USU College of Engineering Welcomes New Assistant Professor | College of Engineering

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News Release — January 19, 2022 — Sierra Young is joining the College of Engineering as an assistant professor in the Utah Water Research Lab and the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. In addition to mentoring students and teaching undergraduate and graduate courses, her job includes research on environmental and agricultural field robotics and sensing.

“I work with ground vehicles, aquatic vehicles and aerial vehicles and develop new kinds of sensing mechanisms and autonomy to help us learn more about agricultural and natural systems,” Young said.

Sierra Young is a new assistant professor in the Utah State University College of Engineering. She works in the Utah Water Research Lab and the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. (USU)

Young moved to Logan from Raleigh, North Carolina and began her work at Utah State on Jan. 1. Prior to coming to USU, she worked as a visiting scholar in the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department at Iowa State University and then as an assistant professor in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at North Carolina State.

“I love doing fieldwork and have operated ground/aerial/aquatic field robots at sites ranging from oyster leases at the North Carolina coast, to urban lakes in Southern India, to cornfields in Illinois,” Young said.

Young earned a bachelor’s degree from Cornell University and a master’s and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. All of her degrees are in civil and environmental engineering.

The previous experience Young had at a land grant institution is part of what drew her to Utah State University, and she is looking forward to opportunities to collaborate with researchers from different departments and programs.

“I'm looking forward to working in the water lab, but also being able to work across agriculture and environmental engineering and bridge that gap is something that I'm really excited about doing here,” she said.

Research Young is currently working on includes using aquatic surface vehicles and aerial vehicles to improve water quality monitoring and using remote sensing and drones to monitor soil moisture.

Young moved to Logan with her spouse and two cats. Outside of work you can find her playing volleyball, checking out new restaurants or tackling projects around her house.

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