

Environmental Science Newsletter

Allegheny College

An Interview with Professor Davis



Since the Fall of 2014, Allegheny College's Environmental Science Department has been enriched with Professor Brittany Davis's presence. Professor Davis earned her Bachelor's degree at Princeton University, Master's degree at the University of Georgia, and her Ph.D. at the University of Arizona. She wrote her dissertation with a focus on management of natural resources and ecotourism. Through her classes at Allegheny College, Professor Davis aims to further expose environmental corruptions which are oftentimes overlooked. For example, her People and the Environment course goes into depth about how environmental injustices drastically alter the lives of our indigenous brothers and sisters around the Earth. Professor Davis strategically plans her Sports and the Environment course to occur in alignment with the Winter Olympics. This is done to enlighten students of the various environmental injustices behind the production of grand sporting events. In regards to having taught her Sports and the Environment course before the summer Olympics of 2016 in Rio, she

says, "I did so well!" She recalls receiving many emails over the summer from her students reporting back environmental injustices due to the event. She also teaches freshman and junior seminars with an environmental justice twist. Professor Davis is happy to discuss the injustices around the world--and within our very own backyards--because they go unnoticed though they are life-changing for those impacted. What we put onto others, we in essence put onto ourselves. Professor Davis offers a dynamic through her courses, a stream of issues that she hopes will inspire a waterfall of change within her students. If you are ready to embark on a journey of new perspectives and to embrace mind-boggling facts of the environmental world, enroll in a class or two with Professor Davis!

Environmental Science Course Offerings for Fall 2017

ES 110, ES 210, ES 285-Quantitative Sustainability, ES 290-Small-Scale Ag, ES 305-GIS, ES 321-Ecosystems, Birds, & People, ES 335-Conservation Bio, ES 360-Religion and Ecology, ES 370-Insect Ecology, ES 390-Climate Change Policy, ES 415-Environmental Health, ES 427-People and the Environment, ES 585-Junior Seminar

Interested in joining the ES Newsletter? Send an email to <lutheranb> for more information!

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Stories from the Alum Interview with Susan Washako '16

Susan graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Science and minor in Spanish. She is currently attending graduate school at Utah State University. She is currently studying how beaver dams change stream communities. Her thesis focuses on how the macroinvertebrate community changes from the un-impounded stream (riffle) through the transition to the beaver pond (deeper water, less turbulent) and in the beaver pond itself (impounded section behind the dam). She is flushing trout stomachs and matching the contents to the stream habitat from which the prey originated. She also is tracking trout movement to see in which habitats they reside for most of the time. Furthermore, she places young trout in cages in beaver ponds and in un-impounded sections to determine where they achieve better growth. Her thesis will help inform the public, scientific community, and watershed managers about the indirect effects of beavers on stream communities.

When asked about her favorite things about graduate school she said, “The freedom over my schedule is fabulous. In grad school, students take fewer classes and focus more on their research, which means I spend less time in class and doing homework, and more time exploring topics that I find really interesting. I still have a lot to do, of course, but the ability to create the balance I need for the day is invigorating. Another thing I love is the collaboration between projects.” After her completion of her master’s degree, she hopes to pursue her PhD directly. Then, she hopes to become a professor at USU or a college like Allegheny.

“My favorite thing about Allegheny would have to be the really personal experiences available. It was a small school, but that made it easy to get to know other students and the faculty. I also think that Allegheny’s commitment to sustainability and conservation is really beautiful. From trips to the Market House to the French Creek Cleanup to the DeHart dinner to the Trashion Show, I was always in touch with the Meadville community as well as the Allegheny community, making friends, supporting a cause, sharing experiences, and having fun.”

Susan offers this advice to anyone looking to attend graduate school:

- If you want to go to grad school directly out of Allegheny, get started on looking for possible places the summer before graduation, and take the GRE before Thanksgiving to stay ahead of deadlines
- Don’t hesitate to contact potential advisors to ask about their work and possible positions and opportunities
- Be involved at Allegheny, whether it’s through a club, a department, research, an event, etc. It pays to be committed, and grad schools seek out students who will be assets to their communities

Susan added this at the end of her interview, “Feel free to contact me (washko.susan@gmail.com) with questions regarding grad school, interviews, study abroad, research, resumes, etc. I’m happy to lend a hand to a fellow Gator, and keep my connection with my favorite place strong.”

