

# Faculty Promotions 2024

**04/05/2024**

Join the College of Engineering in congratulating our five newly promoted faculty members.

**Prof. Austin Ball (CEE) Promoted to Associate Professor of Practice**

Austin Ball joined the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department in 2018 as an assistant professor of practice after 15 years in the industry, working as a professional engineer for the state of Colorado, Idaho and Utah. He received a master's in civil and environmental engineering from Utah State University with an emphasis in structures in 2005. Ball's thesis focused on the modal analysis of a multi-span reverse curve steel girder bridge using computer modeling.

As a professor of practice, Ball teaches career practicality and provides valuable real-world insights into the engineering field. His primary goal is to provide guidance and assistance to students as they navigate their individual paths toward fulfilling and successful careers



**Dr. Matt Harris (MAE) Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure**

**Dr. Matt Harris (MAE) Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure**

Matt Harris joined USU's Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department in 2019. He holds a Ph.D. and a master's in aerospace engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M respectively.

Harris is an accomplished researcher and engineer. He has published more than fifty 50 journal publications and conference proceedings, as well as a book in 2023 titled "Optimal Spacecraft Guidance." Harris also holds three patents and is funded by numerous organizations including the United States Office of Naval Research, NASA and the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory. To date, he has earned over \$2 million in research funding as both PI and Co-PI.

**Dr. Jeffery Horsburgh (CEE) Promoted to Full Professor**

Jeff Horsburgh is an Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering and at the Utah Water Research Laboratory at Utah State University specializing in watershed hydrology, surface water quality and human dimensions of water use. He joined the CEE faculty in 2009. Horsburgh holds a Ph.D. and a master's in civil and environmental engineering and a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering, all from USU.



**Prof. Austin Ball (CEE) Promoted to Associate Professor of Practice**

Horsburgh has published research since 2005 and has published more than 50 peer-reviewed publications. He has earned funding from organizations such as the National Science Foundation and states including Utah, Idaho, Washington and Delaware.



Dr. Jeffery Horsburgh (CEE) Promoted to Full Professor



Dr. Hailei Wang (MAE) Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

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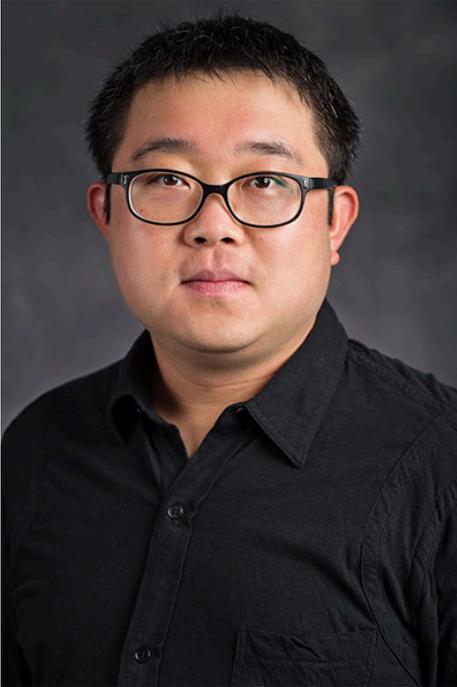
Prior to joining USU in August 2018, Hailei Wang worked at Oregon State University as a research faculty for ten years. He has broad research expertise in various thermal energy systems. Before going back to graduate school, Wang worked eight years in a natural gas research institute as a mechanical and process engineer.

Wang received his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from Oregon State University in 2006 and his master's from Texas Tech University in 2002. He holds an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Southwestern Petroleum University in China. He currently runs the Energy Technology & Innovation lab, specializing in developing clean and efficient energy systems and novel thermal transport processes in energy conversion and storage.

Dr. Zhen Zhang (ECE) Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

Zhen Zhang joined the USU Electrical and Computer Engineering Department in 2017. His research focuses on the modeling and verification of concurrent and stochastic systems, ranging from distributed protocols and asynchronous circuits to cyber-physical and synthetic biological systems. Zhang has a wide variety of experience with topics including principles of cyber-physical systems, formal methods, stochastic verification and much more.

Zhang graduated with a Ph.D. in computer engineering from the University of Utah in 2016 and a master's in computer science from the University of Manchester in 2010. He also received his undergraduate degree in electronic and electrical engineering from the Dublin Institute of Technology. To date, he has published nearly 30 papers and has created several formal models for fault-tolerant links routing protocol for a two-by-two Network-on-Chip mesh in the process-algebraic language [LNT](#).



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