



Meet Laura Bowling

Laura Bowling, PhD

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Program

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Laura Bowling is a Professor of Hydrology and Water Resources in the Department of Agronomy at Purdue University. She also serves as Director of the undergraduate interdisciplinary program in Natural Resources and Environmental Science at Purdue. She holds a Ph.D. and MSCE in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Washington in Seattle, WA. Dr. Bowling's applied research and teaching program addresses how the water cycle is altered through human intervention across multiple scales and ecosystems and communicating these findings to stakeholders such as urban planners, conservationists, policy-makers and drainage boards. She has been involved in international initiatives, collaborating with colleagues from the [Universidad Nacional de San Agustín](#) to work with stakeholders ranging from regional agency officials to rural community members to co-produce products that will aid in decision-making related to water management in Arequipa, Peru. Currently, she is pursuing field studies and model development to evaluate the effectiveness of agricultural drainage water management, particularly the practice of drainage water recycling, to mitigate floods, reduce downstream nutrient loads and enhance crop yields. She is a member of the American Geophysical Union and the ASA-CSSA-SSSA Tri-Societies.

“How do you plan on advancing UCOWR’s mission of leading in education, research and public service in water resources?”

As a member of a land grant university, I fully embrace the tri-part UCOWR mission, and I believe I can contribute to aspects of all three mission areas. I am heavily involved in interdisciplinary, undergraduate education about water, including directing an undergraduate program, and teaching an undergraduate hydrology course, a field skills class for water measurement and a class on the intersection of water and food security. To me, the study of water resources is inherently interdisciplinary, but the interdisciplinary students I serve are often lacking the connection to a student chapter of a professional society. Many such chapters are firmly established in discipline specific programs with a strictly research focus. During my first term as a UCOWR Board Member, I have been particularly excited by the increased engagement in our annual meetings. Through the poster sessions, mentorship opportunities and career panels, the UCOWR meeting provides a supportive atmosphere and rich professional development opportunities for students and young professionals. Together with our new student member of the board, UCOWR is committed to continuing to expand opportunities and support for students.

This last fall, I was able to participate in the strategic planning retreat for the UCOWR Board and Staff. I was most heavily involved in the Visibility and Membership Goals to increase our overall UCOWR membership, and to increase the diversity of UCOWR membership through expanded opportunities to engage minority serving institutions. Increasing membership requires sharing a vision of how UCOWR can be an asset to water researchers, teachers, and extension professionals and students. The utility of UCOWR to these cohorts will be enhanced through other aspects of our strategic plan to develop regional focus areas, identify research communities, build a stronger student base and ultimately, to make UCOWR into a central hub of activity for extension and engagement in water resources. I look forward to the opportunity to work with the board to implement our strategic plan.