

Speech and Hearing Sciences Professor Stephanie Borrie Named Interim Associate Dean for Research

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Stephanie Borrie, Ph.D., new interim associate dean for research in CEHS

Stephanie Borrie, Ph.D., professor in the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department, has been named interim associate dean for research in the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services (CEHS) at Utah State University. In the role of associate dean for research, Borrie will lead the CEHS Office of Research Services, which works to enrich the research climate across the college by supporting proposal development, providing statistical consulting services and methodological expertise, and fostering meaningful research collaborations in the college community. Additionally, Borrie will engage with national and international research organizations, participate in interdisciplinary collaborations within USU and other institutions, and oversee the diverse infrastructures that sustain the college's impactful research enterprise.

"I am delighted that Dr. Stephanie Borrie has agreed to serve as interim associate dean for research in the College of Education and Human Services," said Interim Dean Shawn Whiteman. "Dr. Borrie brings a distinguished record of scholarship and leadership that will strengthen the college's research mission and facilitate faculty, staff, and students to pursue innovative, interdisciplinary inquiry. Her extensive expertise—spanning foundational research and clinical translation—positions her exceptionally to support and advance the diverse research programs across the CEHS."

Borrie is well suited for the position. She joined USU in 2014 as an assistant professor in the then Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education. Over the past 12 years, Borrie has served as principal investigator (PI) on seven grants that total more than \$6M. Her research centers on improving communication for people with speech disorders that result from neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease, ALS, and stroke. She currently leads two NIH-funded projects, including a 5-year clinical trial, that develop innovative strategies to help people with Parkinson's disease and their communities communicate more successfully.

Reflecting on her new leadership role, Borrie said, "Research thrives when people are supported to adapt and innovate together. My vision for this role is to cultivate a culture of flexibility, curiosity, and collaboration where our faculty and students feel empowered to take risks, pursue bold ideas, and connect their work to meaningful human outcomes."

In March 2024, Borrie presented at a USU-sponsored Blue Plate Research Series in Salt Lake City focusing on the science of the art of communication. She was also a speaker for TEDxUSU in 2017, where she discussed vocal entrainment, the conversational "dance" that occurs when two people align their speech patterns. Her work shows how understanding these alignment patterns can improve communication and strengthen interpersonal connection.

In 2024, Endowed Dean Al Smith named Borrie one of two inaugural dean's scholars in the college, a position she still holds. "This honorific recognition is given to mid-career scholars who have shown particularly strong performance as well as an accelerating trajectory of growth and impact that will meaningfully strengthen the college," said Smith. The three-year \$45,000 award supports the continued advancement of these scholars' research programs.

As director of USU's Human Interaction Lab, Borrie mentors post-doctoral, graduate, and undergraduate researchers, and collaborate with experts across disciplines to study how people adapt to and succeed in communication affected by neurological disorders. The lab's NIH-funded work bridges basic and clinical science, advancing innovative solutions that strengthen human communication and connection while modeling how collaborative, translational research can drive meaningful community impact.

A native of New Zealand, Borrie earned her Ph.D. in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand and completed postdoctoral training in the Motor Speech Disorders Lab at Arizona

State University before joining the faculty at USU. She remains deeply committed to advancing research that bridges science and human connection.