The Huntsman School welcomes two outstanding new faculty

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Dr. Briggs Depew
Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Finance

The location and lifestyle of pastoral Cache Valley were instantly appealing to Dr. Briggs Depew, who grew up in the small farming community of Raymond, in southern Alberta, Canada. However, it was the administration’s overall vision for the Huntsman School of Business and his colleagues’ personal excellence and genuine interest in helping students excel that made him eager to join the Economics and Finance Department at the Huntsman School.

“I’ve been thoroughly impressed with the dedication that the Huntsman School has to their students, how much they care about teaching and mentoring students in trying to help them move to that next level of becoming leaders and becoming independent thinkers who can go forward and help spread the reputation of USU based on the quality of the education they’re receiving here,” says Depew, who received a BS in Economics from BYU-Idaho in 2008 and a PhD in Economics from the University of Arizona in 2013.

Depew specializes in applied microeconomics with a focus on health economics and labor economics. His research interests are as varied as immigration, crime, law in economics, and health care, but his overarching interest is trying to understand the implications of policy, including both their intended and unintended consequences. “Economists are social scientists. We look for natural ways that experiments happen within data. I’m trying to understand the causal effects of x on y, rather than just the correlations between x and y,” says Depew.

He credits excellent advisors and professors with facilitating a learning environment that got him excited about economics and grew his desire to make a difference in economics education. In like manner, Depew hopes to increase students’ interest in how to do policy research and evaluation, and provide them with opportunities to analyze policies empirically with data. Specifically, he wants to provide students with the toolset to use data to critically understand the economic and social effects of public policies.

Dr. Mike Ulrich
Assistant Professor, Department of Management

Dr. Mike Ulrich joins the Huntsman School of Business an accomplished author and researcher, with more than 30 works published as refereed journal articles, books, book chapters, white papers, and other publications, and more than 10 works in progress. Notably, his forthcoming book, Victory Through Organization: Why the War for Talent Is Failing Your Company and What You Can Do About It, coauthored with Dave Ulrich, David Kryscynski, and Wayne Brockbank, has attracted the attention of HR executives at companies like American Express and Unilever. Historically, organizations have sought to win by hiring the best individual talent, but falter when they lose the talent they’ve relied on. In Victory Through Organization, the authors find that although individual talent is important, organizations are better served by building processes, systems, and capabilities that transcend individuals within the organizations.

More broadly, Ulrich’s research is focused on HR and strategy. On the HR side, Ulrich studies how HR departments can affect businesses as a whole, as well as how organizations utilize people to achieve their goals and strategic priorities. On the strategy side, he’s interested in the study of executive succession, or succession practices and
policies. How companies choose their leadership and who the leadership chooses for their team significantly impacts the organization. Because senior leadership of an organization determines the extent to which companies are successful, understanding the people making strategic decisions within a company leads to a better understanding of how the organization works overall.

Dr. Ulrich received BS and MS degrees in statistics from BYU in 2007 and 2009. After working at an HR and leadership consulting firm as a statistician, he attended the University of South Carolina where he received his PhD in Business Administration in 2016, with an emphasis in Management and a minor in International Business.