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Faculty Highlights

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Faculty Highlights

Dr. Jennifer Webb

Dr. Jennifer Webb is an associate professor at the University of Arkansas as well as a professional interior designer. She earned her first two degrees at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and her Ph.D. at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. Dr. Webb started at the University of Arkansas in 1999, and teaches third-year design studios in the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design.

Dr. Webb initiated research on anticipated living environments for Arkansas residents and this investigation provided the pilot data for the Arkansas Health and Housing Survey (2006). She was recognized with the Joel Polsky Prize for contributions to the interior design profession for her work on *Just Below the Line: Disability, Housing, and Equity in the South* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2010). Dr. Webb has also made contributions to the *Universal Design Handbook* (McGraw Hill, 2010), a textbook on inclusive design (*Diversity and Design: Understanding the Hidden Consequences*, Routledge, 2015), and has a book on aesthetics and social justice underway.

Dr. Webb described her approach to interior design as an analysis of the things that people do, whether it's work, living or play. She emphasized that the environments we create must support those activities.



"It's not just that it looks good, right? It's got to work. And it's got to solve problems," Dr. Webb said. "Depending on the space, we can raise blood pressure, we can encourage people to walk or drink more water, or we can help students focus on their test more effectively." Dr. Webb's current research focuses on environments and spaces for people of all abilities.

In terms of undergraduate research at U of A, Dr. Webb stressed how special it is to have a research program at the Fay Jones school and how not many design schools provide such an opportunity.

"Students show up with their own unique idea and we completely empower them to investigate that idea," Dr. Webb stated. "I hope that from the student perspective, that they find it empowering. For example, one student investigated campus auditoriums and the impact of acoustics on students and faculty who have hearing loss. This project is now funded by a Women's Giving Circle Grant and these research outcomes will be shared across campus to improve U of A learning environments. Another student examined design interventions that support children with ADHD and there are plans to pursue a book publication.

Dr. Laurence Hare

Dr. J. Laurence Hare is an associate professor of history and was recently appointed Executive Director of Undergraduate Excellence and Global Engagement in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas. In his present position, he oversees the Honors Program in Fulbright College and promotes global and experiential learning for undergraduate students. Dr. Hare is originally from Chattanooga, Tennessee. He completed his Ph.D. work in history at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill before coming to the University of Arkansas as an assistant professor in 2010. Dr. Hare teaches courses in modern European history with a specialization in German and Scandinavian culture. Additionally, he also instructs introductory courses in international and global studies as well as European integration.

Dr. Hare is the author of *Excavating Nations: Archaeology, Museums, and the German-Danish Borderlands*, published by the University of Toronto Press. He is also the co-author of *Essential Skills for Historians: A Practical Guide to Researching the Past*, which is geared toward helping undergraduate students navigate their own independent research projects. In addition to describing how to conceptualize and design a project, the book includes an examination of history as both a discipline and professional career. Currently, he is in the process of completing his third book, *The Discovery of the North: Scandinavia and the Making of Modern Germany*. His research focuses on the German fascination with Scandinavia, particularly Nordic myths and the Vikings. His publication also focuses on the origins of nationalism and white supremacy in those regions.



“In our field, students have to create their own projects in a lot of ways,” Dr. Hare explained. “So, what I try to do is create groups where we can interact and collaborate with one another when possible.”

Dr. Hare stressed the benefits of faculty mentorship while participating in research as an undergraduate, adding that it can help direct student’s career goals and aspirations.

“Research projects provide an opportunity to be part of the university’s mission to create new knowledge by applying what you've learned so far as a student on campus,” Dr. Hare added.

In his free time, Dr. Hare enjoys hiking and playing the bass guitar.