Mitchell A. (Mitch) Thornton is currently the Cecil H. Green Chair of Engineering and Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He also serves as the Executive Director of the Darwin Deason Institute for Cyber Security, a research-only unit, and as Program Director for the interdisciplinary M.S. in Data Engineering degree program within the Lyle School of Engineering at SMU. His past industrial experience includes full-time employment at the Amoco Research Center, E-Systems, Inc. (now L3Harris Technologies Inc.), and the Cyrix Corporation. He is an author or co-author of five books and more than 300 technical articles. He is a named inventor on over 20 US/PCT/WIPO patents and patents pending. During his career as an academic researcher, he has performed sponsored research for numerous federal government agencies and industrial organizations that, in total, exceeds $10M in combined research support. He has also practiced as an independent professional engineer since 1993 and holds P.E. licenses in the states of Texas, Mississippi and Arkansas. His professional practice areas include digital/embedded systems design and analysis, cyber security, quantum informatics and data processing algorithms/systems. In addition to his P.E. licenses, he holds a General Radiotelephone Operator License (GROL) with a Radar Endorsement from the U.S. Federal Communications Commission. He received the PhD in computer engineering from SMU in 1995, MS in computer science from SMU in 1993, MS in electrical engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1990, and BS in electrical engineering from Oklahoma State University in 1985.

Dr. Thornton's academic career began with a faculty appointment at the University of Arkansas where he was an Assistant Professor and later, an Associate Professor, in the Department of Computer Systems Engineering (1995-1999). He was an Associate Professor at Mississippi State University in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (1999-2002). He joined the faculty at Southern Methodist University in 2002 as an Associate Professor and is currently appointed as Cecil H. Green Chair of Engineering and Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. His current research activities generally revolve around cyber security, quantum informatics and data-intensive applications. He previously served as the Acting Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at SMU.

Some of Dr. Thornton's past industrial experience includes full-time employment at E-Systems, Inc. in Greenville, Texas (now L3Harris Technologies Inc.). At E-Systems he began his employment as an Associate Engineer/Analyst in the Analytical Techniques group and later transferred into the Special Systems group where he was a Senior Electronic Systems Engineer. His duties at E-Systems were focused on the design, analysis, operation, implementation, and test of airborne RF and signal processing systems including involvement ranging front-end RF antenna and circuit design to back-end automation and signal processing algorithms. His duties included early conceptual design of new systems, operational flight test/evaluation, and upgrade of deployed systems. Later in his career, at the Cyrix Corporation, he was employed as a Design Engineer where he was responsible for the design and verification of a portion of the microarchitecture of a microprocessor that is compatible with the Intel Pentium architecture. During his years as an undergraduate, he was employed by the Amoco Research Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma as a Research Technician (full- and part-time). At Amoco, he served as an Electronic Technician supporting geophysical seismometer data acquisition and recording equipment and later, as a Research Technician in the Modeling and Inversion theory group where he participated in the development of modeling, inversion, and signal processing software for seismic petroleum exploration and signal analysis.

Dr. Thornton is a member of several professional and honor societies including the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) where he is a senior member in each organization. He was elected as Chair of the IEEE Technical Community on Multiple-Valued Logic (TCMVL, 2010-11) and has served in various roles for other IEEE/ACM committees. He has also served in leadership roles for several research conferences, symposia and workshops. He has served on editorial boards and is currently the series editor of the Digital Circuits and Systems book series for Springer Nature publishers. He has also contributed to US licensing practice and policy of professional engineers and was chair of the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES) working group that develops the U.S. Professional Engineering (P.E.) licensure examination for electrical and computer engineers (2009-2011). In terms of policy, Dr. Thornton served as chair of the IEEE-USA Committee on Licensure and Registration.

Among the awards he has received are a Citation of Honor from IEEE-USA, an Inventor Recognition award from the Semiconductor Research Corporation (SRC), and the Long-Term Contributor Award from the IEEE Computer Society Technical Community on Multiple-Valued Logic. At SMU, he was designated a Gerald Ford Senior Research Fellow and the J. Lindsey Embrey Trustee Associate Professor of Computer Science and Engineering. He also received the Rotunda Outstanding Professor Award and several other teaching and mentoring awards at SMU.