

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER



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ARMANDA DUPONT
We are grateful to
Armanda Dupont for
designing this year's
Newsletter. She is a
Communication Major &
member of PLU's
MediaLab.

NAVIGATING TROUBLED WATERS IN COMMUNITY

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends of the Environmental Studies Program-- Last year, I closed this introductory note expressing confidence that our Program's students, staff, and faculty would surely inspire us with their resilience and creativity in the face of the unknown challenges that were in store for AY 20-21. Soon after we published last year's Newsletter, George Floyd was murdered and a wave of protests followed that called us all to stand up for Black Lives and renew our commitment to anti-racism. Throughout this academic year, we have navigated the distance, demands, and promises of the remote learning environment, elections and political upheaval, the ongoing pandemic, the vaccine roll-out, and the loss of beloved colleagues due to our institution's financial exigency. Indeed, it has been an incredibly challenging year for all. Yet, as I anticipated last year, students and colleagues have remained resilient, creative, and committed to our Program in the face of it all. This Newsletter celebrates their incredible work. I am sure you will agree that it is inspiring. Chairing this Program is an honor because I get to co-lead it along with an amazing group of faculty, staff, and our students.

On behalf of the Environmental Studies Program, I wish you a restorative and healthy summer.

- Adela Ramos



Spring 2021
Students in
ENVT 350

WELCOME!



This year, we were happy to welcome new affiliate faculty member, Dr. Michael Turzewski (Geoscience). Michael delved into the challenges of remote learning right away. In his fall ENVT 104: Conservation of Natural Resources course, he creatively figured out a way to provide students with a safe in-person lab that provided them with knowledge of native species--and a chance to exercise!



Top: identifying native species
Bottom: Students getting exercise using lab equipment

NOTES FROM THE WATERSHED | ENVT 350

This Spring, Environmental Methods of Investigation, our innovative, interdisciplinary course centered on the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed, was taught as a hybrid course. Some students took it remotely and others were able to attend in-person data collection on the watershed. We want to thank Dr. Rose McKenney for her hard work figuring out creative ways to support remote and in-person activities, and to make this course a meaningful experience for students, as the following student notes attest.



Dr. Michael Behrens and ENVT 350 Students on the Watershed.



Students study the health of the watershed applying Environmental Chemistry

NOTES FROM THE WATERSHED | ENVT 350

"This year I was grateful to be able to experience a hybrid version of ENVT 350: Environmental Methods of Investigation taught by Dr. Rose McKenney. When I chose environmental studies as a major, I was unaware of the pandemic that would change my experience while learning about the environment and the effects people have on it. Despite the major changes to my classes, Dr. McKenney did an amazing job of combining the methodology of data and analysis with the evidence collection of the watershed that the class needed to do when applying it to Environmental Studies. I was able to learn how to use new tools to gather information about different communities and watersheds. This led to projects that helped guide the class in assessments that also would hold the cultural information to a high standard. The class covered many different aspects of study through different professors that each provided a new insight into Environmental Studies through disciplinary focuses of study. Along with the important life skills I was taught through interacting with my peers and lectures, I was also privileged enough to experience the in-person side of the lab class. During the in-person labs I was able to learn how to use different types of equipment for environmental monitoring and field data collection. As a class we would walk to the Clover Creek watershed and together use these new tools to collect the data and compare the results. Being able to experience an in-person lab together created a positive way for my peers and I to interact and use our studies from online class with field studies to create an even deeper understanding of watershed health."

GRACE GODWIN '22
ENVT & RELIGION



JULIE RENDLER '22
ENVT & BIOLOGY

"In the 2021 spring semester of Environmental Methods 350, I was able to participate as an on-campus student who joined our in-person lab sessions and Zoomed into lectures virtually. While it was so great to see old classmates again and meet new peers, it also felt like a strange transition into a new normal. Our lab adventures to Parkland Prairie were always a fun break from online lessons and moving back into hands-on activities really added to the overall experience. Despite some rainy days and oversized rain boots and waders, our labs were always productive and I got to practice old experiment skills, like chemical strip sampling techniques, along with learning new ones, such as discharge and flow calculations. Out of the four guest professors we have the pleasure of learning from in ENVT 350, I had already met two and enjoyed learning from them about new class topics. The connectivity between all departments in this course was something that added significantly to achieving the interdisciplinary mission of the Environmental Studies program. I loved connecting both previous guest professor's lessons to our following weeks and also incorporating other class content to this course. Our labs included examining water quality through chemical tests, water flow calculations, and recording substrate data. Some of our virtual lessons included a Coastal Salish native foods essay and a watershed focused audio letter written in the style of *Frankenstein*. This class, while simultaneously teaching me new content and connections between classes was a great way to begin my return to in-person classes. It gave me a lot of hope that the rest of my Environmental Studies major will include super cool fieldwork along with the other great classes I take."

NOTES FROM THE WATERSHED | ENVT 350

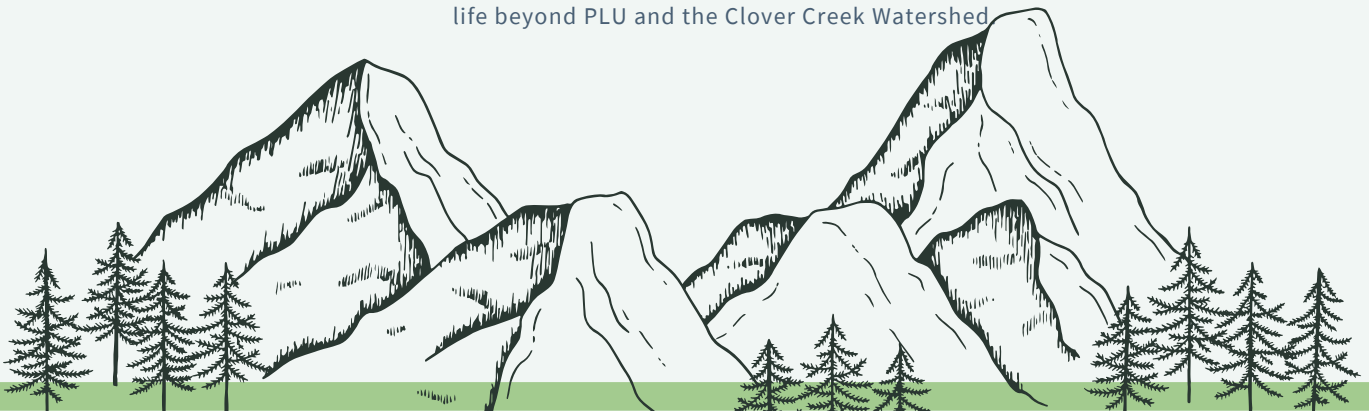
"As a double major focusing on Environmental Studies and Biology, I was looking forward to taking ENVT 350 because as I progressed in my academic career, I've heard remarkable things regarding how my peers viewed and studied Clover Creek from various lenses. However, during the midst of a pandemic we were unable to participate in as many hands-on activities as previous classes had the privilege of doing. This brings me great sadness, but I was very appreciative of the few times we were able to practice experiments on Parkland Prairie. Even though we did not have the usual number of in-person tasks, that does not mean we did not receive plenty of information. Thanks to the assistance of multiple professors from a range of disciplines, my peers and I were able to receive different perspectives on the watershed and on how communities coexist with it. Some of the most impactful series included: brainstorming ways to illustrate beautiful figurative language on describing a watershed guided by English Prof. Adela Ramos; highlighting the importance of Native American issues and their history of caring for watersheds in the Pacific Northwest taught by Religion Prof. Suzanne Crawford O'Brien; or analyzing the water properties present in the watershed with Chemistry Prof. Brian Naasz. I was surprised at the several discrepancies included within this one class, and I am thankful because now I feel like I am well-versed to discuss the qualities and importance of the watershed to a wide scope of individuals, and share the wisdom I was able to gain from this experience. "

LUIS REYES '22
ENVT & BIOLOGY



RYAN SHANE '22
ENVT & PHYSICS

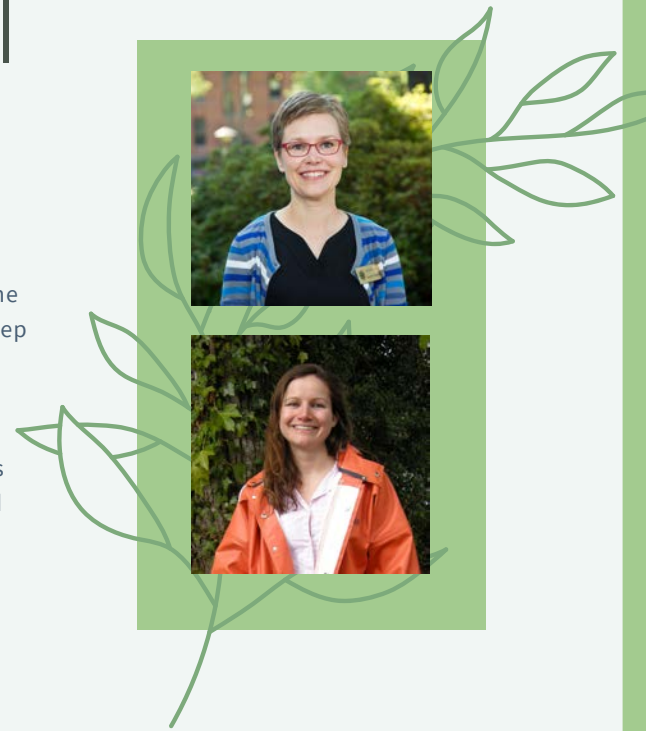
This year I had the privilege of taking Dr. Rose McKenney's ENVT 350 course. In a time of disconnection due to the pandemic, this class helped us experience the connections and interweaving threads between different disciplines in respect to watershed health. ENVT 350 spoke to all of the reasons why I chose to major in Environmental Studies; I value the opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary study, and this class helped me and my classmates develop skills to view the environment through the lenses of different disciplines. Over the course of this semester, we worked with various professors from the PLU community who each bring something new to the table. We analyzed watershed health using ecological, chemical, and literary lenses, but we also learned about Indigenous cultures and how different Native American peoples view the Earth and watersheds. We listened to Coast Salish stories, and in doing so were able to begin the process of decolonizing our mindset and challenging our preconceived notions of what is important when introducing policy that impacts the watershed and all its residents. Dr. McKenney, along with each guest professor, impressed upon us the importance of diversifying the voices who contribute to conversations about environmental sustainability and climate justice, and that lesson will be at the forefront of my mind as I look ahead to life beyond PLU and the Clover Creek Watershed.



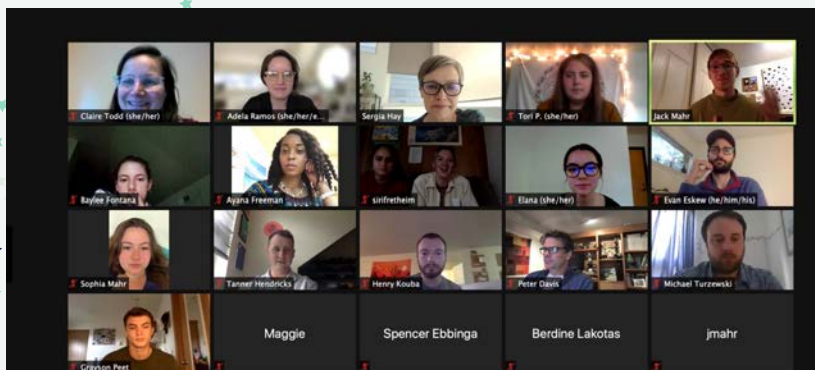
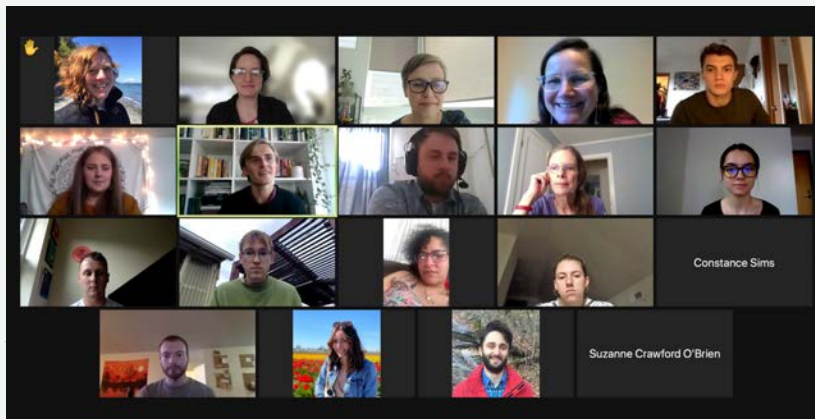
NOTES FROM THE SUMMIT | CAPSTONE PROJECTS '21

On May 18th, this year's senior class presented on wide-ranging complex environmental problems that included mining, the application of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to both colonial history, and dam removal and salmon habitat restoration, the exploitation of non-renewable sources and the demise of coral reefs, the challenges of climate change risk preparedness, deep ecological art, and more! We are grateful to Professors Sergia Hay and Claire Todd for guiding our seniors in this journey (and we're impressed with Prof. Todd's flawless management of the Zoom environment during the presentations!). Many thanks, as always, to our Program mentors from across campus for providing students with support and resources as they developed their projects. It takes a village!

Meet this year's graduating class [here](#).



CONGRATULATIONS 2021 ENVT GRADUATES!



FINDING YOUR CAPSTONE PATH

After completing my first capstone for my Global Studies major last spring, I thought I would be more than prepared to take on my second capstone for Environmental Studies. While I wasn't totally wrong in this assumption, my Environmental Studies capstone experience has challenged me in unforeseen ways and has required me to be far more intentional about the interdisciplinarity of my project than my first capstone. My capstone investigates Washington State's extent of preparedness for impending climatological hazards using the disciplines of Political Science and Philosophy. Although my topic seems focused now, it wasn't always like this! I spent the majority of my fall semester in Inquiry and Analysis ("ENVT 498" as it's more commonly referred to) trying to decide what I wanted to research for my capstone. Because there are just so many fascinating environmental issues I'd love to learn more about, this phase of my project was actually one of the most challenging! In complete honesty, I didn't feel confident about my topic and research until the drafting phase, but now that I'm nearing the completion of my project I firmly believe that my research is something I will take with me into my graduate program and my future career. It has taught me how to manage a long-term project, how to be concise with my ideas, the value of interdisciplinary collaboration, and definitely some time management skills. For those who have yet to embark on their capstone journeys, I'll say this: let your ideas and passions guide you and the rest will fall into place!

ELANA TRACY
'21 ENVT & GLST



MINING THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON



BAYLEE FONTANA
'21 ENVT & GEOS

Through the completion of my Environmental Studies Capstone, I have been given the unique opportunity to bring together two diverse disciplines in an effort to uplift a significant environmental issue. The issue I choose to investigate unified the disciplines of philosophy and geology to offer a distinctive interdisciplinary solution. My Capstone investigated the implications of gold mining on the environment specific to the Ecuadorian Amazon. In response to this environmental degradation, I offer philosopher John Locke's definition of private property to obligate certain criteria be considered in terms of land use. By using this definition as a framework, I ensure that, labors are invested in land in order to obtain ownership, that there is plenty of land left for the contemporaries and the common use, and finally that the land is of a quality that is equivalent to the privatized land. In satisfying this criterion we see a simultaneous reduction in environmental degradation thus mitigating the mercury pollutants ensuing from gold mining. Overall, this Capstone experience has been an exhilarating challenge as I have obtained a new interdisciplinary lens for which to evaluate issues through. I am beyond grateful for the professional development I have acquired through this experience and believe it will prove extremely useful in my future career. I will forever be thankful and appreciative of how manageable my Capstone instructors were able to make this virtual experience despite the circumstances.

NOTES FROM THE GROVE | TEACHER-SCHOLARS



A photo shared by PLU alum Kelly Hall, taken by her father Scott Hall during a previous year's canoe journey

Head to this year's Newsletter webpage to engage with materials from this year's courses, including:

- ENVT 239: Environment and Culture, Dr. Sarah Robinson-Bertoni
- ENVT 350: Environmental Methods of Investigation, Salish Sea Stories, Watershed Audio Letters, and student reflections on the Clover Creek Watershed and Parkland Prairie
- Digital Stories from Environmental Humanities Courses
- Collaborative Environmental Justice Bibliography

ANNUAL EARTH & DIVERSITY WEEK '21

This year's Earth and Diversity week was a collaboration between students, staff, and faculty that resulted in a robust program of activities that were held online. Building on the experiences of the past year and implementing new technical knowledge, this year's programming gathered 433 unique participants! We are incredibly grateful for Nicole Juliano's leadership in the organization of this week's programming, and for our partnership with Cece Chan (President, ASPLU) and Kenzie Knapp (Sustainability Director, ASPLU), and Dr. Erik Hammerstrom (Religion, Chair).

You can take a look at the full schedule [here](#).

The Environmental Studies Program contributed to the week's events with the annual Earth Day Lecture. Following our commitment to anti-racism and environmental justice, we invited Seattle's El Centro de la Raza to share their work advocating for environmental and climate health. Maria Batayola, El Centro's Environmental Justice Coordinator and the Beacon Hill Council Chair, presented a keynote lecture on the impacts of SEA-TAC Airport's flight paths on the Beacon Hill Community, a majority immigrant and refugee community. Her lecture provided invaluable lessons about the complexities involved in working toward reducing air and noise pollution. In addition to patience and generosity, this work requires placing the community's needs at the forefront while collaborating with legislators and port authorities. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from Maria Batayola and the Beacon Hill community.



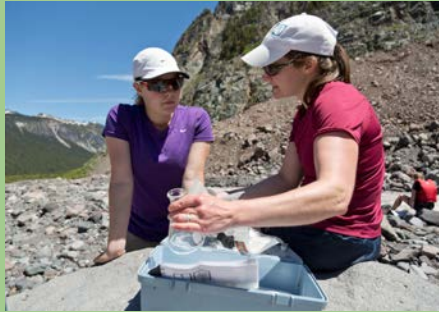
Maria Batayola



TRIBUTES & THANKS

This year our Program loses two invaluable members whose contributions and vitality will be greatly missed.

FAREWELL & THANK YOU DR. CLAIRE TODD



Dr. Claire Todd joined the Environmental Studies Program in 2007. Her contributions to this Program are deep and far-reaching. Claire has been profoundly committed to our students, many of whom have been lucky enough to learn from her through faculty-student work over the summer. Her generosity as a mentor has supported students and faculty alike, and her loyalty to the institution has been felt through her participation in pan-University committees and curricular programming. We will miss her joy, energy, and creativity, and we wish her the absolute best in the next stage of her career. We are so fortunate to have been a part of it! Thank you so much for everything, Claire!

FAREWELL & THANK YOU PROF. WENDY CALL

Prof. Wendy Call joined the Environmental Studies Program in 2015 as an affiliate faculty member. Her course, ENGL 322: Place-Based Writing, has been a favorite of Environmental Studies majors and minors who have benefited from Wendy's profound understanding of our biological, emotional, and intellectual relationship to place, and from her work as a Native American Indigenous Studies expert. In addition to being an inspiring teacher and a prolific creative writer, Wendy is an award-winning translator committed to giving voice to indigenous women poets. As a mentor, Wendy provides students with in-depth knowledge of the craft of writing, of what it means to be a writer and environmentalist, and provides them with resources and a model for how to create community in writing. We will miss her many talents, her generosity, her relentless energy, and thoughtful contributions to our Program's initiatives, and wish her the absolute best in the next stage of her career. We are so fortunate to have been a part of it! Thank you so much for everything, Wendy!



LAURELS & PALMS

KENZIE KNAPP WINS UDALL SCHOLARSHIP!



"I am endlessly grateful to my professors and advisor in the Environmental Studies department, the supportive staff members, and the students of ASPLU, the Student Sustainability Committee, and GREAN club for their knowledge and for motivating my advocacy for sustainability on and off campus. From my experience as an Environmental Studies student, I've grown in my passion for equitable environmental justice and was moved to apply for this award. I look forward to sharing all that I have to learn from the Udall Scholarship experience with the PLU community as we continue our journey towards a more sustainable campus, Tacoma, and global neighborhood. Onward!"

- Kenzie Knapp

- Elana Tracy has been admitted to the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Policy and Governance. Congratulations, Elana! You can read more about Elana [here](#).
- Alumna, Kim Wogahn published "Bringing a Berry Back from the Land of the Dead: Coast Salish Huckleberry Cultivation and Food Sovereignty," in *Native Foodways: Indigenous North American Religious Traditions and Foods*, edited by Michelene Pesantubbee and Michael Zogry (SUNY 2021). The article began as her capstone.

