

Debra Reinhart Announces Retirement, Changes in Office of Research and College of Graduate Studies Leadership

ORLANDO, April 23, 2021 – Pegasus Professor of Engineering and Associate Vice President for Research and Scholarship Debra Reinhart is retiring effective June 4.

After a long career dedicated to advancing research in her own field and as an administrator advocating and supporting fellow researchers, Reinhart plans to enjoy her retirement mixing family time with volunteer work. In addition to traveling, bicycling and spending time with her grandchildren, she will continue to serve as the associate editor and newsletter editor for the *Waste Management Journal*, on the Board of Directors for Oak Ridge Associate Universities, on the Board of Scientific Counselors for US EPA and as an ABET program evaluator.

Effective June 7, stepping in to fill her big shoes on an interim basis is Winston Schoenfeld, who is no stranger to the Office of Research or the College of Graduate Studies.

Schoenfeld, an accomplished professor of optics, has served as director of the Solar Technologies Research Division at the Florida Solar Energy Center, which reports to the Office of Research. Since 2018, he has been leading the university-wide Energy Initiative, during which time he has worked closely with Reinhart. Schoenfeld was also named acting associate dean of the College of Graduate Studies in 2019. He has been overseeing the development of new academic degrees and the postdoctoral program in that role.

Schoenfeld was named to the position when Weishampel left UCF on a two-year appointment to the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., Weishampel will resume his duties when he returns to UCF June 14.

A retirement celebration is in the works for Reinhart who has spent a lifetime working to improve our world and supporting faculty aspiring to do the same. Her research has focused on solid waste management, with a focus on optimized waste collection and sustainable operation of landfills. She is a registered professional engineer in Florida and Georgia, a board-certified environmental engineer, and a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors.

NASA, the American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists, the Tech Museum of Innovation, Solid Waste Association of North America, and the Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors have all recognized Reinhart for her excellence. She earned her engineering degree from UCF when it was still called Florida Technological University and returned to her alma mater in 1989 to teach and conduct research. She rose through the ranks and was named a 2009 Pegasus Professor — the highest faculty honor at UCF. She has worked with industry and spent two years at the National Science Foundation. Reinhart dedicated the past decade to advocating for and supporting faculty researchers as a member of the leadership team in the Office of Research.

