

ESS Newsletter

February, 2024



Alumni Highlight: Melissa Mattwig

During her time at Allegheny, Melissa Mattwig ('17) majored in Biology and Environmental Science and minored in French and Spanish. Her senior comp explored different phosphorus species and microbial activity of varying trophic status in the Northwestern PA lakes. Since graduation, Mattwig has received the David L. Boren award, which allowed her to study Swahili in Tanzania, which she hopes will eventually enable future collaborative research with the East African and Laurentian Great Lakes. She then joined the Peace Corps and taught Biology and English in Tanzania from 2018 through 2020. Once her time in the Peace Corps was complete, she returned to the States to earn a master's degree in Geospatial Data Science at the University of Michigan, which was largely inspired by the time she spent taking Geographical Information Systems with Professor Chris Shaffer. She now works for the Cooperative Institute of Great Lakes Research as an Earth Systems Modeler. In this position, she is working on a hydrodynamic modeling project in Lake Ontario which will forecast flood events. If you are interested in contacting Melissa, her email is mmattwig@umich.edu. Thanks for sharing your story!

Professor Krone's Sabbatical

ESS and Religious Studies
Professor Adrienne Krone will be going on a sabbatical after this semester. The purpose of the sabbatical is to devote time to her own research about Jewish community farming in North America. This research is meaningful because the Jewish community farming movement "provides a good example of how communities can draw on their religious traditions to address contemporary problems like food injustice and climate change." Professor Krone has been researching this movement for ten years, and is in the process of writing her first book on the subject. Her goal for the sabbatical is to write the second book, which she has tentatively titled Jewish Community Farming, the Climate Crisis, and the Future of Judaism. In addition to writing, Professor Krone will also conduct some field work with funding through Allegheny's Academic Support Committee. She also hopes to relax and spend some time with family.





Progress on Hiring New Professors

As we proceed with the spring semester, progress is being made in the search for new ESS professors. As previously mentioned in October’s Newsletter, current interest in new classes lies within the disciplines of climate, food, and water. We can anticipate an increase in intermediate classes bridging the gap within these fields. The increase in faculty is expected to bring new perspectives that will further the opportunities for exploration available for both current and incoming students. Alongside this may come more diverse teaching interests and research opportunities.

Terry Bensel was extremely impressed during the interviewing process of the 6 candidates, stating that “the department was extremely impressed by student turnout and questions. Everyone had good interactions” and that “our students stepped up and made a really good impression.” Professor Bensel also noted that he was very excited for the addition of any of the candidates and remains optimistic despite being nervous about decisions and offers.



Students perusing the clothing swap!

SEA Winter Clothing Swap

Earlier this month on 2/2, Students for Environmental Action (SEA) hosted a winter clothing swap in the Campus Center lobby! Consisting entirely of clothing donated throughout the previous week by fellow students (and collected in hand-painted boxes, created by SEA members), the event gave students the chance to receive free winter clothing while also having the chance to send their old winter clothing off to a new home. Ultimately though, the main goal of the event was to provide students with essential winter clothing during a time when it would otherwise be difficult to do so. Luckily, while lots of clothing was taken, SEA still has a significant amount left. Plans are underway to have a similar event in the future, so be sure to stay tuned! Thank you to everyone who attended!





Sustainable Development in Dakar, Senegal

Last semester (Fall 2023), I had the wonderful learning experience of studying abroad in Dakar, Senegal. The program (MSID: Senegal) focused on international development, and within this subject students chose a sub-topic, such as sustainability and climate change. The international development sustainability class was engaging and insightful, including the subjects of climate change impacts in Senegal, the challenges of rapid urbanization, and the ongoing impact of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and globalization on the sustainability of ecologic as well as social systems in the region.

In addition to the classroom phase, students were placed at internships based on their chosen sub-topic. I completed my six-week internship at Bonergie, a Dakar-based company that sells and installs solar, particularly solar water pumps for agricultural irrigation. It was interesting to learn and participate in a new context at the office and in the field.

This short article cannot even pretend to cover everything, so I would be happy to talk more about these subjects and/or the MSID program! My email is waidelich01@allegheny.edu



Contributions By:

- Lindsey Kutz
- Ava Loch
- Samantha Adams
- Luna Hammer
- Elsa Waidelich

Edited By:

- Luna Hammer

Faculty Advisor:

- Rich Bowden

Interested in writing for the ESS Newsletter?

Contact our editor at: hammer01@allegheny.edu



Solar pump installation in Kayar, Senegal

Classroom phase field trip to Baie d'Anne in Dakar

