Peter Savolainen Joins CEE as MSU Foundation Professor

Peter Savolainen, a transportation engineer who examines road user behavior, has joined the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Michigan State University as an MSU Foundation Professor.

The designation of MSU Foundation Professor is given to nationally and internationally recognized researchers who combine scholarly accomplishment with clear professional relevance to specific research areas.

Savolainen was previously with Iowa State University, where his transportation engineering research focused on econometrics - applying statistical methods to economic data. His research examines the fundamental nature of road user behavior, particularly how traffic safety and operations are influenced by driver behavior in consideration of roadway and traffic characteristics.

Savolainen’s work in this area has provided important information regarding road user behavior changes in response to such roadway features as maximum speed limits, centerline and shoulder rumble strips, and red-light-running cameras at signalized intersections. His research has also advanced fundamental knowledge as to how roadway design, environmental factors, and in-vehicle distractions affect the risk of traffic crashes.

He has served as PI or co-PI on more than $14 million of externally funded research through competitive grant awards from agencies including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and various state departments of transportation.

Savolainen received a BS in civil engineering from Michigan Technological University, and MS and PhD degrees in civil
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engineering from Purdue University. He was a member of the civil and environmental engineering faculty at Wayne State University from 2006 to 2014. He served as an associate professor and safety engineer at Iowa State University from 2014 to 2018, before joining MSU.

Related Website: MSU Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
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