



SPRING 2019 ENVT 350 STUDENTS WORKING WITH DR. NAASZ TO MEASURE DISSOLVED OXYGEN IN CLOVER CREEK! FOR MORE ON ENVT 350, SEE PAGES 4 AND 5!

PLU Environmental Studies! 2019 Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE

Hello again, friends of PLU Environmental Studies! Welcome to our third annual newsletter. It took us a little longer to produce this issue, but it will be worth the wait – we have a lot to report! On page 2 you'll learn that our co-founder, long-time advocate, and outgoing chair Dr. Jill Whitman is transitioning into phased retirement. She offers her thoughts on page 2! We are excited to welcome our new chair Dr. Adela Ramos from PLU's English Department!

As part of our transition, we spend a little time in this issue looking back! We highlight our long history of teaching ENVT 350, through perspectives from our outgoing chair (p. 2), recent changes to the course (p. 4) and photos from past semesters of some of our most memorable sites (p. 5)!

We also highlight our major program event held each spring – our annual dinner and Earth Day lecture (p. 6)! We extend heartfelt congratulations to our spring 2019 capstone

students! Learn what range of topics our capstone projects covered this year on page 7!

Missing the alumni updates section? We are too! We did not get responses to our call for updates this year. We're looking into better ways to reach out to you, so stay tuned for requests and please – respond when you see one! We are always excited to hear from you!

Finally – thanks for reading! We appreciate your interest! Stay in touch! Follow us on Facebook for news, opportunities, and updates: [@pluenvtstudies](https://www.facebook.com/pluenvtstudies)

Join the Environmental Studies Alumni Facebook group to keep in touch with faculty and alums from the department.

With that - keep engaging the complex relationships between humans and the environment – that's what we'll be doing throughout the 2019-20 school year!



The history of our program

Outgoing ENVT chair and co-founder Jill Whitman shares her perspective !

Page 2



ENVT 350 Past and Present!

Page 5

Greetings and perspectives from our outgoing Chair – and one of our program's founders: Dr. Jill Whitman



As I reach the end of my 31st year at PLU and beginning of a new phase of life, I will take the opportunity to offer some reflection about the Environmental Studies program over the years, to celebrate the successes of this year, and to offer my thanks for all the amazing contributions of and experiences with students and colleagues.

I have been associated with the Environmental Studies program since 1990, when it was just a certificate program. I had the privilege of collaborating with a dedicated group of faculty as we worked to design the minor that debuted in 1992 and the major that followed in 1998. While the faculty teaching in the program have changed over time and hundreds (!) of vibrant and dedicated students have majored and minored in

the program, the heart of Environmental Studies remains the same, as articulated in our mission statement: "We educate to engage actively and critically the complex relationships between people and the environment, drawing upon integrated and interdisciplinary perspectives."

The Environmental Studies program relies on a breadth of perspectives provided through courses that are taught throughout the university and we are so grateful for the many offerings that students can select from in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. It is very exciting to see the new courses that faculty are developing that add even greater breadth to the program.

ENVT 350 was designed when the minor began and over 25 years of data about the Clover Creek watershed have been collected by many, many cohorts of students. Recently we have been offering the course twice a year, so we now have both fall and spring data! The course has been strengthened by the wide range of faculty members teaching in the class over the years, from English, Philosophy, Religion, Native American and Indigenous Studies, History, Economics, Political Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Geosciences! And the wonderful support and engagement from community members has been vital to the course - I am sure that many of you remember Al Schmauder!

PLU Offers New Environmental Studies Minor

Growing environmental concern among students from a variety of academic disciplines has led to creation of an Environmental Studies minor at PLU. The new 24-semester hour minor expands on the 16-hour Environmental Studies certificate program offered for many years, according to program coordinator Jill Whitman, an earth sciences professor.

"This program is interdisciplinary and hopes to draw students from a greater range of disciplines," she said. In the minor, the student selects from a list of options within the humanities and social sciences, in addition to courses in the natural sciences.

The committee that developed the minor included faculty members from English, art, psychology, political science and religion in addition to the natural sciences and business.

Mike Isensee, a senior biology major, was already taking classes for the certificate program. He feels that the change to a minor will add value to his degree. "I am greatly interested in the human impact on the environment and earning a minor in the subject gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction," he said.

A new Environmental Methods of Investigation class integrates data collection and analysis with land use planning, resource assessment and other applications, using a nearby watershed as a living laboratory. The program is completed with a Capstone Project designed by the student and faculty from the committee that will focus on an environmental problem or issue in the context of the student's major.

Spring 2019 ENVT 350 students on a watershed tour with Clover Creek Watershed Council member and watershed activist, Al Schmauder!



In 2011 a new course was added to the major (ENVT 498) that focuses on "Interdisciplinary Inquiry and Analysis." While practicing interdisciplinary skills, students create an inventory of their previous academic experiences and reflect on their vocation in order to identify their professional strengths and interests. These activities provide scaffolding for the capstone experience that follows.

Each spring the excitement builds as the seniors work on their capstone projects. On capstone day, the energy from the presenters is contagious and we are so grateful for the supportive and engaged audience that comes to hear them. (Ed. Note: see p. 7 for a list of this year's capstone projects!)

This was a great year for the program! Our number of majors and minors is very strong, bringing a wide range of perspectives from their complementary majors and minors. Our two annual events were a huge success. The turnout for the Environmental Studies program dinner was great and we enjoyed hearing from our students about their experiences in courses, study away, and experiential learning. Our Annual Earth Day Lecture, given this year by Dr. Matthew Vitz had fabulous attendance and high audience engagement as he shared his views on "What Environmental History Can Teach Us." (Ed. Note: see p. 6 for more info about our spring dinner and Earth Day lecture!!)

Each of you, our students past and present, has helped to build this program. It has been strengthened by your engagement in the wide range of classes, by your constructive and insightful feedback, by providing us the opportunity to learn alongside you, by your enthusiasm for new challenges, and by your passion for our Earth's environment. Thank you for all that you have contributed to PLU through the years!

I am thrilled to pass the leadership of the program on to Dr. Adela Ramos (English). She has served the program in many ways already, teaching a disciplinary breadth course, in ENVT 350, and in the capstone as well as serving on the program committee. She brings new energy, insights, and vision that will be wonderful for the program.

After this school year finishes, I begin phased retirement. It has been an extraordinary privilege to serve as chair of the Environmental Studies program at both ends of my career. I feel as though I got to grow up with the program, from its early years to the mature and thriving program that I had the opportunity to shepherd these past three years. I have been blessed to work with energetic and creative colleagues and to have the privilege to get to know so many students throughout the years. I will miss the daily interaction with the community and I thank you for all that you did to enrich my life. THANK YOU! (Ed. Note: Jill, thank you for everything you've done for our program!)



Jill in Clover Creek at 133rd St S.



Above: Jill launching our spring dinner in April.

Left: Jill receiving the faculty excellence in service award in 2016.
Far left: Jill mentored 2008-09 sustainability fellow, Tamara Power-Drutis with Resident Director Courtney Bailey.



Updates from ENVT 350 Environmental Methods of Investigation!

Dr. Rose McKenney

We created an Indigenous/Native American Studies unit in Environmental Methods of Investigation (ENVT 350) this year to learn about Southern Coastal Salish cultural ties to the watershed and to support the initial year of PLU's Native American and Indigenous Studies minor. Dr. Suzanne Crawford O'Brien (Religion) led discussions on the connections between Coastal Salish religious practice, human health, and watershed health. She used native foods—salmon and huckleberry—to highlight the similarities and differences between Southern Coastal Salish religion and western ecology. Dr. Troy Storfjell (Languages and Literatures) introduced us to indigenous methodologies and research ethics. He highlighted the role of the environment as a teacher and how the history of the Sami is inextricably linked to their native landscape. Both Drs. Crawford O'Brien and Storfjell discussed oral traditions, seasonal rounds, and connections to place as central to indigenous cultures. Members of the Nisqually Tribe's community garden project discussed the importance of local watersheds in revitalizing indigenous food networks and the importance of traditional foods in terms of health, culture, and political sovereignty.



*Dr. McKenney with the spring 2019 ENVT 350 class at Gonyea House.
Photo courtesy of Kristi Floyd.*



During the unit we grappled with indigenous cultural perspectives about the environment in comparison to current human activity in the Clover Creek watershed. Presentations by Caitlyn Krenn, Janell Blacketer, Carlin Briner, and Grace Ann Byrd of the Nisqually Tribe's community garden project brought to life the Southern Coastal Salish cultural norm of environmental stewardship, their current struggle to achieve food sovereignty, and their work to re-establish native food networks. At the end of the unit, students wrote group papers focused on one native food of their choice. They researched different aspects of the foods including the ecology of specific native foods, their cultural significance, and what contemporary tribes are doing to protect/revitalize food resources. This unit introduced students to Native American religious and indigenous methodologies, and the Coastal Salish culture, which is one thread in the diversity of cultures and people who interact in the watershed.

We will incorporate this unit into 2019-20 offerings of ENVT 350!

Left: Dr. Brian Naasz, Chemistry, with ENVT 350 students at Clover Creek in Mayfair Park, spring 2019. Photo courtesy of Kristi Floyd.

ENVT 350 - Then and Now!

As Jill notes in her reflections on page 2, ENVT 350 has been an integral part of our program since the beginning! Enjoy the following site comparisons from our long history of work in Clover Creek Watershed!



Above left: ENVT 350 students at Spanaway Creek in summer 1993 – the second offering of ENVT 350. The first ENVT 350 course was offered in summer 1992! Above right: ENVT 350 students at Spanaway Creek in spring 2009!

Below left: ENVT 350 students at Clover Creek at Waller Road in summer 1995. Below right: Clover Creek at Waller Road in spring 2008 – the last time the class collected samples from this site! Insets at right: measuring temperature (top) and collecting benthic macroinvertebrates (bottom) at Waller Road in spring 2008!



Below left: ENVT 350 students at Clover Creek at Canyon Road in spring 2009. Below right: ENVT 350 students at Canyon Road in spring 2015 – the last time the class collected samples from this site!



Earth Day 2019!

The Environmental Studies program – students, faculty, and staff – comes together in spring semester to prepare for and celebrate our Earth Day festivities each April. Countless meetings are held and e-mails are exchanged in preparation for the event!

For the past few years, we have celebrated Earth Day *and* our program with a spring dinner – an opportunity to recognize student accomplishments and share experiences across our curriculum. Our dinner is followed by the annual Earth Day Lecture, this year offered by Dr. Matthew Vitz, Associate Professor of History at the University of California San Diego and author of *A City on a Lake: Urban Political Ecology and the Growth of Mexico City*. His lecture, “What Environmental History can Teach Us: Lessons for building a Just and Sustainable Future,” was held in the Scandinavian Center and fostered a lively question and answer session afterwards!



Environmental Studies senior Maddie Titelbaum introducing our Earth Day Speaker. Photo courtesy of Dr. Adela Ramos.



Earth Day speaker Dr. Matthew Vitz. Photo courtesy of our campus photographer, John Froschauer.

Our events are just part of the University's Earth and Diversity Week, organized expertly this year by Kenzie Gandy, ASPLU's Diversity Director. Campus-wide events included a Work Party in the Community Garden, and many discussions and events celebrating the importance of Diversity, Justice and Sustainability



Above: ENVT junior Gretchen Johnson presenting photos from her study away experience in Namibia.

Photos courtesy of Dr. Adela Ramos



Right: Senior Ashley Whitley sharing a summary of her capstone project.

Congratulations to the 2019 Senior Capstone Class!



This year we collaborated with Women's and Gender Studies on a joint interdisciplinary capstone experience! The result was a semester's worth of challenging and invigorating conversations, and a diverse range of completed capstone projects – as you can see from the list below!

Miranda Berg	Humans and Bats in the Ape Cave: A Discussion on the Impact of Human Presence
Emily Burk	The Concept of the German Forest and Its Influence on Modern Resource Economics
Ava Cozzetto	The Common Thread: Prolife and Prochoice Abortion Stories
Lottie Duren	Bureaucratic Bull: A Critique of Washington State's Sexual Assault Center Accreditation System
Kristi Floyd	Will Changes to the Endangered Species Act Hurt Washington Species?
Julia Grosvenor	The Greenhouse Effect: Game-ifying the Business of Climate Change
Katie King	Conservation through History: the Extirpation of Gray Wolves and the Impact on the Ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest
Corinne Lythgoe	Comparing Environmental Values of Environmental Studies Students and Lutheran Institutions
Britt McCracken	Rattlesnake Ridge Landslide: An Ethical and Geological Approach
Forrest O'Brien	Urban Water: A Geologic and Religious Look at Water Resources in the Orting River Valley
Dejan Perez	Supporting the Off-Island Native Hawaiian on the Mainland
Jadey Ryan	Saving the Southern Resident Killer Whales: A Co-Management Strategy
Madison Smith	Solutions to Mercury Pollution from Artisanal Gold Mining: A Case Study of Ghana
Jackie Stenberg	Polar Bears and Indigeneity: Climate Change Impacts on Relationships in the Arctic
Maddie Titelbaum	Our Forest, Our Village, Our Government: Exploring the Influence of NGO Initiatives and Religious Tradition on Tribal Women's Agency in Forest Management Practices
Kylie Webb	An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Issue of Shark Finning in China
Zac Webb	Dammed if We Do, Dammed if We Don't: Advocating for the Removal of Four Dams along the Lower Snake River in Eastern Washington
Sarah Webster-Olson	The Nisqually Hydropower Complex and the Roles of Stakeholders
Ashley Whitley	Pop Culture and Climate Fiction: An Analysis of Geoscience In Literature

2019 Newsletter

Environmental Studies

Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, WA 98447

[Addressee]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]