



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

## Center for Lifelong Engineering Education

2613 Speedway, Stop A2800 | Austin, TX 78712 | (512) 232-5550

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Trammie Anderson, Marketing Manager  
[trammie.anderson@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:trammie.anderson@austin.utexas.edu)  
Lauryn Feil, Communications Coordinator  
[laurynfeil@utexas.edu](mailto:laurynfeil@utexas.edu)

### **NEWS RELEASE**

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

## **February is for forensics**

### **The University of Texas at Austin hosts annual Forensics Engineering Conference**

**AUSTIN, Texas – January 29, 2014** -- The annual Forensics Engineering Symposium hosted by UT's Center for Lifelong Engineering Education (CLEE) and the Cockrell School of Engineering's Department of Civil Engineering will be February 20-21, 2014 located at the West Pickle Research Building.

Forensics engineering is the investigation of materials, products and structures that fail, causing personal injury or damage to property. Forensics engineers determine the cause of the failure in order to improve the life of the component or to assist attorneys in court to determine the facts of an accident.

This two-day conference brings together some of UT's most elite faculty members and industry experts to discuss forensics engineering topics including lessons from hurricanes, building envelopes, structural failures, foundation and other recent case studies.

Engineers, architects, building officials, insurance adjustors, attorneys, undergraduate engineers and anyone else with an interest in learning about forensics engineering can attend the conference.

After registration and a light breakfast on February 20, Dr. David Fowler, a University Distinguished Professor who has taught at UT since 1964, will lead the introduction into the conference.

"This is one of the best groups of speakers and some of the most interesting topics we have ever had," said Dr. Fowler.

New issues of focus include a discussion about the aftermath of the April 2013 fertilizer plant explosion in West Texas, lead by Erik Nelson, and an investigation of the collapse of the Dallas Cowboys practice stadium lead by Ryan Chancey.

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“The presentations regarding the explosion in West Texas and the collapse of the Dallas Cowboys practice facility are unique in the sense that they will be presented from an engineer’s perspective,” said Michael Lee, professional engineering and Principal at Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. “It will be interesting to delve deeper into the engineering aspects of these two incidents than what was widely reported in the media.”

Other topics include engineering construction and distress, forensics methods, materials and conditions, geometry deposition, legal viewpoints, engineering ethics, as well as historic failures such as the Tower of Pisa in Italy, and the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

“Uncertainty in Geotechnical Forensics Engineering by Bob Gilbert is another great topic that will alert engineers that there are limitations to whatever engineering work that goes on in the field of geotechnical forensic engineering,” said Dr. Narendra Gosain, Senior Principal in the Structural Diagnostics Services Group of Walter P. Moore.

Gosain said he is also excited about getting a chance to learn from a practicing attorney in the presentation “Engineering your Expert Experience: A View from Legal Trenches.”

“This should give engineers some great insight on what the attorneys are looking for from their expert witnesses. It will help streamline the discussions that engineers likely have with their attorney clients and thus have a better outcome from the effort that they put in,” said Gosain.

For more information and registration contact Erin Warner, the program coordinator at:

Erin Muire Warner

(512) 232-5154

[erin.muire@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:erin.muire@austin.utexas.edu)

Or visit the CLEE website: [http://lifelong.engr.utexas.edu/epd/course\\_1.cfm?course\\_num=1508](http://lifelong.engr.utexas.edu/epd/course_1.cfm?course_num=1508)

### **About the Center for Lifelong Engineering Education**

The University of Texas at Austin’s Cockrell School of Engineering is one of the Top 10 distinguished engineering schools in the country. Our professional development department, the Center for Lifelong Engineering Education, provides busy engineers with immediately applicable, real-world knowledge through individual courses, master’s degrees and on-site custom courses. What Starts Here Changes The World. Learn more at [www.UTclee.org](http://www.UTclee.org)

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