

FOUNDATION

AWARDS

MIDDLE
TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY.

I AM
true
BLUE



Samantha Johnson

*Department of Health and Human Performance
Outstanding Teaching Award*

Samantha Johnson is an assistant professor in the Exercise Science program at Middle Tennessee State University. She earned a Ph.D. in Human Performance from MTSU, an M.S. in Exercise Science from the University of North Alabama, and a B.S. in Exercise Science from Northern Kentucky University. She is grateful to work at a university that gives faculty access to the necessary resources for continual professional development, including the provision of a quality, meaningful educational experience for all students.

Her interest in promoting high-impact teaching practices has led her to participate in several pedagogical research projects. Beyond that, Johnson worked with a multi-institutional team to develop an open-access journal for pedagogical research in kinesiology, titled *Educational Practices in Kinesiology*. She also enjoys helping students pursue their own research interests, as her mentors have done for her.

Additionally, she serves as a senior associate editor for the *International Journal of Exercise Science*, which is a journal that aims to engage students in the research process, from serving as peer reviewers to the requirement of all submitted articles having at least one student author.

Beyond this, she also conducts research that focuses on promoting longevity in older adults, aiming to improve our understanding of the changes in function over time, and identifying interventions to facilitate improvement or mitigate losses.



Katie Schrodtt

*Department of Elementary and
Special Education*

Outstanding Teaching Award

Katie Schrodtt is an educator with nearly 20 years of experience as a classroom teacher, reading specialist, literacy consultant, and professor. She received her B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of North Texas.

After moving to Tennessee, Schrodtt completed her M.Ed. and Ph.D. at MTSU, where she was awarded Outstanding Doctoral Student. Right before graduating, she and her husband, Jacob, had their twins, Matilda and Monroe, 10 weeks early at Vanderbilt hospital, where she finished her dissertation in the neonatal intensive care unit.

From 2013–18, Schrodtt worked as a literacy consultant, adjunct professor, and full-time temporary faculty at MTSU and Lipscomb University. In 2018, she was hired in MTSU's Department of Elementary and Special Education, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses focused on literacy instruction and research. She has mentored many students on projects and served on dissertation committees as affiliate faculty in the Literacy Studies Ph.D. program.

Serving teachers and children is at the heart of her work. Each semester, Schrodtt plans and implements community-wide literacy events and teacher professional development opportunities, including Family Literacy Nights with Read To Succeed; the Southern Kid Literary Festival with Rutherford Arts Alliance; literacy and math training with Project OPTIMAL and Murfreesboro City Schools; and writing conferences and workshops with Middle Tennessee Writing Project.

Her teaching practices have led to multiple awards and honors, including Phi Kappa Phi Influential Faculty Member, MTSU Person Who Makes a Difference, and the 2019–20 EXL Outstanding Faculty Award. In 2020, she gained national recognition as the recipient of the Bonnie Campbell Hill National Literacy Leader award.

Schrodtt's research interests include early reading and writing achievement and motivation. She has more than 30 publications and earned approximately \$640,000 in grants in collaboration with her colleagues. You can find her work in leading journals such as *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, *The Reading Teacher*, and *Young Children*. She is the director of the Middle Tennessee Writing Project and a consulting editor for *Young Children*.



Rebecca L. Seipelt-Thiemann

*Department of Biology
Outstanding Teaching Award*

Rebecca Seipelt-Thiemann, a molecular geneticist, grew up in rural Brown County, Ohio. After attending Berea College, where she majored in Biology, she pursued her doctoral degree in the Medical Microbiology and Immunology Department at the University of Kentucky. Her dissertation work focused on studying post-transcriptional gene regulation.

Seipelt-Thiemann continued to work on gene expression as a postdoctoral scholar, this time in budding yeast, at the School of Biological Sciences at Kentucky, where she became involved in the Preparing Future Faculty educational movement supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Since arriving at MTSU in 1999, she has been teaching and mentoring undergraduate, Honors thesis, master's, and doctoral students in general genetics, human genetics, bioinformatics, and genetics education. She has mentored numerous undergraduate research students, including 16 Honors thesis students, as well as seven master's students and two doctoral students.

Seipelt-Thiemann is committed to an active learning classroom that focuses on problem-solving using a flipped classroom design and course-based undergraduate research. Her research interests include designing better ways for students to learn genetics and investigating mechanisms of gene expression regulation, particularly alternative mRNA splicing at the transcriptome level.



Katie G. Gruber

*Department of Communication Studies
Outstanding Teaching in General Education*

Katie G. Gruber is a lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies. She earned a B.A. in Film and Digital Media and an M.A. in Communication Studies from Baylor University. She is currently pursuing her Doctor of Education in Assessment, Learning, and Student Success with a Higher

Education concentration at MTSU.

Gruber taught at Baylor University for four years before joining the faculty at MTSU in 2014. She focuses on the General Education course fundamentals of communication, as well as small group communication.

Gruber seeks to enthusiastically incorporate the principles of public speaking into the everyday lives of students, establishing community and building opportunities for reflection and integration. Her teaching philosophy centers on creating a culture of openness, trust, and discussion, which empowers students to communicate openly with their classmates.

Her research has focused on friends with benefits relationships, prenatal loss, learning communities, and open educational resources (OER). She received three grants in 2021–22 to support her use of OER in COMM 2200 – Fundamentals of Communication, adopting and adapting course materials to replace the standard textbook. In spring 2022, she produced a Pressbook titled *Principles of Public Speaking*, which is used by several faculty in the Department of Communication Studies.

She completed the Academy of Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows program in 2017 and was recognized as an influential faculty member by Phi Kappa Phi in 2018 for “encouraging students to strive for academic excellence.” She actively participates and presents at professional conferences, such as the National Communication Association (NCA), the Tennessee Communication Association (TCA), and the Tennessee Association for Student Success and Retention (TASSR). She is actively involved in the Communication Studies Department, serving as the recruiting coordinator, an evaluator for the General Education Assessment seven times, and a frequent reviewer or judge for the annual speech contest.

Gruber is grateful to those who have encouraged and uplifted her, including her supportive husband and 4-year-old son. She would not be where she is today without the continued guidance of mentors and inspiration from colleagues, and their examples to be a better instructor.



Richard Lewis

*Department of Media Arts
Outstanding Achievement in
Instructional Technology Award*

Richard Lewis earned a B.A. in Fine Art Drawing from Xavier University in Cincinnati and an M.F.A. in Animation from the Savannah College of Art and Design. He moved to Los Angeles to create visual effects, titles, motion graphics, illustrations, and matte paintings for numerous projects, films, and television shows, including the *X-Files* hi-def conversion, the *Unsolved Mysteries* repackaging, two seasons of *Life After People* on the History Channel, *Vanished with Beth Holloway* on Lifetime, and five years of *Art Mann Presents* on ASXtv/HDNET. He also directed a team of animators for two seasons of *The High Fructose Adventures of Annoying Orange* on Cartoon Network.

Since coming to MTSU in 2017, Lewis has taught a wide range of animation courses and has certified each with the MT Engage designation. He has incorporated client-based projects into courses, including having students work on modeling historic visualizations for “Hidden Town in 3D,” a digital history project, and create visual effects for the award-winning short film ROAM. Along with curricular committee and development work, he spearheaded the creation of the new Motion Design concentration in Video and Film Production, utilizing courses from both Media Arts and the Department of Art and Design.

Lewis has been working to grow the esports footprint at MTSU since taking over as the advisor for the Esports Club. For the past five years, he has served as the curator for the annual Faculty Submitted Student Work Exhibition hosted by the ACM SIGGRAPH Education Committee and has presented his work at the ACM SIGGRAPH conference. He co-directed the animated virtual reality short film *What Took You So Long*, which received the U.S. Broadcast Education Association Best of Festival Interactive Media Award, and has been assisting with projects for the new MT Imagine Animation Studio.



Lucy M. Matthews

*Department of Marketing
Outstanding Public Service Award*

Lucy Matthews, an associate professor of Marketing, joined Middle Tennessee State University in August 2015. Since then, she has volunteered for a variety of organizations in the community and in academic organizations related to marketing, taking on several leadership positions.

In 2016, Matthews joined the development board for Ascend Federal Credit Union and was appointed to the board of directors in 2018. She went on to serve as secretary and vice chair on the board as well as chair of the governance committee. Matthews has attended several conferences to stay abreast of the ever-changing financial industry.

With the Society for Marketing Advances (SMA), Matthews has served as a session chair and track chair, led workshops, and joined the executive committee. She has been on the group's board of governors since 2019 and is currently serving as president.

Matthews also is involved with the Atlantic Marketing Association and currently serves on the board of governors after serving as track chair for three years, program chair (2020), and president (2021). She has been a reviewer for many marketing journals, serves on three editorial review boards, has been a special issue editor four times, conducted unpaid consulting for various organizations, served as a judge for high school marketing competitions, and volunteers at her church. In 2021, Matthews was honored with the E. W. "Wink" Midgett Distinguished Service Award from the Jones College of Business at MTSU for service both in and outside of MTSU.



DeAnne Priddis

Department of Communication Studies

Outstanding Public Service Award

DeAnne Priddis spent nearly two decades in both nonprofit and corporate environments, specializing in human resources or training and development. With a Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, she specializes in conflict resolution within families and organizations. Since

2016, she has been part of Middle Tennessee State University's Communication Studies Department.

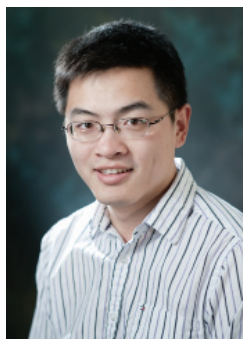
Priddis' passion for communication, paired with experience, enables her to conduct impactful training sessions for audiences on such topics as effective communication, conflict resolution, intergenerational relations, collaborating with organizations, professional self-presentation, workplace improvement, and family addiction.

As an educator, Priddis has nurtured meaningful experiential learning (EXL) partnerships with local companies and nonprofits. Her classes enable students to develop and present training presentations for the general public or for notable partners such as the state of Tennessee, Nashville MTA, Cigna, Franke, Murfreesboro Medical Clinic, and Greenhouse Ministries.

Priddis has served on the board of directors of the Association for Talent Development Nashville chapter since 2017 and currently serves as president-elect. Additionally, she is on the board of directors for the National Rural Institute on Alcohol, Drugs, and Addictions and volunteers as a civil mediator for the Nashville Conflict Resolution Center. Priddis has served as division chair for both the Central States Communication Association and the National Communication Association.

Priddis is a recipient of three prestigious awards within the past five years, including the 2023 Career Influencer Award from the MTSU Career Development Center, the MTSU 2022 Outstanding EXL Faculty Award, and the 2019 Outstanding Service Award from the National Communication Association Training and Development Division.

Priddis makes service a priority at MTSU, too. She serves as the Outreach/Recruitment Committee chair and internship coordinator for Communication Studies. She is the faculty advisor for two student organizations and she has served on several department, college, and University committees. Lastly, she is an active member of the MTSU community by attending sporting events, theatre and music performances, and other events to support our University.



Mengliang Zhang

Department of Chemistry

Distinguished Early Career Research Award

Mengliang Zhang is an associate professor of Chemistry and a faculty member in the Molecular Biosciences Ph.D. and Forensic Science programs. As a principal investigator, he has received over \$1.16 million in federal grant funds in the past five years from various funding agencies, such as the National Science

Foundation, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Department of Justice. He is also the co-principal investigator on two other grants from the U.S. Department of Energy and USDA.

MTSU students (12 undergraduate, one master's, and three Ph.D.) involved with his research have presented at 20 national or international conferences and have been co-authors with Zhang on 13 publications since 2018. His students have won multiple awards/scholarships, such as a Barry Goldwater Scholarship, first place in student poster presentations at the Tennessee Academy of Science meetings (twice), first place in the MTSU Scholars Week poster exposition (twice), and eight MTSU Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity (URECA) grants.

Zhang's research interests revolve around chemical analysis by mass spectrometric methods and chemometrics. Projects include the analysis of forensic textile fibers collected at crime scenes, less volatile components of ignitable liquid residues from fire debris, secondary metabolites from food and agricultural materials, organic ligands in semiconductor quantum dots, and toxic compounds such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in wildfire smoke. Recently, his collaborative research on bioactive compound analysis in the Tennessee wild American ginseng, the DART-MS characterization of ligands on nanocrystals, and the review paper on metabolomics in food and agriculture were selected for the covers of *Chemistry & Biodiversity*, *Langmuir*, and *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, respectively.

After obtaining a Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry from Ohio University, Zhang conducted postdoctoral research in the Food Composition and Methods Development Lab at USDA. He received the Tomas A. Hirschfeld Scholar Award from the Federation of Analytical Chemistry and Spectroscopy Societies (FACSS) and the John A. Milner Fellowship from USDA and the National Institutes of Health. Since joining MTSU in 2017, Zhang has served as session chair at the FACSS national conferences for five years and was elected to serve on the *Journal of Forensic Sciences* editorial board in 2022.



Hanna Terletska

*Department of Physics and Astronomy
Distinguished Senior Research Award*

Hanna Terletska is an associate professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy and leads the MTSU Quantum Science Initiative (mtsu.edu/quantum). She is a computational and theoretical physicist with a diverse background in quantum systems featuring strong electron interactions and systems with disorder.

She earned her B.S. in Physics from Drohobych Ivan Franko State University in Ukraine in 2003 and her Ph.D. in Physics from Florida State University in 2011. She joined MTSU in 2017.

Terletska's research portfolio includes 38 high-impact journal articles and more than 70 presentations at prestigious national and international venues. She has received multiple national awards, including the National Science Foundation Early Career Development (CAREER) award, the national KITP Scholar award, and the MTSU Honors College Exemplary Service Faculty Award.

Terletska is the principal investigator on five external grants (funded and recommended), four National Science Foundation, and one Department of Energy, with a total of about \$3 million. Her expertise extends to serving on national committees, such as organizing the new PI meeting for NSF's Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) Directorate, being part of NSF's ACCESS review committee, and serving as an annual reviewer of proposals for Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences. She has reviewed numerous NSF and DOE projects, as well as for esteemed journals like *Nature Physics*, *Physical Review Letters*, and *Physical Review B*.

Terletska actively supports women in physics at MTSU, acting as a faculty mentor and committee member of MTSU Women in STEM.

She also has been instrumental in driving quantum education at MTSU. She successfully piloted a new quantum computing course in spring 2023 and organized a high school summer camp in quantum computing. Additionally, she has conducted multiple workshops for 16–20 students, emphasizing the importance of quantum technologies and their potential for the future.



Tony Rodriguez

Department of Art and Design

Distinguished Early Career

Creative Activity Award

Cuban American illustrator and educator Tony Rodriguez teaches illustration at Middle Tennessee State University. His work infuses flat color with bold line to convey a sense of spontaneity and simplicity.

Although the art is created digitally, it has the look of traditional pen and ink gestural, dynamic, and expressionistic drawings.

His works have been recognized by the Society of Illustrators in New York, Communication Arts, NBCUniversal, *Creative Quarterly*, *3x3*, *American Illustration*, *Latin American Ilustración*, The Illustration Academy, Visual Arts Passage, *Illustration Age*, *Applied Arts*, *Entertainment Tonight*, the Society for News Design, Grey Cube Gallery, and the United Kingdom's World Illustration Awards.

U.S. and international clients include *Rolling Stone*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *The Village Voice*, *The New Republic*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *American Cowboy* magazine, *Computer Arts* magazine, *WIRED*, *Country Weekly*, *DAS Magazine*, *Blow Up* magazine, *Yankee Magazine*, *Nurant Magazine*, *Ace Entertainment*, Facebook TV, *Humanities* magazine, *Rhapsody Magazine*, *Misc Magazine*, *Peeps Magazine*, the *London Evening Standard*, *BBC Focus Magazine*, *Milk X Magazine*, *Flaunt Magazine*, Black Key Group, Atlantic Records, Rock Ridge Music, The Beach Boys, and Red Light Management.

Rodriguez, an assistant professor in the Department of Art and Design, earned his M.F.A. at Marywood University in Pennsylvania and his B.F.A. at Savannah College of Art and Design.



Claudia Barnett

Department of English

Distinguished Senior Creative Activity Award

Claudia Barnett is a professor of English and a playwright. A graduate of the Bronx High School of Science, Cornell University, and Ohio State University, she has taught at MTSU since receiving her Ph.D. in 1994. She previously won the Distinguished Creative Activity Award in 2012, and she has also received the Distinguished Research Award (2003), the Bob Womack Distinguished Faculty Award (2006), and the Outstanding Honors Faculty Award (2013, 2017). She coordinates In Process: A Creative Writing Event Series, which she initiated in 2018.

Her experimental plays about women and history and science have been developed and performed at the Great Plains Theatre Conference, the Kennedy Center Page-to-Stage Festival, MultiStages, Venus Theatre, and the Women's Voices Theater Festival. Barnett's play *Aglaonike's Tiger* has seen several college productions, including the University of Pittsburgh, the Stella Adler Studio of Acting, Texas A&M University, and Western Kentucky University. She has been a Tennessee Playwrights Studio fellow, an Ingram New Works playwright-in-residence (Nashville Repertory Theatre), and Downstage Left resident playwright (Stage Left Theatre, Chicago). She also won the Andaluz Award Jury Prize from Fusion Theatre. Her collaboration with Pipeline-Collective, *Outside of Here*, a 12-hour play featuring three dozen performers, premiered as a live broadcast event in 2021 and received the First Night Award for Outstanding Theatrical Event.

I Love You Terribly: Six Plays (2012); *No. 731 Degraw-street, Brooklyn, or Emily Dickinson's Sister: a play in two acts* (2015); and *Witches Vanish* (2021) are published by Carnegie Mellon University Press.



M. Jill Austin

*Department of Management
Career Achievement Award*

Jill Austin began her career at MTSU as assistant professor in 1985. She was tenured and promoted to associate professor in 1991 and to professor in 2001. For 28 years, she served as department chair in what is now the Department of Management. Austin earned a doctorate in Management from Mississippi State University and her B.B.A. and M.B.A. from Delta State University.

She teaches courses in the areas of business ethics, negotiation, decision-making, nonprofit management, and general management. In the 1990s, she was one of the first at MTSU to adopt video conferencing technology as a teaching approach, allowing for students from different schools to connect in one course. Her interest in asynchronous online learning led to her developing 10 different online courses. She was a finalist for the University teaching award three times and was recognized twice by MTSU for contributions to online learning.

Most of Austin's research contributions have been in the areas of business ethics, nonprofit management, leadership, and college teaching and learning. In the early years of her career, she wrote 29 comprehensive cases along with teaching notes for business strategy textbooks on companies such as Amazon, Revlon, and XM Satellite Radio. She has published 29 journal articles and given 16 academic presentations on topics including the development of experiential learning programs, job satisfaction of managers, the ethics of advertising, and social responsibility issues.

Austin is known for her commitment to service to the University and has chaired several major committees, including the Academic Master Plan Subcommittee, Compensation Pay Plan Committee, Merit Pay Task Force, Academic Computing Committee, and Faculty Senate Steering Committee. She also served as co-chair of the MTSU National Women's History Month, president of the Faculty Senate, and coordinator of the Jones College IGNITE career planning program. She was one of the founding members of the Department Chairs Council in 1996.

Perhaps the most impactful initiative Austin helped to develop is the EXL Scholars program. For four years, she led a committee in the development and implementation of a Quality Enhancement Plan that was part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reaffirmation process. This plan culminated in the development of the Experiential Learning Scholars Program, or EXL, where she served as director from 2006–12.

Austin’s passion for giving to the community is evident in her volunteer service on nonprofit boards. She served on the board for United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties for 12 years, spent 6 years as board president of Kymari House, and is currently serving a second term on the MTSU Foundation board. She is board president and co-founder of the Dow Street Community Music School in Murfreesboro since its opening in March 2023. In 2015, Rutherford Cable awarded Austin with the ATHENA Award, which recognizes professional excellence, efforts to improve quality of life for others, and mentorship of future leaders. For her service to United Way, she was recognized as Volunteer of the Year in 2015 and Board Member of the Year in 2023.



EMERITI



Teaching

Research

Service



Rebecca S. Calahan

*Professor Emerita
Mathematical Sciences*

After earning a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Auburn University, Rebecca Calahan became a professor in Mathematics at MTSU in 1990. Her area of research is combinatorics, and she has numerous publications in journals such as *Combinatorial Mathematics and Combinatorial Computing*, *Congressus Numerantium*, *Journal of Combinatorial Designs, Graphs and Combinatorics*, and *Discrete Mathematics*. In 1992, she attained the rank of fellow of the Institute of Combinatorics and Applications.

Calahan's first teaching assignment was with a second-grade class in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Returning to the U.S., she spent her career as a mathematics professor at MTSU, where she taught a wide range of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She served as master's thesis advisor, Ph.D. dissertation committee member, and McNair Scholar mentor. She served as Mathematics graduate student supervisor, providing guidance and training to graduate teaching assistants as they tutored and taught. She was a finalist for the MTSU Foundation Teaching Award.

Calahan started and directed Camp PRISM, a collaboration between MTSU's College of Basic and Applied Sciences and Murfreesboro City Schools providing summer enrichment activities in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology. Camp PRISM was the first of its type to be offered in Murfreesboro and received an award for Excellence in Education.

In 2010, Calahan extended Camp PRISM to an afterschool program. She served as co-director of MTSU's Expanding Your Horizons program, now Tennessee Girls in STEM. Calahan was also involved with Club MARVEL, a partnership that brought at-risk fourth- and fifth-grade students to MTSU for Saturday sessions.

Calahan established the Scotty Tucker Memorial Scholarship and the Jim and Lucinda Lea Mathematics Scholarship. She was co-principal investigator for the NASA-funded Project NOVA. In 2012, Calahan was awarded the MTSU Foundation Award for Public Service.



Chong Cheng

Professor Emeritus

Engineering Technology

Chong Chen earned his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at the University of Kentucky in 1990. Directly after, he started to work for the Department of Engineering Technology at MTSU, where he remained until his retirement in December 2021.

Chen's areas of expertise include electrical machines, electromagnetic fields, and controls. During his years at MTSU, Chen created a new programmable logic controllers laboratory. He also fully updated the industrial electricity laboratory and the instrumentation and control laboratory.

Chen was hired for the MTSU Engineering Technology programs created in the second half of the 1980s, and he participated in the development and ABET accreditations of those programs. He was the coordinator of the Electromechanical Engineering Technology (EMET) program for many years and led the work for its ABET accreditation in 2012 and 2018. ABET awarded this program six years of accreditation each time, which is the longest possible accreditation period. Before serving as the coordinator of EMET, Chen was the Engineering Technology Department graduate program coordinator for several years. Additionally, he contributed to the establishment of the Mechatronics Engineering program.

Chen continually worked on individual and collaborative research with the other faculty members. He published 26 papers in professional journals and presented at conferences. He also served in the MTSU Faculty Senate and on several University committees.

Chen has been a licensed professional electrical engineer in the state of Tennessee since 1992. Aside from using his professional experiences in his teaching work, he also has provided consulting work to several local and out-of-state companies. Lastly, he has been an instructor for PDHonline.org, which provides continuing education to licensed professional engineers nationwide.



John Dougan

*Professor Emeritus
Recording Industry*

John Dougan, a professor in the Department of Recording Industry at Middle Tennessee State University, teaches about the music business and popular music. He received his B.A. in English from Westfield State University in Massachusetts and an M.A. and Ph.D. in American Studies from the College

of William and Mary.

Prior to coming to MTSU, he spent 15 years as a freelance music critic, contributing essays and reviews on music and popular culture to numerous magazines and newspapers, including *Rolling Stone* and *Spin*. He has published dozens of artist biographies and discographies for the All-Music Guide series of books and website, and has published essays and reviews in *American Music*, *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Appalachian Journal*, *Journal of Southern History*, the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, and online publications *Popmatters* and *Perfect Sound Forever*.

He has published two books: *The Who Sell Out* (Continuum, 2006) and *The Mistakes of Yesterday, The Hopes of Tomorrow: The Story of the Prisonaires* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), which was named Best Music Book of 2013 by the *Nashville Scene*.

A former executive director of the Kentucky-Tennessee American Studies Association, he also serves on the editorial boards of *Tracking Pop*, a popular music studies book series published by the University of Michigan Press, and the academic journal *Punk & Post Punk*. He recently completed co-editing an anthology of essays titled *The Life, Death, and Afterlife of the Record Store: A Global History* published by Bloomsbury Academic in July 2023.



Steven Estes

Professor Emeritus

Health and Human Performance

Steve Estes began his career as head coach of rowing at the University of San Diego in 1976, and then held faculty and administrator roles at California State University–Fullerton, State University of New York at Cortland, East Carolina University, and Missouri Western State University before coming to Middle

Tennessee State University.

His administrative appointments included director of the Center for Technology in Education at Cortland, department chair at both East Carolina University and Middle Tennessee State University, and dean of the College of Professional Studies at Missouri Western State University. He has served as president of the National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education (twice), as Faculty Senate chair at SUNY Cortland, and as the keynote speaker at academic and professional conferences in his specialty areas.

Estes' studies in kinesiology began with his career as an athlete. He was a rower as a student at San Diego State University, and he trained and competed for U.S. national rowing teams through 1987. Career highlights include two national championships in the elite eight-oared shell and seventh place at the 1982 World Rowing Championships in Lucerne, Switzerland.

After completing bachelor's and master's degrees at San Diego State, Estes earned his doctorate at Ohio State University. His research interests include the relationship of mind and body in sport and physical activity; philosophy of science in physical activity studies; postmodern sport; and the processes of leader development and team building. He is an author or co-author of four textbooks in kinesiology and articles on leadership in kinesiology and the military. Estes continues to study leader development processes and team building, and his studies in military leadership led to a commission in the Tennessee State Guard, where he holds the rank of major and serves as the G3/Operations Officer at Headquarters Company in Nashville.



Mary Ellen Fromuth

Professor Emerita
Psychology

Mary Ellen Fromuth received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Auburn University and completed a one-year internship in clinical psychology at Indiana University School of Medicine. After joining MTSU in 1989, Fromuth taught a variety of undergraduate courses (e.g., general psychology, child development, abnormal psychology, and child abnormal psychology), and graduate courses (e.g., psychopathology, psychological disorders in children, and practicum). She has chaired 54 master's and five Honors theses, as well as supervised other undergraduate and graduate research projects. She was the first coordinator of General Psychology.

Fromuth's research has focused on various aspects of interpersonal violence, particularly child sexual abuse. She has given close to 90 major regional, national, and international presentations. She has over 30 publications, and her research has been highly cited. She is particularly proud that most of her presentations and publications included MTSU undergraduate and graduate students as co-authors.

Fromuth was a member of at least one University committee every year for most of her tenure at MTSU. She was also the coordinator of the Clinical Psychology graduate program for 17 years. Fromuth was a member of many departmental committees, including two departmental chair searches.

With fellow professor Teresa Davis, she customized a general psychology textbook through six cycles. To date, the customization has generated over \$170,000 for a psychology student enrichment fund. For many years, Fromuth was a reviewer for the Southeastern Psychological Association conference and on the editorial board of the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. She also served as an oral examiner for professional licensing for the Tennessee Board of Examiners in Psychology.



Richard G. Moffett III

*Professor Emeritus
Psychology*

Richard G. Moffett III joined MTSU in 1991 and helped develop the nationally No. 1 ranked Industrial/Organizational Psychology master's program.

He earned a B.A. in Psychology from the University of South Florida, an M.S. in Psychology from Valdosta State College, and a Ph.D. in Psychology from Auburn University. Before coming to MTSU, he served as a psychological evaluator for the Alabama Department of Youth Services, a research analyst for Litton Computer Services, and a project associate for the office of the vice president for extension at Auburn University.

He has taught numerous undergraduate and graduate courses at MTSU, including Advanced Organizational Psychology and Organizational Surveys. In addition, he has directed numerous theses. His research has been published in journals such as the *Journal of Management*, *Group Dynamics*, the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, and *Human Factors*.

Moffett has served MTSU in numerous roles. He was I/O Psychology graduate program coordinator, I/O graduate program internship director, Faculty Senate liaison, and a member of the Faculty Senate. He was part of an eight-year research team of faculty and students from the departments of Aerospace and Psychology conducting team research in the NASA FOCUS Lab. In 2004, he helped create the MTSU Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness, a self-funding consulting center that continues to serve as a training center for graduate and undergraduate I/O Psychology students. He became the first director of the center and later its associate director. In 2009–10, Moffett served as interim assistant vice provost for Academic Affairs to help facilitate a reorganization of colleges at MTSU.

He is most proud of positively impacting the lives of the students he has taught and mentored and, through them, helping make organizations a place for people to grow and thrive.



Daniel P. Pfeifer

*Professor Emeritus
Recording Industry*

Daniel Pfeifer, a professor in the Department of Recording Industry at Middle Tennessee State University, is a native of Louisville, Kentucky. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree from MTSU and a Master of Arts degree with an emphasis in Audio Engineering and Music Production from the University of Memphis. While at UM, he was a recipient of an Audio Engineering Society Education Grant.

Before coming to MTSU, Pfeifer worked in the music industry as an audio engineer and producer, working with artists B.B. King, ZZ Top, Albert Collins, Al Green, and Jerry Lee Lewis. Pfeifer also served as an officer in the Memphis Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and was awarded its Premier Audio Engineer Award. He continued to produce and engineer music projects in a variety of genres after joining MTSU in 1991.

Pfeifer has consulted with companies such as Studer Professional Audio, Automated Processes Inc., National Public Radio, Turner Studios, Naxos Technologies, and others. These consultations involved product development, console setup and commissioning, and operator training.

Teaching in the Department of Recording Industry, Pfeifer has offered courses in audio engineering and technology, studio production, and studio administration, as well as classes in the M.F.A. in Recording Arts and Technologies program. He also coordinated production and technology internships at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Pfeifer has been a recipient of the Tennessee Board of Regents Academic Excellence and Quality Award (2001), MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award (1997), MTSU Creative Activity Award (2007), and the Recording Industry Outstanding Alumni Award for University Service (1997). He served as MTSU Faculty Senate president (2003–04) and the MTSU representative on the Tennessee Board of Regents Faculty Sub-Council (2004–07).



Billy Pittard

*Professor Emeritus
Media Arts*

After graduating in 1978 as one of the first from MTSU's nascent B.S. in Mass Communication program, Billy Pittard launched a successful career working with major media and entertainment brands around the world. He then focused on educational media, winning accolades for innovative approaches to education and as an executive with Lynda.com, one of the world's most successful digital education platforms.

His successes were recognized by the University's award for Distinguished Alumnus in Professional Achievement and by induction into the first Wall of Fame awards in what was then the College of Mass Communication. In 2005, he was recruited to join the college's first Board of Advisors and actively served for six years until he joined the MTSU faculty in 2011 as chair of the Department of Electronic Media Communication. He then applied his unique perspectives, industry experience, and management expertise to strategically reorganize and reposition the department, which resulted in 80% growth in department enrollment and changed accreditation from ACEJMC to NASAD.

Pittard also takes credit for Improved facilities throughout the department, including establishing an equipment checkout system, expanding classroom space by 40%, proposing and launching the XR Stage, and negotiating space for the Baldwin Photographic Gallery.



William M. Robertson

Professor Emeritus

Physics and Astronomy

William M. Robertson was born in Canada but experienced a global education, attending schools in India, Australia, and England. He received a B.Sc. degree in Physics from Imperial College in London and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Physics from Purdue University. After postdoctoral research at Argonne National Laboratory and at IBM's Thomas J. Watson Research Center, he worked as a research officer at the National Research Council Canada in Ottawa, Ontario, before accepting an assistant professor position at MTSU in 1995.

During Robertson's interview at MTSU, the Physics faculty posed two challenges for the position. The first was to promote a culture of undergraduate research for Physics majors, and the second was to develop a course to attract nonmajors—particularly Recording Industry students, who represented the largest major on campus at the time. To meet the second challenge, Robertson—despite little background in acoustics and dubious musical skills—developed a popular course in the physics of music. Inspired by the material in the course, he began a research program in acoustics to complement his optics work. Robertson's research at MTSU was evenly split between optics and acoustics.

Rising through the ranks, Robertson fulfilled the first challenge: developing a research program with undergraduate students as key participants. He maintained a steady record of refereed research publications in optics and acoustics, with 32 undergraduates appearing as co-authors. Robertson's undergraduate collaborations on acoustic and electrical pulse tunneling received international attention in popular science publications, including *New Scientist*. He was active in securing external grant funding both for his research program and for the promotion of undergraduate involvement in research.

Additionally, Robertson's research has resulted in seven patents in the fields of optical sensors and acoustic lenses. He also wrote the proposal for MTSU's Computational Science Ph.D. and served as interim director in the initial year of the program.

In addition, Robertson was the recipient of the Career Achievement Award in 2019.



Rick Vanosdall

Professor Emeritus

Educational Leadership

Rick Vanosdall came to MTSU in 2008 and served as a member of the College of Education faculty and in a variety of administrative positions, culminating in his service as the college's interim dean from 2020–23. He earned his B.S. at Michigan State University in 1984 and his Ed.D. at Arizona State University in 2004. He served in multiple full-time roles as a classroom teacher and district level curriculum leader in Mesa Public Schools in Arizona (1984–2003) and was a research director for the Arizona K–12 Center (2003–05). From 2005–08, Vanosdall served in multiple roles at Tennessee State University, including director of the Center of Excellence for Learning Sciences.

Throughout his professional education career, Vanosdall was fortunate to work with collaborators who facilitated his engagement in research, service, and grantsmanship, resulting in the successful authorship, co-authorship, and implementation of more than \$25 million in grants and contracts from the National Science Foundation, Gates Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as well as multiple state agencies. He co-authored with colleagues Olaf Jorgenson and Jackie Cleveland two books in science education that received national recognition and accolades. He has presented keynote addresses on science education to statewide audiences in California, Michigan, Tennessee, and Washington, as well as numerous presentations and papers at national and international conferences.

Vanosdall is a son, brother, dad, and husband. He feels grateful for this honor and the amazing colleagues, friends, mentors, and teachers who provided him with tremendous opportunities to listen, learn, and actively advance the transformational power of public educators in both formal and informal learning settings.



Stephen M. Wright

Professor Emeritus

Biology

Stephen Wright joined MTSU's Department of Biology in fall 1992. In his three decades as a member of the Biology faculty, he has had a significant and lasting impact on the quality of students' undergraduate and graduate-level experiences. He taught seven different undergraduate and graduate courses and developed the Honors Microbiology course. He mentored 15 MTSU Honors thesis students and over 50 non-Honors undergraduate students on research projects, as well as 18 Biology M.S. students.

Wright is a recipient of the MTSU Foundation Outstanding Teaching Award, the MTSU Honors College Outstanding Honors Faculty Award (twice), and the Tennessee Academy of Science Distinguished University Teacher Award.

He has had a distinguished research career at MTSU. Wright is an author or co-author on 25 peer-reviewed publications, has one U.S. patent, and is a principal investigator or co-PI on grants and contracts totaling over \$1.7 million. His research on infectious viral diseases has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education, and the Department of Homeland Security. Much of this research was conducted collaboratively with colleagues from the departments of Chemistry and Physics and Astronomy, and all his research incorporated graduate and/or undergraduate students.

Wright has received the College of Basic and Applied Sciences Distinguished Research Award and the MTSU Foundation Award for Research Excellence. He is a fellow and past president of the Tennessee Academy of Sciences.



David J. Urban

Dean Emeritus

David J. Urban became dean of Jennings A. Jones College of Business in July 2013 and is returning to the classroom this fall. He previously served for 24 years at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), where he held several faculty and administrative positions. Urban received a B.S. in Commerce from the University of Virginia, and an M.A. in Psychology and a Ph.D. in Business Administration from the University of Michigan.

Urban's business background includes duty as a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer, during which he received the Navy Commendation Medal and the Navy Expeditionary Medal. He has consulted with many for-profit and nonprofit organizations and currently serves as a director on five corporate boards. Urban is a charter recipient of the American Marketing Association's professional certified marketer (PCM) designation. He has been board chair for the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and for the United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties. He recently accepted an invitation to join the Ascension St. Thomas Rutherford Foundation board.

His expert comments have appeared over 400 times in the media, including outlets such as CNBC, Fox Business Network, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. His research interests are in customer satisfaction assessment, retailing, and distribution channel management. He has received 26 research grants and has published extensively in academic and professional journals.

In addition to being a certified Dale Carnegie trainer, Urban has won eight national teaching awards and has been inducted into four national honor societies. In 2017, he received the Dale Carnegie Global Leadership Award in recognition of his leadership in human relations and community development. In 2020, Gov. Bill Lee honored Urban with the Colonel Aide de Camp award in recognition of his community and professional service.



Debra Sells

Vice President Emerita

Debra Sells served as MTSU's vice president for student affairs and vice provost for academic and enrollment services until her retirement in June 2023.

She directed the Division of Student Affairs, Enrollment and Academic Services, which provides essential programs and services that support the matriculation, academic achievement, personal development, and quality of life of our students. In her role as a vice provost, she was also responsible for the recruitment of traditional and transfer students and helped them make effective transitions to the university environment.

Sells joined the administration at MTSU in January 1996. Prior to arriving at MTSU, she worked for nine years at Arizona State University in Tempe. Sells also served in the Division of Student Affairs at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa, and at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo.

Sells completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Communications at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. She completed her Master of Social Work with a concentration in Interpersonal Practice and Clinical Casework at the University of Michigan in 1983. She completed her Doctor of Education at Arizona State University in 1996 with a dissertation titled "The Freshman Year Experience: A Case Study of a Freshman Living-Learning Center."

In 2016, she was the co-author of a book, *A New Way: Introducing Higher Education to Professional Learning Communities at Work*, that examined how leaders may positively impact student success using high-performing collaborative teaming.