

# Academic Affairs

## BECAUSE WE CARE!

Student Success (SS) has become a widely used phrase within academia over the past few years. The concept of SS, and how it should shape all of what we do at Arkansas Tech, aligns with what President Bowen has emphasized on many occasions. SS shaped much of the discussions during the strategic planning process, was well reflected in the strategic plan document, and became central to the vision and mission statements developed by our Board of Trustees. In essence, SS has emerged as an underlying theme to what we care about at Tech, including offering quality programs, recruiting, retaining and graduating students who will become productive and socially conscious members of our region and nation.



Elements of Student Success include: Excellence in programs we offer and recruitment, retention and graduation of students to fulfill our mission as an institution.

Most will agree that SS starts with academic programs that are competitive and current in order to provide students with the knowledge they need to succeed in all future endeavors, whether they are academic, professional or personal. To support academic rigor, retention and timely graduation, academic programs also need to be streamlined and free of hurdles that could delay the progress of students towards graduation. The responsibility of periodic review and update of the curricula to make sure it upholds the concept of student success lies with the faculty within each of the academic programs. For example, program faculty may identify and modify long chains of prerequisites to streamline pathways to graduation. Tech's investment in DegreeWorks™ reflects an institutional belief in helping students identify the best routes to completion. It will also aid the faculty as they advise students and identify potential barriers within the program, while optimizing the curricula.

Curricular review for academic excellence calls for routinely assessing the currency and relevancy of the program, as well as ensuring the inclusion of new and cutting-edge concepts in the field. It is also important to introduce high impact practices, such as project-based learning and utilizing innovative pedagogical concepts, to address and engage the areas and ideas which often become a barrier to student comprehension, and even completion. In line with the strategic plan, an initiative for classroom-based research was introduced in the fall. This initiative supports the efforts of several faculty members to develop pedagogical plans to incorporate scholarship into one of their courses in an effort to better engage students. Other initiatives to support the restructuring of courses with high failure rates will soon be introduced. The success of these initiatives, however, *(continued on next page)*



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## SAVE THE DATE

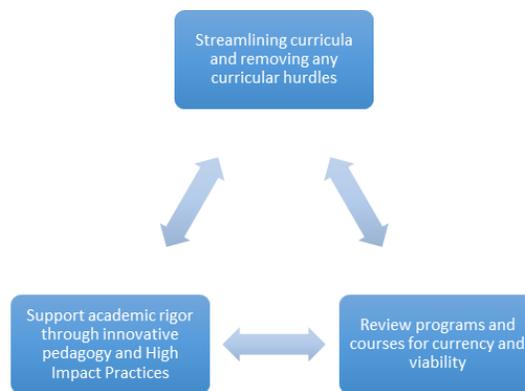
- Time Out for Tech  
Thursday, January 26
- Deadline for Faculty Research & Professional Development Grant applications  
Wednesday, February 1
- Condensed Course Request Forms Due  
Tuesday, February 7
- Faculty Excellence Award Nominations Due  
Tuesday, February 7
- Cyber Warfare Lecture  
Thursday, February 9,
- Final Edited Catalog Copy Due  
Wednesday, February 15
- "Strategic Approach to Proposal Writing"  
Tuesday, February 28

(continued) depends to a large degree on willingness of the campus community to participate, collaborate, innovate, and take the calculated risks.

In support of academic excellence, Arkansas Tech provides several resources for faculty support. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Tech provides many services including training, professional development and consultation to support faculty members' efforts to enhance teaching and learning at Tech. Additionally, the College of eTech provides support for faculty who seek to enhance the content of their online courses. The creation of the Office of Sponsored Programs and University Initiatives (SPUI) aims to assist faculty seeking external funding to support the creation and implementation of innovative and high impact teaching practices.

To conclude, it is my belief that all we do at Tech, including our teaching, scholarship, and service, should encompass the various aspects of student success; not because we must, but Because We Care.

Mohamed Abdelrahman, Ph.D.



Academic excellence depends on programs remaining current, viable and innovative.

### Career Services' Spring 2017 Events

Professional Attire: DRESS the PART

Tuesday, January 31  
4:00 PM—5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

Job Search Strategies  
Wednesday, February 1  
4:00 PM—5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

Interview Skills: Tell Me Something Good  
Tuesday, February 7  
4:00 PM—5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

Resume Review: STEM Majors  
Friday, February 10  
9:00 AM—5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 153

### Tutoring Center Schedule

The Tutoring Center is now open in Doc Bryan 153, and students may begin making appointments for the spring semester. The full schedule of tutoring services on campus for the Spring 2017 semester can be found [here](#). The schedule will be updated online as departments finish scheduling their hours.



# Student Success

## NORMAN CAREER SERVICES

On Wednesday, February 15, Norman Career Services will host a Career Fair Prep at 4:00 PM in Doc Bryan 242 to help students prepare for the following week's career fairs. Career Fair Week will take place on February 21-23 and will offer students the opportunity to engage with hundreds of employers seeking to hire interns and employees from ATU. As incentive for students to attend, NCS will award one iPad Mini at each career fair. NCS encourages faculty to motivate students to attend one or more of the following career advancement experiences:

Educators and Teachers Career Fair

Tuesday, February 21st from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm in Young Ballroom

STEM Career Fair

Wednesday, February 22nd from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm in Young Ballroom

All Majors Career Fair

Thursday, February 23rd from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm in Tucker Coliseum

Professional attire is required for attendance. If students have questions or need assistance, they may call 479.964.0583 (ext. 4506) or by e-mailing [career.services@atu.edu](mailto:career.services@atu.edu).

## MYMAJORS

As part of the Academic Affairs student success initiative, a service called "MyMajors" was recently implemented. The MyMajors software is designed to use a combination of academic achievement, aptitude, interests, and personality characteristics to identify majors that are best matched to a student.

The MyMajors assessment takes approximately 12–15 minutes to complete and provides the student with the top five best academic major matches in rank order. A simple click will then take students to the "What you will learn" web page associated with that major to provide additional information. Further drilling down will allow students to obtain information from the Online Occupational Handbook to determine salary information, future growth potential for that major, and other helpful information.

The software can be used across the institution for advising, admissions, career services, etc. It can also serve as a recruitment tool for high school students, for major exploration, or as an advising tool for current college students. There is no cost to students, and the (continued on next page)



(continued) information from MyMajors will be available to B2E mentors, advisors, career services staff and admissions staff. Hopefully, departments on campus will recommend and use MyMajors with their students. Since so many of ATU students are first-generation college students, it is particularly important that they have an opportunity early on to learn about the variety of available majors. The MyMajors software can aid students in making earlier, and better, decisions about declaring a major.

Links to the MyMajors assessment are sprinkled around the university website. On the <http://www.atu.edu> homepage, a link can be found under the “I Want To” section as “[Find My Major](#),” as well as in many other locations on the site. We would like to make the software as widely known and used as possible as another tool for student success.

## Office of Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness (OAIE)

### OAIE OFFERS GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (OAIE) offers grants to promote and support assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness through both project and recurring grants of up to \$5000. If you are planning to perform assessment of any kind, or are interested in attending an assessment related conference, please contact our office to see how we might be able to help support your efforts. Applications and past grants can be found on the OAIE website under [Assessment Resources](#).

## Pendergraft Library

### LIBRARY COMPLETES EXPANSION PROJECT

In December, the Ross Pendergraft Library completed a \$130,000 project to expand student access to computers and to improve student study and collaboration spaces. These upgrades were completed in accordance of Goal 1 of Arkansas Tech University’s Strategic Plan: to “provide the learning environments needed for students to flourish and graduate from ATU equipped for a meaningful and satisfying future.”

Highlights of the renovation project include the addition of new collaborative learning spaces on all three levels of the Library & Technology Center. This mixture of seating/studying furniture replaced the original lounge chairs that were installed in 1999. Also new to the library are twelve additional computer carrels and an additional printing station on the first floor of the library. Other upgrades include the replacement of fifty task chairs and sled chairs throughout the first and second floors.

Funding for the project was made available through the Library Building Grant, which was established in 1999.



### Summer Internship

The Griffiss Institute will be accepting applications for summer employment through February 28. This is a paid summer internship opportunity for Science and Engineering students currently enrolled in an accredited college or university at the freshman level through Ph.D. level to work on-site with AFRL employees on a wide variety of projects. Additional information can be found by visiting <http://www.griffissinstitute.org/who-we-work-with/afri/summer-internship>.

*“The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice.”*  
- Brian Herbert

### *Interdisciplinary Research Series*

Faculty and graduate students in all academic colleges and departments are encouraged to attend the Interdisciplinary Research Series (IRS) sessions and submit research proposals to be considered for presentation at future IRS sessions.

The IRS sessions are designed to create a great environment for faculty and/or graduate students to get feedback on research by peers that improves the project and prepares the work for publication, do a trial run presentation of research before presenting it at a conference in the respective field, and share research with our larger ATU community.

A full schedule for the spring can be found [here](#).

*“Education is all a matter of building bridges.”*  
- Ralph Ellison



# IMSSO

## IMSSO WELCOMES NEW STUDENTS

The International and Multicultural Student Services Office (IMSSO) recently welcomed new international students to campus for the Spring 2017 term. On January 10, 2017, IMSSO provided a free airport shuttle for any new student to use. Delayed international flights are one of the many obstacles international students have to overcome to just simply arrive on campus, and IMSSO is very excited to welcome them each time and to provide vital support each semester.

Each semester, IMSSO produces an orientation for new students lasting 3-4 days. The majority of tasks are done in the first day they arrive, which allows students to maximize the time they have before classes begin to accomplish other very important things, such as registering for classes with their advisor. This year's orientation was held on January 10-17 and covered topics such as immigration, health and insurance, safety and security, academic expectations, technology, and campus involvement. Students were also given a brief campus tour, an on-campus T-Spot & Immunization Clinic, TOEFL and AC-CUPLACER placement exams, and registration support.



# Cyber Warfare Lecture

## LT. GENERAL BAKER TO PRESENT CYBER WARFARE LECTURE

On Thursday, February 9, Lt. General John R. Baker will speak on Cyber Warfare with a question and answer session immediately following. Lt. Gen. Baker has expertise in cyber warfare, intelligence, surveillance, and logistics. Lieutenant General John R. Baker, U.S. Air Force (Retired), served for over 33 years in the United States Air Force. He served as pilot, staff officer, commander at every level, and staff positions at Tactical Air Command (now Air Combat Command).



This lecture is sponsored by the Business Data Analytics program in the College of Business and will take place at 1:30 PM in the Doc Bryan Lecture Hall.

# Office of Sponsored Programs & University Initiatives (SPUI)

## CONGRATULATIONS!

The Office of Sponsored Programs and University Initiatives congratulates the following individuals for securing external funding to support their programs.:

**Aboozar Mosleh, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering**

Received \$8,037 from NASA RID to support “Extreme Environment High Speed Electronics”

**Mostafa Hemmati, Professor of Physics**

Received \$2,300 from NASA ASGC to support “Lightning Return Strokes”

**Turaj Ashuri, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Dr. Mostafa Hemmati, Professor of Physics**

Received \$2,700 from NASA ASGC to support “A Novel Discrete Interpolation Approach for High Fluctuating Stochastic Field Variable”

**Rajib Choudhury, Assistant Professor of Chemistry**

Received \$1,625 from ADHE SURF to support “Design and Synthesis of Amphiphilic Long-wavelength Fluorophores”

**Vic Dreier, Project Lead the Way State Affiliate Director**

Received a combined total of \$33,250 from AR STEM Coalition to support “Excellence in STEM,” “Girls Leadership Conference,” and “STEM Leadership for Girls”



## CETL

### CETL HOSTS DR. DAVID EMBRICK



On Monday, January 23, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning hosted a special guest lecture entitled “What does Diversity Mean in an Era of Color Blindness?” in the Doc Bryan Lecture Hall. Dr. David Embrick, an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Connecticut, served as the guest speaker. Dr. Embrick is a former American Sociological Association Minority Fellow, former President of the Southwestern Sociological Association, and current Vice President-Elect of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Embrick spoke on the topic of diversity and inclusion on university campuses; following his lecture, there was a question and answer/discussion session on how to better promote inclusivity in the classroom.

## Councils Undergo Modification

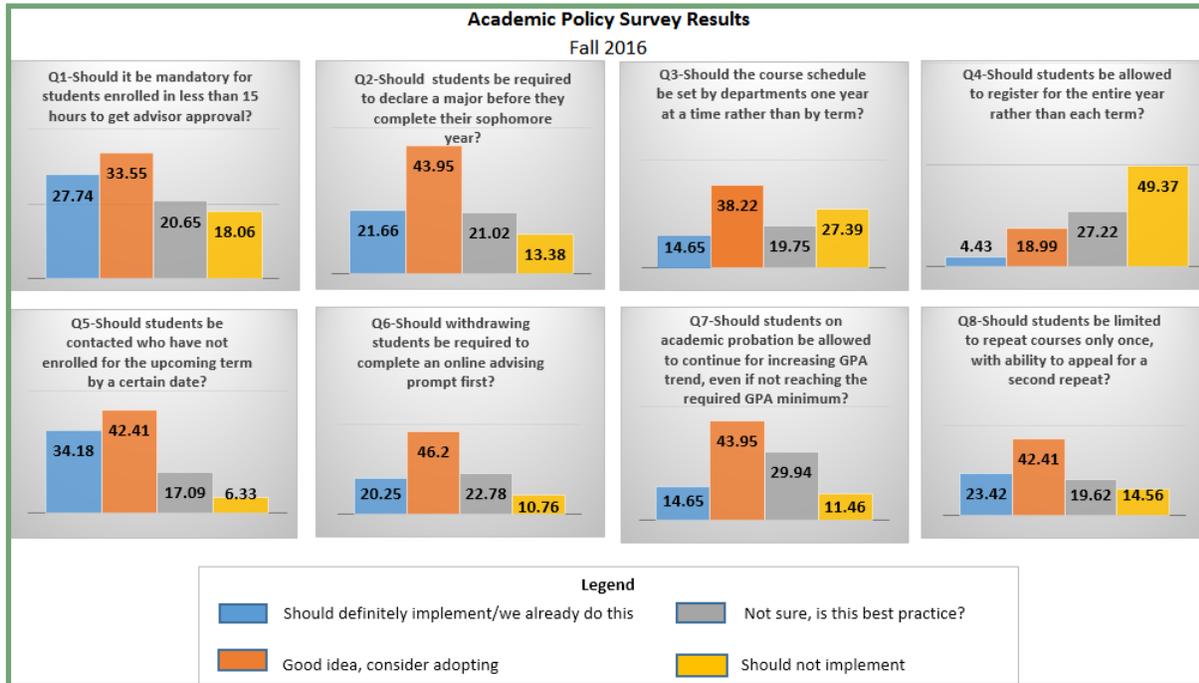
To increase communication across the Academic Affairs division, three distinct councils now meet regularly throughout the semester: Deans’ Council, Academic Heads Council, and Academic Staff Council. The existing structures for the Deans’ Council and Academic Heads Council were modified beginning with the Fall 2016 semester, and the Academic Staff Council was established in Spring 2017. Each group meets independently, but provides feedback and advisement collectively across committees.

The three councils will work in conjunction with the Faculty Senate as needed, and serve as an open channel for communication with the academic leadership.



# Academic Policy Survey Results

At the beginning of the fall semester, faculty were asked to weigh in on certain academic policy “best practices” from the Education Advisory Board. Below are the results:



## Leadership Tech

### SECOND COHORT TO BE SELECTED FOR 2017-18

In fall 2017, Leadership Tech will expand its program with a second cohort with the intention of developing individuals as leaders and to build leadership capacity within the faculty and staff on its Russellville and Ozark campuses. The program is an action-based learning and self-discovery process that utilizes a variety of leadership frameworks, experiential learning activities, coaching and mentoring, and personal assessment. Any full-time faculty or staff member, both classified and unclassified, may be nominated to participate; anyone can nominate themselves or another candidate. The cohort will be comprised of a diverse representation from a variety of campus offices and academic departments. Consideration of nominees will be based on the breadth and/or depth of prior and current leadership experiences, as well as a clear articulation of why this program would be valuable to the nominee and how he or she will contribute to the cohort and the university as a whole. Information on the nomination process will be available in early February.



"The relationships I have built with people across campus...have been both personally and professionally beneficial. I have collaborated on multiple student-focused initiatives that originated from conversations with my colleagues in Leadership TECH. I credit the open, engaging, and innovative environment of Leadership TECH for creating the space for this to happen." --- Dr. Jeremy Schwehm

"The self-reflection process and the partnership style relationships I have developed through Leadership TECH gave me the confidence to apply for the program director position in strength and conditioning studies. This is a leadership role that I would have been hesitant to consider without my Leadership TECH experiences." --- Dr. Gina Kraft



# College Highlights

## ARTS AND HUMANITIES

### Department/Faculty Accomplishments

The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) Commission on Accreditation recently granted renewal of membership with the Bachelor of Arts in Music and Bachelor of Music Education degrees. The Commission commended the ATU “for its diligence evident throughout the reaccreditation process.”

Jason Ulsperger and Kristen Ulsperger’s “The Importance of Rituals in Understanding Mass Homicide: A Structural Ritualization Analysis of the Ronald Gene Simmons Murders” was published in the book *Rituals: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives* (2017).

Arkansas Tech professors Micah Dean Hicks and Tori Sharpe will be participating in the “Triple Threat Author Reading” at Dog Ear Books on Friday, January 27 at 5:00 PM.

### ATU students earn trip to Washington, D.C.

Two Arkansas Tech University students are examining the transition of power from one presidential administration to another during a two-week academic program in Washington, D.C. Sophomore Allison Edwards of Perryville and junior Savannah Dye of Russellville earned an opportunity to spend January 8-21 in the nation’s capitol as part of a presidential inauguration academic seminar hosted by the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars.

### Students attend Arkansas Symposium for Psychology Students

On December 3, students from the Behavioral Sciences Department participated in the first Arkansas Symposium for Psychology Students (ASPS) Winter Poster Session at the University of Central Arkansas Student Center. ASPS is a organization that, since 1985, has provided students an opportunity to present research and to experience a professional conference. Students presenting posters were Mason Sims (with Dr. David Osburn), Katherine Nunez, and Sarah Rutherford. Casey Anderson, Sidney Bowman, April Collins, Jaelyn Herrera, Dr. Jordan Thibodeaux, Dr. Jennifer Samson, and Dr. Jason Warnick also attended.



## eTECH

### Faculty Accomplishments

Jennifer Saxton, Instructor of Professional Studies, recently received her Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Certificate of Mastery through DePaul University. During this four-course certification process, students learned various standards of Prior Learning Assessment using the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) PLA Standards.

Jeff Aulgur, Department Head and Assistant Professor of Professional Studies, had his presentation, *Can Written Freirean Dialogues Enhance the Asynchronous Learning Environment*, accepted for the Adult Higher Learning Alliance (AHEA) 2017 Annual Conference, which will be held March 8-10 in Orlando, Florida.

### Music Events

ATU Jazz Ensemble Concert  
Friday, February 10

ATU Chamber & Concert Chorale  
Concert, Thursday, February 23

### Theatre Events

*The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is a musical comedy about spelling bee hijinks, full of humor and audience interaction. It is directed by Ardith Morris with musical direction by Ken Futterer. It runs February 9-11 at 8:00 PM and February 12 at 2:00 PM in the Technion Theatre. Tickets are \$8 ATU, \$12 general admission, and are available at the door.

*“A liberal education is at the heart of a civil society, and at the heart of a liberal education is the act of teaching.”*

*-A. Bartlett Giamatti*

### Communication & Journalism Graduate Accomplishments

Anderson Terry (Broadcast Journalism) was hired by KHBS/KHOG-TV in Fayetteville as an evening news producer.

Taylor Kendrick (Broadcast Journalism) was hired by KARK-TV (NBC) in Little Rock as evening news assignments editor.

Alexis Johnson and undergraduate student Kirsten Dunn had their paper, “Exploration of Lived Experiences for Girls Who Game: A Collaborative Autoethnography,” accepted to the Southwest PCA/ACA conference.



## EDUCATION

### *What If... Working Lunch*

In response to an invitation sent to all faculty, a luncheon meeting was sponsored by the Dean's office/COE partnership office and facilitated by Dr. Rebecca Shopfner on January 12, 2017, to generate ideas for the future. The "What If" luncheon allowed participants to create, dream for the future, and think "outside the box." Thirteen participants volunteered to work together to develop and dream of the future. Some of the main topics generated included dreams of internships, technology, student support, inclusion of *all* education majors, action research, resources, a professional learning school, and other miscellaneous ideas.



### *Spring 2017 Internships*

The ATU spring teaching interns began their final journey in preparation to become licensed educators. Across the state, 126 future educators are teaching in 72 schools. These interns are located as far in the east as Cross County, in the south as far as Pine Bluff, to the north at Omaha, and to the west at Van Buren. One intern is teaching at the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center near Alexander. The intern in Cross County was interviewed and selected by the district for the first ever "paid" internship, which was made possible by a grant written by and awarded to the district. They chose Arkansas Tech University College of Education as their resource to partner with their grants.

## NATURAL & HEALTH SCIENCES

### *Faculty Accomplishments*

John Watson attended the annual Joint Mathematics Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, and presented a paper on using open resources in lieu of a text for the general education math requirement for non-STEM majors.

### *ATU Students, Faculty to Attend STEM Posters at the Capitol*

Several ATU faculty and students will be attending a STEM Posters at the Capitol event at the Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock on February 15, 2017. This event will provide an opportunity for STEM undergraduates to come together from colleges and university all across Arkansas to discuss their work with elected state officials, members of the media, and the general public. Over 110 undergraduate students representing 15 colleges and universities will be in attendance. ATU's own Jacob Pinkerton, Sara Warrick, and David Ryan Williams will present posters at the event. A full list of presenters and presentation times can be found [here](#).

### *Active Shooter Sessions*

Informational sessions about civilian response to active shooter situations will be offered from 9:30–10:30 AM in the Doc Bryan Student Services Center Lecture Hall on the following dates:

Tuesday, January 31

Monday, February 6

The information sessions will be hosted by the ATU Department of Public Safety and the ATU Division of Student Services. Members of the ATU community are invited to attend.

### *Williamson Dining Room*

Williamson Dining Room lunches begin on Thursday, February 9. Lunch will be served from 11:00 AM–1:00 PM; the cost is \$9.95.

*"All the world is a  
laboratory for the  
inquiring mind."  
- Martin H. Fischer*





# Announcements

## TIME OUT FOR TECH

All high school seniors and their families are invited to Time Out for Tech 2017, which will be hosted by the Arkansas Tech University Office of Admissions on Thursday, January 26. The annual preview day provides prospective Arkansas Tech students with a chance to learn more about the academic programs, student housing options, and campus life opportunities available on the Russellville campus.

## ATU RANKED #1 IN ONLINE VALUE

According to an independent review of data by [www.bestvalueschools.com](http://www.bestvalueschools.com), Arkansas Tech University is the best value in online higher education in Arkansas. Best Value Schools analyzed online enrollment statistics, graduation rates, and in-state tuition rates over a three-year span from 2012-15. Based on that criteria and additional factors, ATU received a score of 100, leading the rankings for Arkansas for the 2016-17 academic year.

## GOVERNOR APPOINTS ALUMNUS AS NEW BOARD MEMBER



Governor Asa Hutchinson has appointed Eric Burnett of Fort Smith to the Arkansas Tech University Board of Trustees.; he will succeed John Ed Chambers III of Danville. Burnett will serve a five-year term through January 2022. This will mark Burnett's second term on the ATU Board of Trustees. He was a member of the board from January 2011-January 2016 and was chairman of the board in 2015. Burnett is also an Arkansas Tech alumnus who earned four letters as a member of the Wonder Boys basketball team.

## ATU WELCOMES NEW FACULTY

Arkansas Tech University welcomed some new faces late last fall and this spring, as new faculty members have recently joined the ATU team.

### COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

Kimberly DuVall Renteria, Visiting Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice (Fall 2016)  
Stacy McKisick, Visiting Instructor of Rehabilitation Science (Spring 2017)

### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Peng Huang, Associate Professor of Finance & Economics (Spring 2017)

### COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES

Morgan Barrett, Visiting Instructor of Mechanical Engineering (Fall 2016)  
Aboozar Mosleh, Visiting Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering (Fall 2016)  
Nansong Wu, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering (Fall 2016)  
Kaiman Karen Zeng, Visiting Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering (Fall 2016)  
Bethany Swindell, Visiting Instructor of Emergency Management (Spring 2017)

### COLLEGE OF NATURAL & HEALTH SCIENCES

Santoshi Nandivada, Assistant Professor of Physics (Spring 2017)



*Time Out for  
Tech  
January 26*