

Cover Sheet

Hi Dr. A,

I have to be honest, I felt like a 4/5 starting this and landed at a 2.5/5. Not a huge knockdown, but I am not as confident. I am worried I talked too much about the researcher and not enough about the actual event.

I decided to leave out quotes from Dr. Johnson as they were very dull and didn't help add energy to the story. I had Harrison Hill give some comments about Research on Tap (ROT) instead. I feel odd about it since he is technically my boss, but since I was unable to hear back from the VPR himself Harrison seemed like a good filler and helped give feedback on the overall release as well. Overall happy with the decision to include him on this before making final edits and writing this cover.

I felt great writing my lead, and feel like things flow really nicely. If I turned in this release without SEO prominence, I would feel like a 5/5. SEO has been a struggle for me. I am looking at doing the certification to see if that helps grow some of those skills you taught us in class. I understand the importance of it, and I understand that adding keywords makes it easier for Google to find, but I struggle with picking those keywords.

These are what I landed on:

- Investigative work in forensic engineering
- Oklahoma State Research
- Research on Tap
- Local Stillwater beer
- Civil engineering
- Environmental engineering
- Bridge autopsies
- Engineering failure cases
- Forensic engineering professor

The links I added help give more background on the highlighted words. For example, each of the names of staff at the university links to their profile page on OSU experts or the directory which has their job title and contact information. I added a link to the book written by Dr. Delatte, as well as links to the OSU research website, OSU experts website and the calendar page for ROT. There is also a link to *The Conversation* article written by Delatte about the Miami condos collapse from 2019. Finally, I included links to departments/organizations/schools or the like to give further background to the readers on those entities if they so choose.

P.S. I think it is important you know the entire time I wrote this story I pronounced his name de-laa-tay in my head. Apparently, I am a coffee addict. I hope you pronounce it that way as well. That is not the correct pronunciation though.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Oklahoma State University
Abby Cage
(405) 744-5000
abcage@okstate.edu



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oklahoma State research division hosts Research on Tap featuring forensic engineering professor

OSU professor dives into how forensic engineering investigations are similar to autopsies and improve engineering

STILLWATER, Okla. [Sept. 15, 2023] — Oklahoma State University will host the next session in its ongoing [Research on Tap](#) series featuring [Norb Delatte](#) — OSU professor and department head of [civil and environmental engineering](#) — on Monday at 5:30 p.m. at [Iron Monk](#) to help ignite interest about the forensic engineering research happening on campus as they enjoy local Stillwater beer.

Each session of Research on Tap starts with a short discussion between OSU vice president of research, [Kenneth Sewell](#), and the guest researcher. However, the event is meant to be interactive, with most of the time spent answering audience questions.

Delatte will speak about his investigative work in forensic engineering. When explaining forensic engineering, he compares it to forensic medicine. Analogies such as “building pathology” or “building a bridge autopsies” are commonly used. The investigations are conducted for similar reasons that an autopsy is performed on a human — to determine the cause of death — or in the case of bridges, the cause of failure.

“The whole goal is to improve the safety of the built environment of the thing, the engineered things, and systems that we use every day,” Delatte said. “From when I started teaching, I started bringing in failure cases into engineering mechanics classes.”

Delatte worked in forensic engineering for two decades helping investigate failures like the [Champlain Towers condominium collapse](#) in 2021. His discussions will focus on why these investigations are important for the future of engineering and the safety of the public.

“Very often there’s a legal aspect because working as a forensic engineer sometimes you’re hired by an attorney who is on behalf of a certain party,” Delatte said. “My focus is much more on the lessons learned, and the classic case studies. I’m doing the investigations, but trying to take

reports and documents and in coverage and trying to distill that down and get the lessons learned out of it.”

Delatte teaches an honors seminar course at OSU and published a book about his work titled “[Beyond Failure: Forensic Case Studies for Civil Engineers](#)” in 2009. While not a course textbook for Delatte’s class, the research and theory in the book is often reflected in the topics of the course.

“Each week we focus on a particular type of failure,” Delatte said when talking about his class. “I’m a civil engineer so a lot of it’s infrastructure, but a lot of students aren’t (civil engineers) so we need to even things like what constitutes a software failure for example.”

Delatte also mentors undergraduate students in research. He has received funding from the [National Science Foundation](#) in previous years to develop case studies on previous infrastructure failures.

“Research on Tap is one of the ways that OSU researchers can connect with the community,” said Harrison Hill, senior research communications specialist at OSU. “I think translating and sharing research with the public is one of the most important things a land grant institution like OSU can do.”

Research on Tap happens monthly, with experts from all fields and areas.

“The event is meant to be for anyone, from other OSU faculty and staff, students and the public,” Hill said. “No matter what you’re interested in, there is probably an expert at OSU focused on researching just that.”

To learn more, contact associate vice president for research [Christine Johnson](#) or visit the [OSU research website](#). More about Delatte’s work can be found on the [OSU experts website](#).

Abby Cage

News Values:

The main news value in this release is proximity. This is an advanced news release that allows readers to learn about an event happening in their area. This is an OSU event happening in Stillwater, the same city as the main campus. This release will be published on the OSU news website and is targeted to all students, faculty, staff and alumni and can be seen by the general public. This release is targeted at local Stillwater residents as well.

The other news value shown in this story is timeliness. This release is advanced, as mentioned previously, which helps readers to prepare for the event. This release goes out four days before the event, making it close enough it is fresh on the mind but not too close that readers cannot prepare.

There is not conflict, magnitude, prominence or unusual news values in this story. The format is structured to be hard news about a small business local college event.

Sources contact info:

Dr. Norb Delatte

Professor & Head of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Phone: 405-744-9298

Email: norb.delatte@okstate.edu

Dr. Christine Johnson (Emailed quotes)

Associate Vice President for Research

Phone: 405-744-2361

Email: christine.johnson@okstate.edu

Harrison Hill

Senior research communications specialist

Phone: 405-744-5827

Email: harrison.c.hill@okstate.edu