ReNews
An Environmental Studies Program Update

Our Growing Community

By Richard York, Program Director

Dear members, alumni, and friends of the Environmental Studies Program,

Environmental Studies has always had the good fortune of drawing good people with bright minds. Due to the successes of our faculty and students, and the ever more apparent importance of interdisciplinary scholarship about the environment, our Program continues to grow. We have our largest cohort ever of new doctoral students – six – starting this year, making it so that we have now 20 students in our PhD program. We continue to draw outstanding students to our Master’s program, and we remain one of the most popular majors (including both Environmental Studies and Environmental Science students) at the UO. Our strong faculty has been further augmented this year with the addition of Assistant Professor Lauren Hallett, an ecologist with a joint appointment in Environmental Studies and Biology. We are also looking to hire two new tenure-track faculty members in the coming months in collaboration with the Philosophy Department and History of Arts and Architecture. Our faculty and students continue to do groundbreaking research across the humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, and a variety of applied fields.

As is inevitable, there have been some changes. Our long-time and much-loved Graduate Coordinator, Gayla Wardwell, retired in July. We miss her and wish her well in her new home in New England. Taylor West, our Undergraduate Coordinator and alum of Environmental Studies, has moved on to further her education. She remains a valued friend to many of us, and she is missed.

The mission of Environmental Studies – to develop our understanding of the connections between the environment and humanity – could not be more important than it is today. Many of the environmental problems the world faces – from anthropogenic climate change and biodiversity loss to unequal access among humans to clean water, fresh air, and healthy food – worsen daily, while prominent world leaders fail to recognize, let alone act to address, environmental and social crises. Although these challenges can lead to pessimism about our future, the talent and dedication of many of the people I see everyday, who care about all of those, both human and non-human, who inhabit the Earth, give me cause for hope. The Environmental Studies community at the University of Oregon is composed of people with analytic and creative minds, kind and generous hearts, vision and purpose, and no small measure of commitment to making the world a better place for all species. I am honored to be a member of this community and grateful that you are part of it too.

Sincerely,
rfyork@uoregon.edu

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Graduate Student Achievements

Alumnus Nick Dreher (M.Sc. 2016) won the American Society of Food Studies’ Alex Macintosh Graduate Student paper award for his paper "Matcha as Superfood: Cultural Colonizing through Ignoring Origins."

Lisa Fink was awarded the Dorys Grover Award from the Western Literature Association (WLA). The award is given to two outstanding papers submitted by graduate students that contribute to our critical understandings of region, place, and space in western American literatures. The second winner this year was also a UO graduate student working in the environmental humanities, April Anson.

Shane Hall (PhD. 2017) joined the faculty of Salisbury University, MD, as Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies in Fall 2017.

Briana Meier is the recipient of the prestigious Wayne Morse center fellowship for 2017-2018. Her research project is titled “Emerging Cultures of Belonging: Building the Uncertain Spaces of Germany’s Citizen-Refugee Communities.”

Congratulations, students!

You can support our engaged learning and research community through student scholarships, graduate research and travel to conferences, equipment purchases, or renowned speakers. To donate, contact Richard York (rfyork@uoregon.edu) or the UO Foundation (uofoundation.org).
Core Faculty Achievements

Peg Boulay, Nicholae Morar and Kory Russel were awarded UO Sustainability Faculty Fellowships to support community-based learning in their courses.

Scott Bridgham and Kari Norgaard won UO Faculty Excellence Awards.

Peg Boulay and Alexandra Rempel participated in the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science program. Alexandra launched Building Science Poetry Slam into both her Passive Heating course and an international building scientist meeting.

Nicholae Morar, Kory Russel and Peter Walker won Faculty Research Awards from the UO Office of Vice President for Research and Innovation.

Galen Martin and Stephen Wooten both received Rippey Awards for Innovative Teaching to support their Freshman Interest Group courses, Edible History (Dr. Martin) and Food Matters (Dr. Wooten).

Stephanie LeMenager and Marsha Weisenger won a $25,000 Interdisciplinary Award in the Humanities and Social Sciences from the UO Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation for the Center for Environmental Futures.

Stephanie LeMenager, Sarah Wald, and Marsha Weisiger, received a College of Arts and Science program grant to organize an open to the public symposium, “Environmental Justice, Race, and Public Lands”.

Trudy Ann Cameron was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Western Economic Association International, a non-profit academic economics society founded in 1922.

Mark Carey has been honored by the King Albert I Mountain Foundation in Zurich, Switzerland, and will receive the Albert Mountain Award in September 2018. The Albert Mountain Award is granted to people making exceptional and lasting contributions to the mountains of the world.

Ron Mitchell won the College of Arts and Sciences Tykeson Teaching Award for the Social Science.

Lauren Hallett was awarded a grant from the Long-Term Ecological Research Network Communication Office to study patterns of population synchrony over time and space.

Richard Margerum co-edited a new book with Catherine Robinson entitled “The Challenges of Collaborative Governance.” In July 2017, he took over as Head of the new School of Planning, Public Policy and Management.

Lucas Silva received a competitive National Science Foundation grant as the UO Principal Investigator to study climate change impacts on forest ecosystems over the past several thousand years. He established and is the director of the Soil-Plant-Atmosphere Research Lab, and his recent co-authorships include publications in Agrosciencia, Forest Ecology and Management, and Science.

Sara Wald was invited to present her paper “We Ain’t Foreign: Race, Land, and Nation in Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath” at the Steinbeck and The Environment symposium held at Stanford University.

Peg Boulay and Katie Lynch received a Williams Instructional Award to develop a new field-based course examining the ecological and social dimensions of wolf conservation in Oregon.

Peter Walker was awarded an Oregon Humanities Center Fellowship to support his research on why the community in Harney County did not support the 2016 militant takeover of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. His book on the topic will be published by OSU press in 2018.

Stephen Wooten won the UO Excellence in Teaching Award for Sustainability for his work developing the Food Studies Program.

Richard York was awarded the Frederick H. Buttel Distinguished Contribution Award from the Environment Section of the American Sociological Association. This lifetime achievement award was founded to “express appreciation when a person’s life work is deemed extraordinarily meritorious.”
Building Diverse Community Collaborations

In Fall 2017, the Environmental Studies Program launched an initiative to increase faculty awareness of regional organizations working with communities of color and to promote faculty interdisciplinary research collaborations with these organizations.

Over the next two years, ENVS will host 12 community groups for presentations and dialogue, with the goal of creating a culture of interdisciplinary research collaboration with communities of color. In addition to creating vibrant, timely, important research questions, such a collaborative culture can contribute to the further recruitment and retention of diverse faculty of color in Environmental Studies.

This fall, José González, partner of The Avarna Group, spoke about diversity, equity, inclusion and unconscious bias in environmental organizations and industries. Eric Richardson, President of the Eugene-Springfield Chapter of the NAACP, spoke about his organizations’ work on environmental justice, which is tightly intertwined with social justice. Both speakers suggested potential productive partnerships for research and teaching.

In 2018, we will discuss how to build de-colonized collaborative research projects with communities of color.

This initiative is funded by the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Diversity Grant awarded to the Environmental Studies Community Building and Diversity Committee.

Food Studies Program

By Ashley Studholme

The Food Studies program continues to grow this year after last year’s launch of the Undergraduate Minor. We have a total 52 current students, and eight have graduated to date. To promote the minor further, we invited perspective undergraduates to join us in the Mills International Center to socialize over Falling Sky Pizza and learn about what the minor has to offer.

The Graduate Specialization has a total of 8 current students, and 11 have graduated to date. It’s an eclectic group representing many departments throughout the university including but not limited to Environmental Studies, Business, Sociology, and Journalism.

We hosted several events including a Zimbabwean food demonstration with Patience Munjeri, where 12 UO students, staff and community members learned how to make sadza alongside typical vegetable-based side dishes and a pasta-making event through Central Kitchen, where 15 undergraduates learned how to make ricotta-stuffed ravioli.

Stay tuned for important upcoming events like the Campus Food Insecurity Listening Session. Also, our “Food Talks” lectures start next term again with ENVS alumni Raj Vable from the Global Tea Exchange and UO alumna Lexi Stickel facilitating a panel discussion with key stakeholders that will describe their work on community food systems in Grand Ronde, a tribal community in a rural food desert.
The Tribal Climate Change Project (TCCP) is a collaborative project that began in 2009 between the University of Oregon Environmental Studies Program and the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station. The TCCP works with American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in the Pacific Northwest to address the impacts of climate change on indigenous peoples in the United States.

The project focuses on examining the impacts of climate change on indigenous sovereignty and developing resources to assist tribes in addressing climate change through adaptation and mitigation. The TCCP also offers research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students that are related to the impacts of climate change on indigenous peoples in the United States.

There are currently two student research assistants working with the TCCP. Miakah Nix is Haida and Tsimshian and received her bachelor’s degree in Ethnic Studies and Native American Studies at the University of Oregon in 2017. Miakah is currently working in collaboration with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes and the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station to examine the impacts of climate change on cultural and subsistence resources in Southeast Alaskan tribal communities. This research will result in recommendations that will help tribes gain access to the resources, tools, and information necessary to build their capacity to adapt to accelerated environmental changes.

Haley Case-Scott is a Siletz Tribal member and a descendant of the Klamath Tribes, Yurok Tribes, and Sakoagan Band of Chippewa. She is currently in her last year of undergraduate studies in Political Science and Native American Studies at the University of Oregon. Haley is interested in the ways tribal governments are addressing climate change in their communities.

Haley has had the opportunity to attend the ATNI Tribal Climate Change Camp. Here, Haley was able to learn new and effective strategies to address climate change impacts on indigenous communities and culture. She had the opportunity to network with indigenous professionals from tribes and nations throughout the United States and Canada. She is currently working on maintaining and updating the Tribal Climate Change Guide.
The mission of the Center for Environmental Futures is 1) to encourage and support humanities and social sciences faculty and students in interdisciplinary environmental studies research and teaching; 2) to encourage and support members of the community to participate in the University’s environmental studies programming and problem-solving; and 3) to cultivate relationships and build projects across disciplines and schools to address our most pressing environmental and social problems. CEF recognizes that problems of environment, justice, and culture call for a broad interdisciplinarity that includes the natural and physical sciences, the arts and architecture, education, and law.

Our theme for the next two-three years is “Public Lands.”

We were recently awarded a $25,000 grant from the VPRI’s office to serve as seed money to launch our center’s research program, “Living in Common: The Past, Present, and Future of Oregon’s Public Lands.”

To support further work on the “Living in Common” project, Stephanie LeMenager and Marsha Weisiger just applied for a major grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. Over the next couple of years, we hope to return to Harney County and also conduct interviews in the Wallowa Valley, the Willamette National Forest, Portland, and the northern Oregon coast. Our plan is to produce a book, a “living map” of Oregon’s public lands, complete with video and audio clips from our interviews, and public symposia.

Sarah Wald was also awarded a $6,000 program grant from CAS to support a public symposium, “Environmental Justice, Race, and Public Lands: A Center for Environmental Futures Symposium,” The symposium will be open to the public and held between May 9-11. Kyle Powys Whyte and Carolyn Finney will be the keynote speakers.

The success of our film festival has also galvanized us to start preparing for a Second annual Emerald Earth Film Festival, dates TBA.
Beginning in Winter 2017, we hosted Interdisciplinarity 101. Presenters included Steve Beda (History), Carla Bengtson (Art), Shane Hall (English), Brook Muller (Architecture), April Anson (English), and Allison Ford (Sociology).

We organized and sponsored the first annual Emerald Earth Film Festival at the Bijou Theater, with the theme of “environmental justice.” The series included filmmakers Suree Towfighnia, Rose High Bear, and Gregg Mitman, as well as two episodes of Climate and Native Wisdom; Crying Earth, Rise Up; Blue Vinyl; Oil and Water; River Blue; and Land Beneath Our Feet.

This summer, a group of us (Stephanie LeMenager, Gordon Sayre, Marsha Weisiger, Hayley Brazier, Allison Ford, and Parker Smith) went to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and Harney County, where we interviewed land managers, ranchers, a member of the Burns Paiute Tribe, a journalist, and a wildlife biologist about the ways they valued public lands and the recent militant occupation of the Malheur refuge headquarters. That launched our research project, “Living in Common: The Past, Present, and Future of Oregon’s Public Lands.” As part of the “Field School,” we also watched young barrel racers at a rodeo and attended a parade (both part of the Harney County Fair) and visited the ranch owned by Pete French, who was a large-scale rancher in Harney County in the late nineteenth century.
23rd Annual Joint Campus Conference

On May 2017, the Environmental Studies Program hosted the 23rd annual Joint Campus Conference (JCC), organized by a committee led by Dr. Nicolae Morar. The JCC has traditionally been a forum for environmental scholars from Oregon, Oregon State and Portland State Universities to share their research and writing in an intercampus dialogue.

The plenary faculty panel – Dr. Melissa Lucash (PSU), Dr. Allen Thomson (OSU) and Dr. Richard York (UO) – provided an interesting interdisciplinary examination of this year's theme, "Disturbance and Resilience." More than 30 graduate and undergraduate students gave oral presentations or presented posters.

ENVS Master’s student Jordan Wyant won best UO poster for his research summary, "Race, Space and the State: Critical Perspectives on Environmental Education." The 2018 JCC will be May 18th at OSU.

Below: Program Director Dr. Richard York (left) with ENVS professor Dr. Nicolae Morar (center) at the 23rd annual JCC

Remembering our Roots

On May 4th, Environmental Studies hosted a celebration to recognize a key event in the founding of the Program.

There is no singular date for when Environmental Studies began at UO, since the Program came together in steps. However, one major step was taken in 1976 when the Environmental Education Research Group, headed by students, produced an important document, "Coordinated Environmental Studies in the University of Oregon Community."

We were honored that some of the students who helped organize this – Trudy Cooper, Vic Affolter, and Peter Thurston, along with Chris Mathews, the brother of another of the organizers, the late Lynn Mathews – joined us to share some of their memories. Dan Goldrich, an emeritus professor of Political Science, who worked with these students also attended, sharing his memories. It was a wonderful event, which allowed for connections across the generations of people who have made Environmental Studies thrive.
Focus on Diversity: SAIL

by Katie Lynch

The Summer Academy to Inspire Learning (SAIL) program is an innovative bridge program that serves middle and high school students from underrepresented backgrounds, which include lower income and/or first generation college students, with the aim of encouraging students to enroll and succeed in college through early exposure and exploration.

During summer 2017, ENVS hosted its second SAIL camp. Our hope was to highlight the relevance of environmental studies and inspire the next generation to join us in learning how to promote an environmentally sustainable and socially-just world. The week-long camp introduced 20 rising high school freshmen to our interdisciplinary, hands-on approach to Environmental Studies. They explored how climate change is impacting local tribes, the relationship people have with animals, and how nature is portrayed in pop culture, among other topics. They visited with the steward of the Many Nations Longhouse, learned about the importance of bees at the Urban Farm, and climbed into the canopy of an old-growth forest.

Special thanks to everyone who volunteered their time to make this possible, including our ENVS faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, and community partners: Gordon Bettles, Trudy Cameron, Tia Hatton, Chelsea Ingram, Emily Jenkins, Harper Kee ler, Sonja Kolstoe, Kathryn Lynch, Galen Martin, Trisha Maxfield, Avery McRae, Rob Miron, Miakah Nix, Sarah Stapleton, Sarah Wald, Sarah Ward, Stephen Wooten, Jordan Wyant, and Richard York.

https://sail.uoregon.edu/about/
ELP
Making a Difference

By Peg Boulay

The Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) is Environmental Studies’ flagship community-based learning program. ELP’s mission is to provide undergraduates with an integrative capstone experience and graduate students with project management experience, while engaging with the community to address real needs. During the 2017 calendar year, ELP developed and implemented seven projects. The Canopy Connections, Cultivating Connections, and Restoring Connections teams developed place-based curricula for elementary and middle school students. Their curricula linked to Next Generation Science Standards and included interactive classroom lessons and inspiring, engaging field trips. The Stream Stewardship and Riparian Restoration teams helped restore the health of a small creek and used a variety of methods to monitor plants, animals and floodplain characteristics. The Climate & Phenology team conducted original experimental research on the effects of climate change on plant bloom time. The Destination Deschutes team collected data on invasive species and whitebark pine at Newberry Volcanic National Monument. Six teams presented their projects at the UO Undergraduate Symposium and a member of the 2015 Aspen Adventures team participated in a panel about undergraduate research at Lane Community College.

To learn more about the students’ many accomplishments, check out their webpages at https://envs.uoregon.edu/pastprojects/

A Special Thanks to ELP Donors and Partners

We would like to thank the funders who made this all possible: Steve Ellis, Douglas C. Laidlaw Charitable Fund, John L. Luvaas Family Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation, Robert and Catherine Miller Foundation, National Science Foundation MacroSystems Biology Program Grand Award #EF-1340847, and all of our private donors. We would also like to acknowledge our community partners: Adams Elementary, H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest, McKenzie Watershed Council, Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, Pacific Tree Climbing Institute, School Garden Project of Lane County, Springfield High School, UO Bridgham Lab, UO Roy Lab, U.S. Forest Service, and Whitewater Ranch.
The Environmental Studies Program launched the Student Advising Center in 2011, and it continues to be a central hub for fostering a cohesive interdisciplinary community. The Center has a team of five undergraduate Student Advisers (SAs) who assist current and prospective students, faculty and staff, and community members. The Center strives to provide a personalized experience for the 750+ undergraduate majors and minors as they navigate their unique path to academic, career, and personal success.

Current students within the Program’s two undergraduate majors—Environmental Studies and Environmental Science — and two undergraduate minors — Environmental Studies and Food Studies — drop in for advising on a variety of topics including major/minor/university requirements, practical learning experience opportunities, and the Environmental Leadership Program. As part of an effort to bolster career development services to students, the ENVS Program hosted Environmental Connect in February, which provided 80 students with the opportunity to network with 20 local environmentally-oriented organizations. The Student Advising Center said good-bye to our wonderful Undergraduate Coordinator Taylor West, who moved forward with her interest in food systems. This year we are pleased to have Madeline Cowen and Tia Hatton continue as SAs, while Justin Culman, Peter Cooper, and Danielle Stein successfully graduated from the Environmental Studies Program and moved on from the Advising Center. We are also excited to welcome Haley Nicholson, Alex Mauthe, and Ariella Dahlin onto the amazing peer advising team!

At the suggestion of an ENVS major, the ENVS Student Advising Center launched a new undergraduate event series in 2017. Each term, we organized an event designed to help our undergraduate students explore shared interests, build new friendships, and relax during a hectic time of the term. During Winter term, students watched and discussed the BBC documentary series, Planet Earth II. An ice cream social was a delicious way to gather in spring. Lastly, students enhanced our urban forest and local carbon storage ability by planting trees with the Friends of Trees during Fall term. We have creative, fun plans for 2018!

If you have ideas for events, let us know by emailing ecopeers@uoregon.edu.

Student Advisers Alex Mauthe and Haley Nicholson helped organize community-building events for undergraduates along with Madeline Cowen, Tia Hatton and Ariella Dahlin (not pictured).
New People at ENVS

Lauren Hallett
Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies and Biology

Lauren is a plant community and restoration ecologist who joined the University of Oregon faculty in the Fall of 2017. The goal of her lab is to produce “usable” science to improve ecosystem management. Lauren's research spans a variety of systems, including working rangelands, serpentine grasslands, woodlands and alpine. Her research themes include: community assembly, functional traits, species coexistence, ecosystem stability, and resilience theory. She uses a combination of long-term data analysis, population modeling and field experiments to this end.

Nathan Adams
Graduate Programs Coordinator

Nathan is an alum of the University of Oregon Psychology Department, graduating with a BA in 2013. Nathan is the first point of contact for any questions about our Master's and PhD programs. He shares information with prospective students, coordinates the administrative admissions process, and shepherds our graduate students through their programs, ensuring they meet all requirements for obtaining the degree. Nathan also coordinates the GE (Graduate Employees) appointment process.

2018 EVENTS

Environmental Connect 2/22

UO Climate Change and Indigenous People's Initiative Lecture 5/9

Environmental Justice, Race, & Public Lands: A Public Symposium 5/10-5/11

Undergraduate Research Symposium 5/17

Joint Campus Conference at OSU 5/18