Nan Hu ('14, '15) joins faculty at Ohio State University

Nan Hu, who earned a master’s degree in 2014 and PhD in 2015 at MSU, started his appointment as a tenure-track assistant professor at The Ohio State University on Sept. 1, 2017.

A native of Beijing, China, he received a bachelor’s degree with honor from Hunan University and M.S. degree with high honor from Central South University.

His early experience in China focused on understanding the behavior of large-scale infrastructure, particularly on high-speed rail bridges. He spent a year at Tsinghua University as a research associate before coming to Michigan State University for graduate school.

At MSU, he was a research assistant under the supervisor of Professor Rigoberto Burgueño (CEE/ME). Hu earned a master’s degree in engineering mechanics (‘14) and PhD in civil engineering (‘15), where he developed approaches to controlling the postbuckling response of cylindrical shells, with a focus on energy harvesting.

In addition to his research, Hu was a teaching assistant (TA) for four years, 2011 to 2015, for one of the largest undergraduate courses in the College of Engineering (CE/ME 221 Statics). Many students described him as an energetic TA with a strong attitude toward helping students. He also helped with many undergraduate student summer research program and outreach events. At MSU, he established himself as a leader by organizing many student events at both the department level and the university level. He was a standing student board member for both the College of Engineering Graduate Studies Committee and the University Committee on Graduate Studies. He was the recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Student Award from the College of Engineering in 2015.

In addition to earning his PhD from MSU, Hu was a postdoctoral researcher at Dartmouth College from 2015 to 2017,
where he focused on harnessing mechanical instability for adaptive and multifunctional devices. He has assisted in multiple NSF-award projects and a NIH transformative research project.

In his new position, Hu will lead the research activities on developing novel structural concepts to develop macro-scale devices, architected materials toward the development of sustainable and resilient infrastructure.

“My success in finding a faculty position would not have been possible without my education at MSU,” he said. “Coursework from the College of Engineering and dissertation work with Dr. Burgueño broadened my training from the traditional field of structural engineering to a more holistic interdisciplinary platform. I am grateful for the numerous resources provided by the College of Engineering, including seminars, workshops, professional training, travel grants and fellowships. I made a great decision to attend MSU and I am a proud Spartan alumnus.”

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