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For immediate release

Pumphrey to help launch engineering program at Ouachita

By Felley Lawson

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For more information, contact Ouachita's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Dr. Norman D. Pumphrey Jr. has been named professor of engineering at Ouachita Baptist University. Pumphrey joins Ouachita faculty in the J.D. Patterson School of Natural Sciences after serving nearly 30 years in the engineering department at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston. He will help launch Ouachita's new 4-year Bachelor of Science degree pathway in engineering, planned to begin in Fall 2023 pending approval from the university's institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

"We're excited about the addition of Dr. Norm Pumphrey to help jump-start our engineering program, which will have three emphases: general, mechanical and civil," said Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the Patterson School. "Dr. Pumphrey brings a wealth of experience in teaching and accreditation for engineering. We're fortunate to have someone with his background to help us start our program."



Photo 1 Dr. Norm Pumphrey

Pumphrey earned three degrees in civil engineering: a Bachelor of Science from Louisiana Tech, a Master of Science from the University of Missouri at Rolla and a Ph.D. from Purdue University. A veteran instructor with more than 40 years' experience in higher education, Pumphrey retired in 2019 from

teaching full-time at Louisiana Tech and earned the honor of emeritus status as associate professor emeritus of civil engineering and construction engineering technology.

He had joined the faculty in 1990 as assistant professor of civil engineering, was named civil engineering program chair in 2002 and served most recently as chair of the construction engineering technology (CETH) program, where he managed curriculum and budget matters, advised as many as 60 program majors each academic quarter and taught a variety of courses in mechanics and materials, civil engineering and construction engineering technology.

“When I heard last fall about Ouachita’s plans to start an engineering program, I remember thinking how challenging and fulfilling it would be to be a part of something like that,” said Pumphrey, a native Arkansan. “My family attended Southern Baptist churches all over Arkansas as my dad’s job moved us around the state. My oldest son, my aunt and many of my friends and acquaintances have attended and were graduated from Ouachita. It seems that I have known about Ouachita and the excellent Christian education that it provided for my entire life. It has just taken me a while to get here!”

He added, “I’m excited about beginning my Ouachita journey. I look forward to working with Drs. Knight, Kevin Cornelius and Angela Douglass and to helping them to make this program a successful reality.”

Cornelius, professor of physics, and Douglass, associate professor of physics, will also be part of the engineering faculty.

Ouachita’s engineering program is designed to meet standards set by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET); in order to become a licensed professional engineer, a student must graduate from an ABET-approved program. Degree requirements will be added to Ouachita’s 2023-2024 catalog. Beginning in Fall 2022, however, engineering courses will be added to the university’s academic schedule, and current and incoming students may declare an engineering major.

On-campus preparations for the program launch are underway, such as creating a 4,400-square-foot engineering lab, developing engineering curriculum and hiring additional faculty members, including Pumphrey.

Formal application for program accreditation can be made to ABET when Ouachita’s first engineering students graduate. Once granted, accreditation applies to all graduates who have completed the engineering curriculum within two years of ABET approval.

For more information, contact Dr. Tim Knight at knightt@obu.edu or at (870) 245-5528.