

Friedman Family Visiting Professionals Program



2020-2021 Academic Year Summary Report

Objectives

The Friedman Family Visiting Professional Program aims to bridge the gaps between the academic and professional worlds of earthquake engineering and earthquake risk reduction by:

- Improving the understanding of students and faculty of the active professional earthquake engineering and risk reduction community
- Enhancing the students' understanding of the multi-disciplinary nature of earthquake engineering
- Increasing the professional's understanding of the educational process
- Utilizing the unique intellectual resources of EERI to broker useful relationships
- Using the resources of EERI to help students understand and consider professional careers associated with earthquake engineering and earthquake risk reduction

With generous funding from the Friedman Family endowment, the program sends professionals to universities to provide a lecture and meet with students to discuss the options available to them upon graduation. These meetings also benefit visiting professionals by increasing their understanding of the educational process experienced by young professionals now entering the field.

2020-2021 Program Overview

The Friedman Family Visiting Professionals program launched in August 2020 for the 2020-2021 academic year. Due to COVID-19, the program was planned to be completely virtual. 31 visits were scheduled by 19 professionals from late January to early July 2021.

In August 2020, EERI staff, David Friedman, and a small group of visiting professionals met to discuss virtual options. A conclusion was made that professionals would still be matched with universities, like in typical years. They would have assistance from EERI to host a lecture over Zoom. All additional activities with the chapter would be planned independently.

In late September 2020, the program was advertised to EERI student chapters, and an application form required student chapters to select their top 3 professionals and describe the reasons for their choices. 31 EERI student chapters applied to the program. Due to the virtual format and no travel costs, all 31 chapters were selected to participate. Selections were made based on the following criteria:

- Diversity in professionals selected
- Diversity in universities selected
- Providing opportunities to new chapters or chapters who have not had recent visits.
- Quality of description and reasoning for professionals in the application form

Before the first visit, EERI staff launched the participating cohort of professionals by email, summarizing the new virtual procedures, linking them to a Student Leadership Council member who would assist as a moderator for their lecture, and providing them with the EERI introduction slides that describe EERI's mission, disciplines, and the benefits to students of being a member.

The Student Leadership Council also generously offered their time to assist with virtual lectures. Staff provided them all with moderator instructions to help with this process. Each SLC member assisted in scheduling, moderating, and acting as a Zoom host for 1-3 lectures. They stepped up above and beyond their typical duties to make this year's FFVP program possible.

Additionally, the student chapters were launched by email. They received detailed instructions and a link to a new FFVP website where their chapters could register for their lecture and join the Zoom meeting at the date and time it took place. The website is still live and students can register or log in to view lecture recordings on demand: <https://eeri.swoogo.com/2021ffvp>.

Upon the conclusion of the spring visits, student chapters were required to complete a report summarizing the visit and submit it via a questionnaire designed to solicit their feedback on the success of the program and areas for improvement. The reporting template has streamlined visit feedback.

The template includes the following sections:

- Itinerary or Agenda
- Student Chapter Planning Committee
- Visiting Professional Lecture Overview
- Supplemental Activities
- Results, Feedback, and Lessons Learned
- Acknowledgments
- List of Attachments

Since the visits were virtual, reports did end up being a bit shorter than usual. Agendas were shorter since not as many activities, such as lab tours and group dinners, could be done virtually.

Visiting professionals were also asked to complete an evaluation that would help EERI staff improve the program. Generally, feedback from the professionals was very good and will help improve our program in the coming academic year. More details about the results of these evaluations are included later in this report.

List of Visiting Professionals

Below are the names of the visiting professionals participating in the program during the 2020-2021 academic year, along with their firm and disciplinary area of expertise.

- Christine Beyzaei, Exponent Inc., Engineering - Geotechnical
- Erik Bishop, Reid Middleton, Inc., Engineering - Structural
- Dana Brechwald, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Urban Planning
- David Cocke, Structural Focus, Engineering - Structural

- Ron Eguchi, ImageCat Inc., Lifelines
- David Friedman, Forell/Elsesser, Engineering - Structural
- Ramin Golesorkhi, Langan, Engineering - Geotechnical
- Nathan Gould, ABS Consulting, Engineering - Structural
- John Hooper, Magnusson Klemencic Associates, Engineering - Structural
- Ezra Jampole, Exponent Inc., Engineering - Structural
- Janiele Maffei, California Earthquake Authority, Engineering - Structural
- Faiz Makdisi, Gannett Fleming, Inc., Engineering - Geotechnical
- Jim Malley, Degenkolb Engineers, Engineering - Structural
- Brent Maxfield, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Engineering - Structural
- Jorge Meneses, RMA Group, Engineering - Geotechnical
- Troy Morgan, Exponent Inc., Engineering - Structural
- Sissy Nikolaou, NIST, Engineering - Geotechnical
- John Thornley, Golder Associates Inc., Engineering - Geotechnical
- Jay Wilson, Clackamas County Disaster Management, Emergency Management

Selected Universities

Thirty-one universities were selected to participate in the 2020-2021 program. Complete reports summarizing each visit have been submitted by the participating universities and are linked below. EERI staff plans to upload each to the EERI website, like previous program years.

University (and link to report)	Professional	Date
Johns Hopkins University	Jay Wilson	January 28, 2021
University of British Columbia	John Hooper	January 28, 2021
University of California, Irvine	John Hooper	February 5, 2021
University of Michigan	Troy Morgan	February 11, 2021
Virginia Tech	John Thornley	February 18, 2021
University of Kansas	Jim Malley	February 19, 2021
The University of Memphis	Brent Maxfield	February 24, 2021
University of California, San Diego	David Friedman	March 1, 2021
California State University, Chico	David Friedman	March 2, 2021
University of Nebraska	Sissy Nikolaou	March 2, 2021
Stanford University	David Cocke	March 4, 2021
Portland State University	Christine Beyzaei	March 5, 2021
University of California, Los Angeles	Jim Malley	March 9, 2021
Universidad Iberoamericana	David Friedman	March 10, 2021

University of California, Berkeley	Faiz Makdisi	March 12, 2021
North Carolina State University	Janiele Maffei	March 12, 2021
University of Victoria	Dana Brechwald	April 1, 2021
University of Nevada, Reno	Troy Morgan	April 8 and 9, 2021
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	John Thornley	April 9, 2021
Universidad Politécnica Salesiana	Jorge Meneses	April 9, 2021
California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo	Janiele Maffei	April 15, 2021
University at Buffalo	Ezra Jampole	April 16, 2021
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	Nathan Gould	April 22, 2021
Rice University	Ron Eguchi	April 23, 2021
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	Sissy Nikolaou	April 23, 2021
University of Notre Dame	Erik Bishop	April 29, 2021
University of California, Davis	Nathan Gould	April 30, 2021
Cornell University	Ezra Jampole	May 5, 2021
Oregon State University	David Cocke	May 10, 2021
Pontifical Catholic University of Peru	Christine Beyzaei	June 25, 2021
Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas UFA-ESPE	Ramin Golesorkhi	July 1, 2021

2020-2021 Outcomes and Accomplishments

Even with the need to adapt the program to be completely virtual, the 2020-2021 program was very successful. It was the first time that all chapters who applied were matched with a professional. It also allowed international universities to participate, which is tough in typical years due to travel costs.

Surveys were distributed to student chapter officers, lecture attendees, and visiting professionals. A summary of results is included below.

- Over 530 students registered on the FFVP website. These students were able to access their university's lecture and all lecture recordings.
- In total, chapter officers reported over 750 individuals attended their visiting professional lectures. (This number is larger than the number registered due to a few universities having to use their own video conferencing platform)
- On average, professionals spent 3-4 hours interacting with students face to face over Zoom.
- On average, universities planned 2-3 activities with their visiting professional. These included: informal meet and greets, Q&A sessions, mock interviews, and virtual lab tours.
- 92% of students and 88% of professionals said the visit and interactions meet or exceeded their expectations.

- 78% of students said they have an increased interest in earthquake risk reduction careers after attending their university's lecture.

As we expected, the majority of students (58%) and professionals (87%) said a virtual visit was less valuable than an in-person visit. But students overwhelmingly still enjoyed the experience. A few stand-out quotes are below.

"The Chapter enjoyed learning about the Oroville Dam Spillways Emergency Recovery Project and lessons learned. Dr. Makdisi gave a talk that was interesting to the attendees with different educational backgrounds as it contained not only geotechnical earthquake engineering aspects but also geological and structural engineering and emergency management aspects. Dr. Makdisi is an excellent visiting professional who gladly shared his knowledge and experience with the students."

- University of California, Berkeley

"Our chapter really appreciated having John Thornley, a practitioner, speak with us about a real-world project. His presentation was a real highlight of the visit and sparked good discussion about how geotechnical earthquake engineers operate in practice. John was also very thoughtful and interactive and we all had a very positive experience exchanging ideas and questions throughout his visit."

- Virginia Tech

"It is hard to say what we enjoyed most, since all aspects of Dr. Gould's visit were excellent! We greatly benefited from the lecture, which was well put together for our audience of primarily graduate students. Many of us had similar interests in structural and risk-based analysis, so it was great to hear about Dr. Gould's experiences within his unique consulting firm with projects focused on several different hazard types (not just earthquakes). His reconnaissance experiences were enjoyable and interesting to learn about as well. We also received positive feedback from those who attended the "informal" conversations for career-advice."

- University of California, Davis

Goals, Plans, and Activities for 2021-2022 Academic Year

For the 2021-2022 academic year, the committee plans to return to in-person visits. They hope to schedule at least 20 university visits, pending a detailed budget assessment.

We plan to continue to collect quantifiable data from our visits to better track the program as a whole. We recently began asking student chapters to report how many undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty members attended the event. We will continue to evaluate the student feedback form and add additional questions to help assess the success of the program.

Staff also is considering whether to include a virtual visit option in the future. While survey results showed in-person visits are important to both students and professionals, a virtual component could allow the program to reach more students throughout the US and internationally.

List of Attachments

See the Friedman Family Visiting Professional webpage for past academic year reports and other information: <https://www.eeri.org/projects/friedman-family-visiting-professionals-program/>.