

Oregon **TECH**

Oregon Institute of Technology

Academic Affairs & Strategic Enrollment Management

Faculty & Staff New Hires

2020-2021

**Welcome to the
Oregon Tech Family!**

Dina Battaglia *Associate Vice Provost* *Academic Excellence*



Dr. Dina M. Battaglia earned her B.S. degree in psychology from Arizona State University and her M.S. and doctorate degrees in social psychology from Texas Christian University. This year celebrates Dr. Battaglia's 24th year working in academic affairs. For those 24 years, she served students as a full-time faculty member teaching psychology and honors courses, working as an assistant director of an honors college, and serving both faculty and students as an educational developer. As Associate Vice Provost for Academic Excellence, Dr. Battaglia leads our institutional assessment initiatives and works alongside faculty to develop strategies to deepen and maximize student learning across all teaching modalities. Dr. Battaglia leads by two philosophies: "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire" (William Butler Yeats) and "Leadership is not about being in charge. Leadership is about taking care of those in your charge" (Simon Sinek).

Dr. Battaglia enjoys international travel for the cultural awareness experiences they offer. She is an avid fan of dogs, football, and bicycling. Dr. Battaglia is excited to be a resident of Klamath Falls so she can regularly ride the OC&E Trail.

Cassedy Biri *Admissions Counselor* *Admissions*

Cassedy was raised in Klamath Falls, Oregon, where she stayed to attend Oregon Tech. After graduation, she moved up to the Portland area and found herself back here as an employee in Admissions on the Portland-Metro campus! As a student, Cassedy was part of the Oregon Tech Racing team for both Baja and Formula SAE, worked as a student employee for our campus radio station, KTEC 89.5 FM, and helped plan and execute several events on campus and in the community.

One of the many things Cassedy loves about Oregon Tech is the small class sizes. She loved being able to spend her years with the same people and grow to make friends with them and her professors. She also loves the fluidity of the Oregon Tech community; all majors work well together and help each other in many ways. Working in Admissions, Cassedy enjoys being able to help provide resources and help students like herself who may be figuring college out on their own. She wants to help them succeed and make sure that they have support along the way.



Bowen Browder *Admissions Counselor* *Admissions*



Bowen Browder is a recent graduate of Oregon Tech with a B.S. in Communication Studies and a Dispute Resolution Certificate, along with an Associate of General Studies from Klamath Community College. He joined our staff as an Admissions Counselor in May of 2021, and enthusiastically advocates the benefits of attending Oregon Tech to potential students through sharing his own experiences. Bowen likes hiking local trails and mountains, practicing the saxophone, and appreciating fiction in his free time.

Staff *(continued)*

Sara Channell *Admissions Counselor* *Admissions*

Sara was born and raised in South Florida and moved to Central Florida, where she received a bachelor's in environmental studies. After graduation, she started teaching English abroad in Kasaoka, Japan, and served two years as an AmeriCorps member in Billings, MT, volunteering on community projects. Later on, Sara obtained a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Montana. Before relocating to Klamath Falls and working in Admissions at Oregon Tech, she worked in Advising and Career Services at the state university in Billings.

In her free time, Sara enjoys listening to music, reading, creating healthy meals, bicycling and hiking.

Sara enjoys working in Admissions because she can contribute to the empowerment of students seeking to improve their lives through education.



Willow Charlton *Admissions Counselor* *Admissions*



Willow joined the Admissions team in January 2021. She is a 2019 alum of Oregon Tech who received a B.S. in Population Health Management. As a Klamath Falls local, Willow was involved in Oregon Tech early on; she attended local athletic events and camps on campus as a kid. Willow is a first-generation college student who was able to work in the community as a barista and then bartender to pay for her education at Oregon Tech.

Willow enjoys almost all outdoor activities, reading, home improvements and trying out new recipes.

Grace Ernst *Administrative Program Specialist* *Registrar's Office*

Grace is an Administrative Program Specialist in the Registrar's Office. She is originally from the Midwest and earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Lincoln Christian University in 2014. Since then, she has worked for ranches, insurance agencies, and credit unions throughout Illinois, Montana, and Wyoming. She is excited to be at Oregon Tech to help students achieve their goals!

Grace's primary passion is showing horses - she grew up showing horses throughout the Midwest. She is also an avid outdoor enthusiast - hiking, kayaking, camping, skiing - and loves spending time with her two dogs.



Staff *(continued)*

Dan Guthrie *Admissions Counselor* *Admissions*



Dan joined the Admissions team in May 2021. He is a graduate of Sierra Nevada College with a B.S. in Business Administration.

He comes to us from the College of Southern Idaho, where he spent 5 ½ years as a recruiter. During this time he developed a passion for helping students work through the important steps of becoming a college student.

When he isn't working with prospective students, you can find Dan watching baseball and basketball, reading with his son, and exploring Oregon with his family.

Monica Lopez *Program Representative 1* *Educational Partnerships & Outreach*

Monica currently serves as the Program Representative 1 on the Educational Partnership and Outreach team, where they work to help dual credit, pre-college and transfer students. Monica is a first generation alumni of Oregon Tech and has been given the opportunity to help other students succeed in the way she was also helped. She is originally from Reno, Nevada but has grown to love the rural community and decided to continue her journey in Klamath Falls.



Beverly McCreary *Assistant Vice Provost* *Faculty Labor Relations*



Beverly McCreary joined the Provost's Office in July as the Assistant Vice Provost of Faculty Labor Relations. She relocated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where she was for 21 years as both a faculty member and administrator.

Dr. McCreary was initially a faculty member working in gender equity, where she developed programs and helped respond to situations of potential harassment and discrimination. She then moved into an administrative position where she provided leadership in faculty development. She oversaw the tenure and promotion process and built programs and resources to assist faculty in all stages of their career path. She spent the last 15 years working in labor relations, where she assisted in negotiating and implementing the Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). In this role, she helped individuals understand the intersection between the University Policies/Procedures and the CBA.

Dr. McCreary brings an extensive background in faculty human relations and working with people on different sides of issues towards a common goal. She is a graduate of the University of Oregon, where she received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. She has a strong love for the Pacific Northwest, and enjoys running, hiking, traveling, and being outdoors.

Staff *(continued)*

Monica Ourada Admissions Counselor *Admissions*

Monica joined the Admissions team in December 2020. She earned her B.S. in Sports Management from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and her M.Ed. in Postsecondary Administration and Student Affairs from the University of Southern California. She has worked in several roles along the way, including two of her favorite positions: as a Premium Ambassador for the Sacramento Kings and as a Cast Member at Walt Disney World.

Monica is very grateful to be working at Oregon Tech and in higher education because she is passionate about helping all students become the best versions of themselves. She enjoys listening to music (Pentatonix is her favorite band), playing board games, and watching sports in her free time. She is extremely excited to cheer on our Hustlin' Owls when fans are allowed back in the stands!



Suhiedy "Su" Reyes Academic Advisor *College of ETM*



Su joined the Office of Academic Advising and Retention in June of 2021. She has recently graduated from Rutgers University with a Masters of Education in College Student Affairs. Su also holds a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Sociology and Communications from the University of Alaska Southeast. As a Latina, she is one of the two women in her immediate family to have two degrees.

Originally from Juneau, Alaska, Su enjoys traveling, hiking, camping, and enjoying quality time with friends, family and her cat, Finn. Prior to living in Oregon, Su spent two years on the East Coast for graduate school and quickly realized how much she missed the West Coast. Alaska has spoiled her greatly with the beautiful scenery, hikes and snow. Now that she is back on the West Coast, Su plans on spending time on any of the ski parks close by and enjoying/exploring the Pacific Northwest.

Bob Reynolds Admissions Counselor *Admissions*

Born in Burbank, California, Bob moved to beautiful Portland, Oregon, in 2010 after graduating from CSU, Chico, with a B.A. in Communication Studies. Throughout his educational and career experiences, service, education, and student success have been at the center of his focus. Most recently, he completed an M.S. in Educational Leadership and Policy at Portland State University. He is excited to bring his passion for higher education and student service to Oregon Tech! He loves listening to and making music, cooking delicious meals, cruising out to the Oregon coast, and kitchen dance parties when he is not working.



Staff *(continued)*

Brandon Rodriguez

Transfer Outreach Coordinator
Educational Partnerships & Outreach



Brandon relocated to the Portland area from Tennessee; however, he is originally from Orlando, Florida. In Orlando, he attended Seminole State College, where he received his A.A. degree before transferring to Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL. At FSU he received his B.S. in Political Science and International Affairs. His first job in higher education was working for Disney Internships and Programs in Orlando. He then moved to Chicago, IL, to work in online and transfer admissions, working for several private universities in the Chicago metro area.

He received his M.Ed. from Clemson University, where he also worked in LGBTQ+ programming, education, and advocacy in the Gantt Multicultural Center. At Clemson, he also worked in various functional areas like transfer student success, transfer bridge programming, and transfer academic programs. Brandon is very passionate about transfer student support, success, and advocacy which stems from his experience as transfer student. When he isn't working, you can usually find him traveling to new places, hiking around the Pacific Northwest, or spending time with his husband and two kitties.

Tracy Scharn

Instruction & Outreach Librarian
Library

Tracy Scharn received her MLIS from the University of Washington and has been an academic librarian for 15 years, focusing on instruction and public services. She appreciates a student-centered approach to teaching and library services, and working at an institution where you can get to know the students and celebrate their successes as they progress through their academic programs. Her professional interests include media literacy, critical thinking, metacognition, information habits, information overload, pedagogy, and assessment. She grew up in New Mexico surrounded by a family of artistic scientists and taking trips to Radio Shack with her grandfather. In her free time, she hikes, birds, games, cooks and, of course, reads. She gets back to NM as often as she can to replenish her green chile stores.



Kelly Sullivan

Academic Advisor
Academic Advising & Retention



Kelly Sullivan (she/her/hers) joined the Oregon Tech team at the Portland-Metro campus in Summer 2021. She earned her Bachelor's degree through Creighton University, then joined Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest. Through this, she served as an AmeriCorps member in the Columbia River Gorge, doing college mentoring and college access programming through the local schools. For the next six years, Kelly served as an Academic Advisor through Columbia Gorge Community College, supporting students through all aspects of the student life cycle. She has a passion for equity, proactive advising, and giving students the tools they need to be successful.

Kelly recently became a Master Gardener and loves to spend time outside amongst the flowers, vegetables, and buzzing bees. She also has been dabbling in painting after doing a couple of inspiring Zoom classes during the pandemic.

Staff *(continued)*

Michael Yilek
Communications Specialist
Admissions

Mike grew up in Southern Oregon, leaving to serve in the Marine Corps for five years as an Intelligence Specialist. Before moving to Klamath Falls in 2017, he worked as a Social Media Analyst in Quantico. Mike graduated from Oregon Tech's Professional Writing program in 2021. He now applies his interests in writing and technology towards his role as a Communication Specialist for the Admissions department. Mike's personal interests include creative writing, virtual reality, and tabletop games.



***Hands-on Education
for Real-World Achievement***

College of Engineering, Technology & Management

Arief Suriadi Budiman received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the Institute of Technology, Bandung (ITB), Indonesia, his M.EngSc in Materials Engineering from Monash Univ., Australia and his Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from Stanford University, CA, in 2008. During his doctoral candidacy at Stanford's Department of Materials Science & Engineering under the supervision of Professor William D. Nix (MRS Von Hippel Award 2007), Dr. Budiman received several research awards (MRS Graduate Silver Award 2006, MRS Best Paper 2006) and contributed to several high-impact journal publications (Acta Materialia, Applied Physics Letters, Journal of Electronic Materials). Subsequently, Dr. Budiman was awarded the prestigious Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Director's Research Fellowship in 2009 to conduct top strategic research for the energy and national security missions of the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Dr. Budiman also has an international career in academics in Singapore and Indonesia as well as collaborating with researchers in Europe, China and Japan. He also served an academic stint at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in Boston, MA, in 2005. He has recently published a book, "Probing Crystal Plasticity at the Nanoscales - Synchrotron X-ray Microdiffraction" (Springer 2015). He has two U.S. Patents and one pending.

Arief Suriadi Budiman, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Manufacturing & Mechanical Engineering & Technology



Martha Chamberlin

Instructor

Computer Systems Engineering Technology



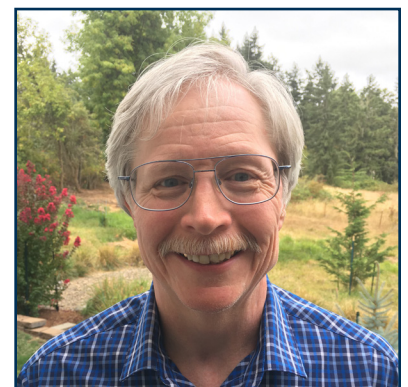
Martha has worked in industry from startups to major companies with about 10 years of industry management experience. She also has experience teaching from middle school through graduate school, mostly in computer science but also in areas such as math and human relations. It is an honor for Martha to be able to continue her teaching career at Oregon Tech with this great team and our amazing students.

Martha and her husband have 3 beautiful, intelligent children and 3 beautiful, intelligent grandchildren. They also have 2 cats and 5 chickens - that are not quite so beautiful or intelligent but are often amusing.

With more than 35 years of experience teaching college courses, Ron Little joins Oregon Tech as a Visiting Instructor for the Business Management Department. His master's degree in education included a computer science/information technology focus. He has extensive experience both in the classroom and online in courses that include topics like software development, database management systems, systems analysis and design, and networking. His independent contractor experience includes development with multiple programming languages, network administration and database development.

After his own personal experience of computer information technology courses providing an interesting and fun career, Ron has dedicated the majority of his own career to teaching and curriculum development in various areas of information technology and computer science with the hope that his efforts will help others find careers will suited for their skills and interests.

Ronald Little
Visiting Instructor
Business Management



College of Engineering, Technology & Management *(continued)*

Sam McCormick

*Academic Advisor &
Retention Coordinator
College of ETM*



Sam was born in Washington state but raised in Montana. Growing up near Glacier National Park, he developed a love for hiking and whitewater rafting. He studied Mechanical Engineering at Montana State University, and during that time worked as a Resident Advisor and a summer camp counselor. Sam developed a passion for teaching through those experiences, and when his partner accepted a job in Klamath Falls, he used the opportunity to pursue that passion as an Academic Advisor. After working for years as an engineer, Sam is excited to work with students, and administration, to help students succeed. Sam is looking forward to exploring all the outdoor opportunities that the Klamath Basin has to offer.

Dr. Pasang received his Ph.D. from Monash University, Australia, in 2001. He spent a number of years as Research Engineer at the Indonesian Aircraft Industry and worked as Senior Consultant at the PSB Corp, Singapore in 2001-2004 before moving to New Zealand. His research area covers various aspects of materials and manufacturing, especially welding, metal forming, machining, biomaterials and metal additive manufacturing. He was the Head of Department of Mechanical Engineering at Auckland University of Technology - AUT (2012-2020), and also the Director - Engineering Research Institute (ERI: 2016-2020), Auckland - New Zealand.

Prof. Pasang was a Loewy Visiting Professor at the Materials Science and Engineering Department, Lehigh University between 2010 and 2015; Visiting Professor at the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Akita University Japan between 2009 to 2019, and also Honorary Professor at the Department of Mechanical Engineering/Institute of Mechatronic Engineering at National Taipei University of Technology (NTUT) - Taipei, Taiwan since 2019. Prof. Pasang was a recipient of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellow in 2013.

Tim Pasang, Ph.D.

*Department Chair
Manufacturing & Mechanical Engineering
& Technology*



Anindita Paul, Ph.D.

*Assistant Professor
Electrical Engineering & Renewable Energy*



Dr. Paul's academic and professional background combines science and engineering (B.S. in Electronics & Communication Engineering, M.S. in VLSI Design from the Institute of Radio Physics & Electronics, University of Calcutta, Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the New Mexico State University). Her professional experience includes working as a Lecturer in several undergraduate engineering colleges in India, an Analog Integrated Circuit Designer Intern in the semiconductor industries, and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering at Manhattan College and Youngstown State University. She joined the Electrical Engineering and Renewable Energy (EERE) department at Oregon Tech in 2021 as a tenure track Assistant Professor. Her teaching areas include CMOS Analog VLSI Circuit Design, Digital VLSI Circuit Design, Microcontroller System Design, Circuit Analysis, Signals & Systems, Solid-State Electronic Devices, and Analog & Digital Electronics. Her current research focuses on designing low-voltage, low-power analog integrated circuits for portable electronic equipment, Biomedical, IoT applications.

Aboubakr Salem, Ph.D.

Instructor

Electrical Engineering & Renewable Energy

Dr. Salem received B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Helwan University, Egypt, in 2004 and 2009, respectively, and a Ph.D. in Electromechanical Engineering from Ghent University, Belgium, in 2015. Dr. Salem has teaching experience from universities in Egypt, Belgium, and Saudi Arabia since 2006 as TA, RA, and Assistant Professor. His research interests include power electronic converters design using modern wide-band-gap semiconductor technologies applied to electrical drives, electric vehicles, renewable energy, and smart grid applications. His funded research activities include several international projects, with more than \$30 million. He has more than 35 publications in journals and conferences and three filed/submitted patents. Dr. Salem has supervised and graduated many Master's students. Additionally, he is a reviewer in many journals, i.e., Industrial Electronics and Power Electronics IEEE Transactions.



Derrick Speaks, Ph.D.

Instructor

*Manufacturing & Mechanical Engineering
& Technology*



Dr. Speaks is a native of the Pacific Northwest. He grew up in Washington State and received his B.S. in Materials Science from the University of Washington. He received his M.S. and Ph.D in Materials Science from the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Quality and Reliability Engineer for Intel where he worked on Intel's first tablet processor. He is passionate about clean energy technology and has been actively involved in solar cell research and commercialization, including YCombinator's Startup School and OSU's startup accelerator: ATAMI. In addition, his research interests have included collaborations with researchers at Sandia National Labs, Lawrence Berkeley National Lab and Lawrence Livermore National Lab. His current research interests include studying the impact that defects have on the optical and electronic properties of semiconductors.

Jintai Wang, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Civil Engineering

Dr. Jintai Wang received his B.S. and M.S. in Civil Engineering from Tongji University and a Ph.D. in Geotechnical Engineering from Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Wang has three years of industrial experience in geotechnical design, construction, instrumentation, and data management with Geosyntec Consultants. He is excited to bring real-world applications on large and complex civil infrastructures such as foundations, dams, landfills, coal ash impoundments and pipelines into his classroom for undergraduate and graduate courses and laboratories. Dr. Wang is a registered Professional Engineer (CA, TX). Dr. Wang's research interests include liquefaction evaluation, geotechnical instrumentation, and solid waste engineering. He is excited at the prospect of getting students involved in research, ASCE conferences, student organizations and competitions. Dr. Wang currently serves on three ASCE technical committees: Frozen Ground, Earthquake Engineering and Soil Dynamics, and Embankments Dams and Slopes.



College of Health, Arts & Sciences

Sandra De Leon Mendoza

Spanish Interpreter

Dental Hygiene



Sandra is an Oregon Tech newbie working at the Dental Hygiene Program's Salem campus. When she started to work at a dental office back home in California, she was fascinated! The science, patients, and endless learning had her hooked. In between that experience to present day, Sandra has continued her college studies. From working on the beautiful Smith River back home as a tour guide to slinging bean at drive-thru coffee shops, she always had a good time getting the chance to make someone smile. To be working as a Spanish Interpreter here is such a rewarding opportunity for her. It truly has been a pleasure to serve the community with such an amazing team. Hoot Hoot!

Emily Gustafson-Plummer

Instructor

Dental Hygiene

Emily is an Oregon native and Oregon Tech alumna, she graduated with her Bachelor's of Science in Dental Hygiene at the Salem campus in 2017. She has practiced dental hygiene for the past four years in private practice and is a member of the Marion County Dental Hygiene Study Club.

Even as a student, Emily knew she wanted to pursue a career in teaching. In 2020, she had the opportunity to become a clinical adjunct instructor for the dental hygiene department on the Salem Campus and this year became a full-time faculty member. Emily is excited to work alongside many of the faculty members she learned from as a student. She is the Senior Clinic Lead teaching Ethics, Radiology and Emergency Procedures.

When she's not teaching, Emily enjoys spending time with her husband and four kids, especially on the Oregon Coast. She also loves kayaking, golfing and crafting. Emily serves as volunteer treasurer for her local elementary school parent-teacher club.



Shannon Inman

Administrative Program Specialist

Dental Hygiene



Shannon has lived in Klamath Falls since 2002. She is originally from central California. Shannon has two daughters and has been married for 22 years. She graduated from Klamath Community College with a degree in Health Information Management, with certification in Medical Billing/Coding and is an EHR Specialist. Shannon started with Oregon Tech in August 2021 as an Office Specialist 2 and as of November 1, 2021 has moved into the Administrative Program Specialist role in the Dental Clinic.

Faculty – College of Health, Arts & Sciences *(cont.)*

Stacey Lindenburger

Dental Assistant 2

Dental Hygiene

Stacey was born and raised in Klamath Falls, OR, and has been in the dental field about 13 years now. She enjoys getting to help people on a daily basis.

Stacey is married to Cliff, who grew up in the Klamath basin as well, and they have one dog named Boomer, who is spoiled rotten and she wouldn't have it any other way. She loves traveling the world, spending time with family and friends, enjoys camping, hiking, going to concerts, reading and going to the movies.

Stacey is happy to be part of the Oregon Tech team.



Olga Manuylov

Administrative Program Assistant

Dental Hygiene



Olga is the new APA-Sterilization Manager for the Oregon Tech Dental Hygiene department. She is a graduate from Chemeketa Community College, having earned her degree as a Dental Assistant (EFDA) in 2010. Olga has eleven years experience as a Dental Assistant/ Sterilization Tech and a Materials Coordinator as well. Olga is thrilled to be able to contribute her knowledge and skills to the Dental Hygiene program. Olga is inspired daily by her husband and her three wonderful kids. In her spare time, Olga enjoys hiking, biking, kayaking, reading an amazing book and wishes to travel more.

Michael Moghtader, Ph.D.

Coordinator - Academic Advising & Retention

College of HAS

Dr. Moghtader (MOCKED-ah-deer) comes to Oregon Tech from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA, where he was a tenured professor of English (2003-18) and then Academic Advising Coordinator for the College of Education (2018-21). Michael works in a new Oregon Tech position coordinating academic advising support provided by faculty advisors in the College of HAS. He grew up in Virginia but spent eight years in Albuquerque, NM, which he likens favorably to the high desert environment here in Klamath Falls. Off campus you'll find him chatting up the vendors at the downtown farmer's market or hiking/biking the high mountain trails in the Cascades.



Faculty – College of Health, Arts & Sciences *(cont.)*

Joey Parnell

Assistant Professor

Medical Imaging Technology



As an alumna of Oregon Tech, Joey is thrilled to be an instructor in the Echocardiography Program. After working as a cardiac sonographer for nine years, Joey looks forward to directing her focus to teaching. Before becoming an Assistant Professor, Joey was an Adjunct Instructor at Oregon Tech for three years. She specializes in adult and pediatric echocardiography.

Joey earned a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership from Western Oregon University, a Bachelor's Degree in Echocardiography from Oregon Tech, and an Associate in Arts Degree from Columbia Basin College.

Volleyball is what initially brought Joey to Oregon. She moved from her hometown of Lewiston, Idaho, to be part of the Oregon Tech Volleyball Team. After graduating, she had the opportunity to be the Interim Head Women's Volleyball Coach for the 2015-2016 season. Joey has strong ties to Oregon Tech and is proud to be part of the University.

Amanda Petty

Director of Clinical Education

Doctor of Physical Therapy Program

Dr. Amanda Petty joined the Department of Physical Therapy Education as Director of Clinical Education in May 2021. She graduated from Brandeis University with a B.S. in Neuroscience in 2008. After earning her Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of Colorado Denver, she has worked in various clinical settings. Amanda is a board-certified specialist in neurologic physical therapy through American Board of Physical Therapy Specialists. She has a particular interest in treating and researching Parkinson's Disease and traumatic brain injury.

In her free time, Amanda enjoys rock climbing and exploring Oregon with her family and English Mastiff. She is also a competitive obstacle course racer and competed on America Ninja Warrior.



Riley Richards, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Communication



Dr. Riley Richards is a Michigan native and earned his B.A. and M.A. in Communication from Western Michigan University and his Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He studies relational communication and behavior from a functionalist perspective, particularly in the context of relational goals, sexual communication, communication technology, taboo topics, and quasi-sexual relationships (e.g., human-robot). Dr. Richards is passionate about breaking down barriers and helping individuals thrive in their interpersonal and sexual relationships. When he isn't teaching and researching, you can find him hiking, camping, volunteering his time with youth and the homeless, and hunting for the best local spot to eat.