Stanford



David Danielson

Adjunct Professor, Energy Science & Engineering

Bio

BIO

David T. Danielson became a Precourt energy scholar at Stanford in 2016. With Stuart Macmillan and Joel Moxley, Dave co-teaches the yearlong course "Energy Transformation Collaborative." This project-based course provides a launchpad for the creation and development of transformational energy ventures. Interdisciplinary student teams research, analyze and refine detailed plans for high-impact opportunities in the context of the new energy venture development framework offered in this course.

Since January 2017, Dave has been managing director of Breakthrough Energy Ventures, a $1 billion fund focused on fighting climate change by investing in clean energy innovation.

From 2012 to 2016, Dave was assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy. There, he directed the U.S. government's innovation strategy in the areas of sustainable transportation, renewable power, energy efficiency and clean-energy manufacturing, investing about $2 billion annually into American clean-energy innovation. He is considered a global expert in the development of next generation clean-energy technologies and the creation of new R&D and organizational models for high-impact clean energy innovation.

Prior to being appointed by President Obama as assistant secretary, Dave was the first hire at DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency– Energy (ARPA-E), a funding agency that focuses on the development of high-risk, high-reward clean-energy technologies. Prior to his government service, he was a clean-energy venture capitalist and, as a PhD student at MIT, was the founder and president of the MIT Energy Club.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Adjunct Professor, Energy Science & Engineering
- Affiliate, Precourt Institute for Energy

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Big Ideas & Open Opportunities in Climate-Tech Entrepreneurship: ENERGY 203A (Aut)
- Stanford Climate Ventures: ENERGY 203 (Win, Spr)

2025-26

- Big Ideas & Open Opportunities in Climate-Tech Entrepreneurship: ENERGY 203A (Aut)

- Stanford Climate Ventures: ENERGY 203 (Win, Spr)

2024-25

- Big Ideas & Open Opportunities in Climate-Tech Entrepreneurship: ENERGY 203A (Aut)
- Stanford Climate Ventures: ENERGY 203 (Win, Spr)

2023-24

- Big Ideas & Open Opportunities in Climate-Tech Entrepreneurship: ENERGY 203A (Aut)
- Stanford Climate Ventures: ENERGY 203 (Win, Spr)