

Message From the Chairs

Greetings from Purdue University! We welcome you to the 4th International Conference on Lean Six Sigma for Higher Education. The theme of this year's conference is leading the culture of operational excellence in higher education through Lean Six Sigma (LSS). The primary objective of the conference is to build a network of individuals from Higher Education Institutions willing to take a pioneering role in promoting Six Sigma and Lean business process improvement methodologies as well as to build a quality and cost reduction mindset for Senior Executives in the HE sector through Six Sigma and Lean methodologies and set of tools and techniques.

This is the first time the conference has come to North America and we are pleased to welcome delegates from around the globe. This is truly an international conference with participants from Africa, Europe, Asia, South America, and North America. We would also like to extend a special thanks to everyone who helped organize this year's event; especially those from Purdue, Heriot Watt, and Missouri S&T. Since founding the conference in Scotland, UK in 2013, a large volunteer effort has continued to make this conference a success with over 200 academics from 25 countries coming together.

Lean and Six Sigma are disciplines with roots in engineering and technology for operational excellence in business. Operations excellence is not limited to for profit enterprises. Misconceptions of LSS from the public sector are prevalent. Conditions in the higher education (HE) sector are very similar to other industries: fierce competition, constrained budgets, reductions in public funding, and an increasing consumer approach from students toward their education. These and other challenges pit higher education stakeholders against the HE mission that institutions were designed to serve. This conference aims to generate awareness and promote how LSS can serve higher education through improved excellence in operations, the classroom, and wider general public.

In reviewing this year's proceedings, the topics of the conference range from pedagogy to processes. This year's proceedings contain all the selected papers, which were peer reviewed by experts worldwide, and presented over the course of the conference. This multi-disciplinary approach is an important objective in Lean Six Sigma discovery: to uncover something that was unknown, but always there. To research for the sake of greater understanding of Lean Six Sigma is difficult though, as noted by the great French physiologist Claude Bernard who stated, "those who do not know the torment of the unknown cannot have the joy of discovery." We must not forget the strive for excellence, in this field or any other, is greater understanding. The interdisciplinary work curated here provides a broad view of possibilities in HE, and what is clear is that our authors have taken LSS understanding and made it their own. It is only through this type of work will we learn more about the discipline, and also hopefully, ourselves.

Finally, enjoy your time here. Our intention is to help you get the most from this experience. Purdue University is one of the world's leading institutions for higher education. Take time to meet fellow attendees and create connections that will carry into the future. This conference is designed to be engaging. Participate in workshops and panel discussion ask questions, have discussions, and meet new people. We wish you all a great conference and a pleasant stay in West Lafayette, IN.

Yours truly,

Prof. Chad Laux
Conference Co-Chair
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN, USA

Prof. Jiju Antony
Conference Co-Chair
Heriot-Watt University
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Prof. Elizabeth Cudney
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