

SUMMARY

New Appointments to Endowed Chairs, Professorships, or Fellowships (1)

June 4, 2018

College of Engineering (1)

Vinod Lohani

W.S. "Pete" White Chair for Innovation in
Engineering Education

ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP
W. S. "Pete" White Chair for Innovation in Engineering Education

The W.S. "Pete" White Chair for Innovation in Engineering Education was established by the generous gift of \$500,000 by American Electric Power. The creation of this chair, in honor of Pete White (EE '48), enables Virginia Tech to generate new interest in the teaching of engineering and in improving the learning process. It is unique in its flexibility—the chair is rotated biennially to a new recipient. Dean Julia Ross has nominated Professor Vinod Lohani as the W.S. "Pete" White Chair, based on the recommendations of the Department of Engineering Education and the College of Engineering's Honorifics Committee.

Dr. Lohani has excelled at scholarship, teaching, service, and outreach at Virginia Tech. Through his innovative teaching methods based on interactive classroom instruction technologies combined with hands on learning experiences, he has impacted hundreds of students across a wide range of programs in the College of Engineering. With 16 NSF funded projects and a cumulative research income of \$6.4M, Dr. Lohani's research activity underpinning this educational innovation has been equally impressive.

Dr. Lohani founded the Learning Enhanced Watershed Assessment System (LEWAS) Lab at Virginia Tech, which conducts sophisticated water quality and weather monitoring on campus in real-time. Learners and students are able to access these data through an interactive database, and thus are able to engage in exciting work in environmental and engineering education. This lab is used by students in several departments across the college; in total it has been used in more than 26 courses at Virginia Tech and beyond. It has also supported a number of research projects involving an ever-growing community of graduate students.

Dr. Lohani now holds the position of Director for Education and Global Initiatives at the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science (ICTAS) which has allowed him to take the impact of his work to a new level, especially in building connections at the K-12 level. The impact of Dr. Lohani's innovative work in engineering education has been recognized by numerous awards, the full list of which is impressive. Notably, Dr. Lohani was the first person in the college to receive Virginia Tech's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award, in 2013.

He is commended for work at both the course and curriculum level. His work exemplifies a hands-on approach to engineering education and shows an impressive and ongoing uptake of the most recent technologies in the field, allowing students to engage with up to date and exciting engineering experiences. Dr. Lohani's energy and creativity is evident across this diverse portfolio of work, and his strong publication record has allowed this impact to spread beyond the institution to further afield in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Professor Vinod Lohani be appointed to the W.S. "Pete" White Chair for Innovation in Engineering Education effective for a period of two years beginning August 10, 2018, with a salary supplement as provided by the endowment and, if available, with funds from the eminent scholars match program.

June 4, 2018