU with Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2016 and Masters of Science in Nursing Administration and Emergency Management in 2019. She wanted to become a nurse since she was five years old. Nursing is her passion and she has discovered some joy in teaching while working in the nursing department as a Graduate Assistant. She feels blessed to work with professors who taught and encouraged her and now gets to do it with them! Staying active outside work, she loves playing volleyball, doing some light outdoorsy activities like hiking, and watching movies. Although she tends to walk fast while crossing campus, she does not want anyone to hesitate to say hi!



*"Every nurse was drawn to nursing because of a desire to care, to serve, or to help." —  
Christina Feist-Heilmeier, RN*



# Center for Undergraduate Research

The **Center for Undergraduate Research (CUR)** has completed the 2019-2020 grant award cycle. Dr. Nate Chapman, director of CUR, noted there were many promising proposals and the decision process was very competitive. The CUR advisement committee unanimously agreed on 13 proposals that were of excellent quality, showed great potential for student impact and learning, and were consistent with the CUR's mission of promoting research at ATU.

The CUR awarded \$27,250 in funds for materials, student travel, and student stipends. Specifically, the center awarded \$6,500 for materials, \$5,200 for student travel, and \$15,550 for student stipends. Dr. Chapman conveyed his excitement about the research the students will be engaged and looks forward to a presentation of their work at the annual Undergraduate Research Symposium on April 10th in Young Ballroom.

The faculty members who have been awarded an undergraduate research grant for the 2019-2020 academic year are:

Dr. Amber Harrington  
Dr. David Blanks  
Dr. Jennifer Anne Lewter  
Dr. Turaj Ashuri and Dr. Robert Fithen  
Dr. Muhammad Khan and Dr. Kaiman Zeng  
Dr. Jorista Garrie  
Dr. Jacob Grosskopf  
Dr. Robin Dalton  
Dr. Bryan Rank  
Dr. Hye You and Dr. Jason Patton  
Dr. Michael Rogers  
Dr. Mrigendra Rajput  
Dr. Hamed Shojaei

*Additional information about the Center for Undergraduate Research can be found at <https://www.atu.edu/uresearch/grants.php>.*



# Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning

## Monday Morning Mentor Series

Does presenting a syllabus feel like drawing battle lines between you and the student? Tired of having to choose between the carrot and the stick to motivate students? Check out the MMMS video "Beyond Syllabus Policies: What Strategies Help Students Take Responsibility for Learning?" Refer to the blackboard announcement for the code to access the video and hear what Dr. Lolita Paff has to say on structuring a classroom to encourage involvement in the classroom.

## Schedule of Upcoming Events

**Monday, September 23 - CETL Seminar Series-** "What is Orange and Filled with Great Information", Ms Susan West, 3:00-4:00 pm, RCB 43

**Thursday, September 26 - Online Professional Development series-** "Introduction to Kaltura", Mr. Alex Manly, Mr. Ken Teutsch, 3:00-4:00 pm, RPL 300A

**Thursday, September 26 - Hardware/Software Purchasing-** Technical Support Administrator, Joe Keating, will present on Hardware/Software purchasing best practices and the hardware/software purchase application.

*Additional information for the Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning can be found at <https://www.atu.edu/cetl/index.php>.*

# ATU Choral Artists

## National Collegiate Choral Organization Conference

A recognition the Arkansas Tech University Choral Department has received this academic year marks a major historical milestone. The ATU Choral Artists will perform as an invited choir at the National Collegiate Choral Organization (NCCO) Conference hosted at the University of Maryland in November 2019. Of the candidate pool of choral programs from across the nation, only nine ensembles were selected through a blind, peer-reviewed adjudication process. The ATU Choral Artists are the only Arkansas ensemble to be selected this year, and only the second ensemble from Arkansas to be selected in the history of the NCCO Conference. This achievement would be equivalent to an athletic team from ATU advancing to the NCAA finals, having competed and successfully beaten schools not only from their D-II athletic conference, but also from the D-I division as well. It is an immense honor to be chosen and marks the first opportunity for a choral ensemble to be invited to perform at a national conference. Congratulations to the ATU Choral Artists under the direction of Dr. Christopher Harris!

The ATU Choral Artists have also been invited to perform in February 2020 as the honor collegiate choir at the Arkansas All-State Music Conference in Hot Springs, AR.

