

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



## 4 Questions with Dr. Ann Goodell

Assistant Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering

### **What brought you to Cal Poly College of Engineering?**

Cal Poly actually took me by surprise. During my final year of my Ph.D. program, I was applying for faculty positions knowing I wanted to become an educator and remain involved in research. As I learned more about Cal Poly's philosophy, research breadth and course offerings, I became very impressed. Cal Poly's reputation preceded it; when I told my mentors and colleagues that I had an initial interview, I got nothing but gushing praise about what excellent engineers the university nurtured and how unique a program it was. When I came to campus for my in-person interview, I was deeply impressed with everything from the intellectual research interest to the campus itself, and the students particularly showcased thoughtfulness, curiosity, engagement and respect. It caught me off guard what a perfect fit it felt like.

### **How do you like to spend your free time?**

I love to read, mainly fantasy novels. Recently, I've been trying sourdough bread again. It's going well if you consider how hard I laugh when I pull a loaf out of the oven and it's as flat as a frisbee.

### **What is the most helpful advice you've received?**

"Stress isn't worth it." I can't say I follow this advice very well, but I do like to reiterate it. There are inevitably stressful times in life, but I think we often put too much pressure on ourselves and others when there isn't a justified need to do so.

### **How do you support the college's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion?**

This is such an important topic to me. First, I make it a priority to be familiar with the college's available resources, and, within my classroom, I offer the course content in several formats — from written notes, videos, textbooks and lectures. Establishing mutual respect is critical in a successful learning environment. I begin by ensuring my students know that I respect them and the unique journeys that brought them to where they are with me. It's important to recognize that even though I'm teaching engineering-focused courses, there are many external cultural or societal factors which may impact a student's ability to succeed; my goal is to provide flexible support to ensure student success.



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