Honors College Staff

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Dr. Harpham is the Dean of the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College and Associate Provost at The University of Texas at Dallas, overseeing its many activities. A Professor of Political Science, Dr. Harpham teaches courses in political theory, American government, Texas politics, and public policy. With Wendy Harpham M.D., he has developed a sequence of honors readings tutorials that explore the history, philosophy, and practice of medicine. Dr. Harpham is a previous winner of the Chancellor Council's Outstanding Teaching Award. He sits on the Board of the Archer Center in Washington D.C. and serves as the faculty advisor for the Archer Internship Program. He has published extensively on the role that economic ideas play in modern political thought and their impact upon public policy. His more recent work focuses on the role that emotions and passions play in modern political thought. He is the co-author with Anthony Champagne of the bestselling textbook Governing Texas. Dr. Harpham also works closely with the McDermott Scholars Program. Visit Dr. Harpham's homepage to learn more about his research and courses.

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Douglas C. Dow is the Associate Director of Collegium V, and Clinical Professor of Government and Politics. He also heads the Office of Distinguished Scholarships, recruiting and advising students applying for nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships. Dr. Dow teaches courses in political theory, American politics and Texas government, Constitutional law and history, ethics and technology, and film and politics. His research interests include the history of political thought and language, human rights, and jurisprudence.

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Ravi Prakash is a professor of computer science at the University of Texas at Dallas. His areas of teaching and research include wireless and sensor networking, mobile computing and distributed computing. He is the recipient of multiple research grants from federal agencies and industry including the NSF CAREER award and the NSF Major Research Infrastructure award. He has served the technical and university community in his roles as an editor of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Transactions on Mobile Computing, as the President of the IEEE Dallas section, and as a member of the UT Dallas Faculty Senate and Academic Council.

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Eva LaDow is a Senior Lecturer in Neuroscience with Collegium V. She did her Ph.D. at the University of California San Francisco, focusing on neuronal signal transduction and synaptic plasticity. During her postdoctoral fellowship at the Gladstone Institutes of Neurological Disease, she performed a high content analysis drug-repurposing screen to find potential therapies for ALS. Dr. LaDow teaches courses related to neurobiology, including Cellular Neuroscience and Neuropharmacology.

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Christina Thompson is a lecturer in Chemistry with Collegium V. She obtained her PhD in chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, where she focused on synthetic organic chemistry and completed the first total synthesis of the natural product Dykkellic Acid. From there she went to work at Abbott Laboratories, designing and developing new drugs for Schizophrenia.
Dr. Thompson teaches introductory organic chemistry lecture and lab, and works in Dr. Smaldone's research lab developing new materials for energy storage. She is also part of a team at UT Dallas developing Polycraft World, a mod for the popular game Minecraft, designed to teach polymer chemistry and energy science through enhanced game play.

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Valerie Brunell is the Assistant Dean and Director of the National Merit Scholars Program, the Collegium V Honors Program and the Liberal Arts Honors Programs. She has worked in higher education for almost 15 years both at UT Dallas and Binghamton University. She is a graduate of University of California at Irvine where she received her Master's degree in Chemistry.

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Sheila Kelly is the Director for the Terry Scholars Program. She has worked in the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College at UT Dallas since 2013. Prior to this, she was the Director of Student Affairs for a private French school for ten years. Sheila is a graduate of Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, where she received a Bachelors in English Literature. She also holds a Masters of Public Affairs from The University of Texas at Dallas.

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Wendi Kavanaugh is the Assistant Director for the National Merit Scholars Program. She is a graduate of Texas A&M University-Commerce where she received a B.S. in Radio and Television. She has a M.A. in Humanities, Aesthetic Studies and an M.F.A. in Arts and Technology from the University of Texas at Dallas. She is the former Membership Outreach Manager for the Dallas Museum of Art. Her office is located in GC 2.212. She can be reached at 972-883-4285.  

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Traci Rodd is the Business Manager for the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College. She is a graduate of Baylor University where she received a B.B.A. in Accounting. She also has a Master of Business Administration from Texas A&M University-Commerce. She has over six years of accounting and finance experience in the private sector and joined the Honors College in 2018.  

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Cheryl Janes is the Administrative Assistant II for the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College. She has extensive corporate and non-profit experience and excels in working with logistics. Cheryl has been part of The University of Texas at Dallas for more than eight years. Prior to joining the Honors College team, she has served the UT Dallas community in Undergraduate Education with the Health Professions Advising Center and UT-PACT program.