

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SYMPOSIA

Part 1: INDIVIDUAL THRIVING | Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Part 2: RELATIONAL THRIVING | Tuesday, September 23, 2025



ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SYMPOSIA



Paths to Success in Academia:

In academia, especially at the assistant professor level, thriving can be understood at two interconnected lenses: individual thriving and relational thriving.

Part 1: Individual Thriving on Tuesday, September 16

Individual thriving refers to personal growth, well-being, and professional success. For assistant professors this includes advancing their research agenda and gaining recognition; effectively managing teaching and service responsibilities; achieving promotion and tenure milestones; maintaining physical and mental health; and finding a sense of purpose and fulfillment in academic work.

Part 2: Relational Thriving on Tuesday, September 23

Relational thriving focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging within the academic community. For assistant professors this may involve building supportive mentoring relationships; collaborating with colleagues on research or teaching; navigating departmental politics and dynamics; cultivating a network of peers for advice, feedback, and emotional support; and contributing to a positive and inclusive academic environment.

The goal of these meetings is to provide informational resources, encouragement and inspiration, and networking opportunities for faculty members who are relatively new to Purdue. Each meeting will consist of a 40-min panel discussion followed by roundtable conversations in the form of speed coaching.

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Individual Thriving Panelists

Tuesday, September 16, 2025



SALLY BANE is an Associate Professor and Director of Laboratory & Hands On Education in the School of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Her research focuses on nonequilibrium plasmas, hypersonic and supersonic aerodynamics and flow control, optical and spectroscopic diagnostics, combustion and detonation dynamics.



DEVA CHAN is an Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (courtesy) in the College of Engineering and Director of Graduate Programs in the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering. Her research interests are multi-scale image-based biomechanics; musculoskeletal mechanobiology, and synovial joint health and disease, particularly in post-traumatic osteoarthritis.



LISA MAUER is a Professor in the Department of Food Science and Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. She is a member of the Whistler Center for Carbohydrate Research and served as director of the Center for Food Safety Engineering from 2011-2021. Her research focuses on food materials science structure-function questions, emphasizing low and intermediate-moisture products, water-solid interactions, food ingredient architecture, and micronutrient stability.



KAYCE SOLARI WILLIAMS is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health program. Dr. Solari Williams obtained higher education degrees in Kinesiology, Curriculum and Instruction, Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, and Health Education with a Prevention Science concentration. Her education and work experiences in academia have centered on the human body. She promotes movement in ways that are natural yet challenging and rewarding.

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Relational Thriving Panelists

Tuesday, September 23, 2025



STACEY CONNAUGHTON is a Professor of Communication, Director of the Purdue Policy Research Institute in the Discovery Park District, and Director of the Purdue Peace Project. Her primary research interests are leadership, political violence prevention, and policy, and her primary teaching interests are identification, leadership, and peacebuilding.



DARRYL GRANGER is College of Science Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professor of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences. His research interests are tectonic geomorphology, landscape evolution, cosmogenic nuclides applied to geomorphology and surficial processes, environmental geosciences.



LINDSAY PAYNE HAUGEN is an Associate Professor of Practice in Sustainability Engineering and Environmental Engineering. Her research expertise is at the intersection of sustainability, teaching and learning, and engagement focusing on transdisciplinary decision-making in community-engaged design. She is involved in local sustainability, including water quality programs, climate action planning committees, and environmental policy boards.



KATIE SERMERSHEIM is Senior Associate Vice Provost & Dean of Students. She received higher education degrees in educational administration, psychology, and sociology. Dr. Sermersheim has been an active member of professional organizations with student affairs and brings vast knowledge and experience to Purdue University as the dean of students, fondly known as “Dean Katie”.



PREETI SIVASANKAR is Vice President for Research Innovation in the Office of Research and Professor of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences. She previously served as Department Head of SLHS and as the Assistant Vice President for Strategic Health Research in the Office of Research. She conducts programmatic research in voice disorders and upper airway pathophysiology. Her research has been continually funded by the NIH and has been recognized with the Purdue University College of HHS Career Research Achievement Award.



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Speed Coaches

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

INDIVIDUAL THRIVING

Sally Bane
Liz Brite
Candace Croney
Laura Murray-Kolb
Dimitri Peroulis
Sunil Prabhakar
Cara Putman
Libby Richards
Preeti Sivasankar
Sunnie Watson
Kayce Solari Williams

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

RELATIONAL THRIVING

Jenny Brown
Deva Chan
Stacey Connaughton
Darryl Granger
Bhagyashree Katare
Lindsay Payne Haugen
Katie Sermersheim
Preeti Sivasankar
Louis Tay
Jen William