

Kathie Melde Named College of Engineering's Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs

Date::

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Kathleen "Kathie" Melde, who has been on the faculty of the **Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering**^[1] at the University of Arizona for 23 years, has been appointed associate dean of faculty affairs for the College of Engineering. This will be the first time in her years at the UA that a female faculty member has held a position in the dean's office, and Melde is enthusiastic about contributing to the college's continued progress.

"I'm really going to be an advocate for the faculty in the college, to make sure their priorities and concerns are voiced to the college, as well as to communicate changes to the college back to the faculty in an effective way," she said. "I would call myself 'the people dean.'"

Melde has received recognition for her research and her teaching techniques throughout her career, including being named a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, or IEEE, in 2012 and a teaching fellow for the college from 2012 to 2014. During the spring 2019 semester, Melde will be transitioning from her role as a professor and director of graduate studies for ECE into her new position.

"I am delighted that Dr. Melde is our new associate dean for faculty affairs," said Tamal Bose, head of ECE. "Her credentials and personality are perfect for this position. She will be a great addition to the College of Engineering leadership team."

Character and Discipline

Melde looks forward to working with department heads to promote collaboration across disciplines, while helping each department maintain its own unique character. During her time as a professor for the freshman engineering course ENGR 102, she learned what drew some students to the college – not just its larger programs, but less common, small-but-mighty areas like biosystems engineering and mining. The wide variety of departments are one of the things she believes makes the college strong.

"I am excited to have Kathie in this important role for the college," said Larry Head, interim dean of the college. "The associate dean for faculty affairs position will help our college improve diversity, faculty development, collaborations and culture. This is critical to the growth and success of the college."

She'll play a part in helping the college expand applicant pools when hiring to include more women and underrepresented minorities, as diversity is one of the college's core values. Once faculty are hired, she'll dedicate herself to making them all feel valued, whether they're career- or tenure-track, and whether they're new, mid-career or advanced-career.

"When new people get here, we want to help them navigate the University," Melde said. "But I think another thing that's important to do is make sure that the faculty here are feeling valued and retained."

Her years of interdisciplinary research in the college means she's familiar with the work of many of her colleagues. This makes her particularly well-suited not only to keeping an eye out for grants, fellowships and other opportunities, but to matching them to just the right faculty members.

"My job is to be mindful that these are opportunities that could change a person's life," she said. "I truly believe that any win for a single faculty member is a win for the college. We can all gather around that."

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[1] <https://ece.engineering.arizona.edu/>