

Fellows Announced for Inaugural Dean's Leadership Fellow Program



New leadership fellows Professor Jennifer Grewe and Jairo Hernandez, CEHS database administrator, meet with Associate Dean Sylvia Read and Communications Director Alicia Richmond.

The Dean's Leadership Fellow Program, which was introduced to CEHS faculty and staff late last year, has announced the leadership fellows who will participate in the program for 2025. The program is designed to give fellows insight into the administrative and operational structure of the college. They will also develop strategies to address leadership opportunities and challenges, identify and cultivate personal leadership values and skills, and apply skills through completion of a leadership project that will benefit the college.

"We are delighted to introduce and welcome the inaugural class of CEHS Dean's Leadership fellows," said Shawn Whiteman, interim dean of CEHS. "These fellows will advance the multiple missions of the college, bringing new perspectives and lasting impacts through their projects. The program also offers a unique opportunity for fellows to develop their leadership skills and gain invaluable insight into the inner workings of our college's administrative and operational structures. We thank them for their interest and look forward to collaborating with them in the months ahead."

Over the coming year, participants will be mentored by one or more members of the college leadership team, engage with other leadership fellows, and complete assignments and activities supporting leadership development. The

capstone of the annual program will be the leadership projects.

The new program is made possible through Endowed Deanship resources provided by the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation. For its inaugural year, the following individuals were awarded fellowships:

Jennifer Grewe: Improving Student Engagement and Instructor Presence in Online



Classes

Jennifer Grewe, associate professor of psychology, will complete a project that addresses the need for comprehensive support for online classes specifically to increase student engagement and create an instructor presence in the online class.

She explains that, although USU does provide some support for online courses, it does not include an extensive list of ideas or resources for addressing student engagement and instructor presence. Grewe plans to create a process whereby faculty can self-assess their online classes and determine where they need support. She will then collect ideas and create resources that utilize evidence-based strategies to increase student engagement and optimize instructor presence.

"I want to involve faculty in developing these processes and strategies," she says. "After completion, I want to find ways to promote the program so faculty are more aware of its availability, how it can be easily implemented, and how it can be a positive and helpful process."

**Jairo Hernandez:**

Exploring Innovative Technologies and Their Applications in Monthly Podcast

Jairo Hernandez, senior database administrator in the Dean's Office, aims to establish a community that is committed to exploring innovative technologies and their applications in daily work. His goal is to create a space where faculty and staff can learn about emerging tools, ask questions, and share success stories in a collaborative environment. To that end, he will create and host a monthly podcast called "Hour in (Ed)Tech."

"I am eager to engage with mentors and fellow participants, exchanging insights on how best to motivate and support colleagues in adopting meaningful technology solutions," says Hernandez. "I believe this project will promote a forward-thinking culture that is more informed about technology applications within our college. As the host, I will draw upon the expertise of university staff, administrators, and faculty leaders to ensure a well-rounded conversation each month."

Each hour-long monthly episode will feature a 20- to 30-minute presentation on a specific technology, followed by a discussion and Q&A. Episodes and highlights will be made available to faculty, staff, and students via email newsletter, a webpage, and YouTube.

**Kaitlin Bundock:**

Increasing Faculty Capacity for High-Quality Graduate Student Advising

Kaitlin Bundock, associate professor in Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling, is currently working to improve faculty capacity for graduate student advising within her home department by improving efficiencies, creating student supports, and providing faculty with resources. "The majority of faculty in SPERC are pre-tenure faculty, and many have expressed graduate student advising challenges, such as supporting students with producing high-quality writing and providing students with effective and supportive mentoring when limited time is available," explains Bundock.

As a Dean's Leadership Fellow, Bundock's efforts within SPERC will be expanded to the college level. The project will focus on increasing faculty capacity for high-quality graduate student advising and promoting graduate student success. Bundock will conduct a needs assessment to identify faculty and student perceptions of and needs related to advancing high-quality graduate student mentoring and advising. Next, she will build from and contribute to existing repositories of resources available on the USU School of Graduate Studies and CEHS Office of Graduate Studies websites. She will then host professional learning communities focused on high-quality graduate student advising and mentoring for CEHS faculty.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to have a college-wide impact and am looking forward to connecting with faculty about effective graduate student mentoring practices," says Bundock.



Matthew Wappett:

Improving Support and Resources in Post-Award Grant Management

Matthew Wappett, executive director of the Institute for Disability Research, Policy, and Practice, will develop a comprehensive and user-friendly guide for principal investigators in CEHS that will focus on post-award management. The guide will be a dynamic and regularly updated resource that addresses the full lifecycle of post-award management. It will offer clear and concise explanations of university policies and procedures, provide practical tools and templates, and connect PIs with relevant offices and personnel.

"I believe that developing user-friendly, accessible resources for PIs in the college will significantly enhance our capacity to secure and effectively manage extramural funding, which will ultimately benefit the entire college," says Wappett.

Wappett views this fellowship as an opportunity to improve research infrastructure and grow the extramural funding portfolio of the college. He will collaborate with the Dean's office, the CEHS Office of Research, and other colleagues to make a lasting impact on the college's research enterprise.