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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Funding from Global (Re)Insurer AXIS Supports Five New Risk and Resiliency Projects by University of Illinois Faculty**

***Professors awarded research grants from UI Office of Risk Management &  
Insurance Research; Focus on disaster risk assessment and resiliency***

CHAMPAIGN, IL – The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) has selected five faculty scholars for the 2021-2022 academic year to advance academic research on risk management and preparedness. Faculty scholars were announced by the University's Office of Risk Management & Insurance Research (ORMIR) within the Gies College of Business. These outstanding researchers represent various colleges across the UIUC campus and are indicative of its world-class strengths in risk research, risk management, and risk assessment. Faculty scholars are funded by AXIS, a leader in specialty insurance and global reinsurance.

The five ORMIR scholars for 2021-2022 include:

- **Eun Jeong Cha**, assistant professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
- **Tatyana Deryugina**, associate professor of finance, Gies College of Business
- **Bo Li**, professor and department chair of statistics, Liberal Arts and Sciences
- **Ryan Sriver**, associate professor, Department of Atmospheric Sciences
- **Ann Sychterz**, assistant professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering

Research projects undertaken by these faculty scholars include assessing the vulnerability of existing buildings to wind damage, creating a building database for determining natural disaster risk, studying tipping points for temperature extremes, understanding climate variability and developing tools to improve seasonal predictions, and using machine learning to reduce the time involved in infrastructure risk assessment.

“Advancing risk research is a strategic priority for us. The need to better manage risk is undeniable,” said ORMIR Director Lynne McChristian. “Bringing an interdisciplinary approach to risk-related issues is key to developing solutions that are relevant to not only the insurance industry, but to all organizations.”

The Office of Risk Management and Insurance Research, which is housed in the University of Illinois' Gies College of Business, was established to design research on critical issues facing the insurance industry and to engage students seeking careers in risk management and (re)insurance.

“At AXIS, we believe it is critical for the insurance and reinsurance industry to help advance efforts to improve sustainability and study and address the impacts of climate change,” said Laura Sime, Head of the AXIS Research Center & Cat Modeling Support at AXIS. “AXIS recognizes the power of partnering with members of academia to bring valuable research on emerging risks to the market. We’re proud to have supported ORMIR scholars since 2019, and we look forward to continuing this progress through these new risk and resiliency projects.

AXIS is a top specialty insurer and global reinsurer defined by its expertise in complex risks, underwriting excellence and superior client service. In 2018, the Company pledged \$1.5 million over the course of five years to launch the AXIS Risk Management Academy at UIUC, a program that provides students interested in pursuing a career in risk management with professional development resources and experiences to support their undergraduate work.

### **About Gies College of Business**

For more than 100 years, Gies College of Business has intentionally designed its innovative programs, leading-edge curriculum, and experiential learning opportunities to empower and prepare students to turn big ideas into meaningful actions. Today, Gies faculty prepare more than 8,000 future business leaders, including 3,100 undergraduates, from around the world to put their purpose into practice and provide transformative leadership in a global economy.

[GiesBusiness.illinois.edu](http://GiesBusiness.illinois.edu)

### **About AXIS Capital**

AXIS Capital, through its operating subsidiaries, is a global provider of specialty lines insurance and treaty reinsurance with shareholders' equity of \$5.4 billion at June 30, 2021, and locations in Bermuda, the United States, Europe, Singapore and Canada. Its operating subsidiaries have been assigned a rating of "A+" ("Strong") by Standard & Poor's and "A" ("Excellent") by A.M. Best. For more information about AXIS Capital, visit our website at [www.axiscapital.com](http://www.axiscapital.com).

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