

ESS Newsletter

Eric Pallant, 2024



Eric with students at Bousson Experimental Forest!

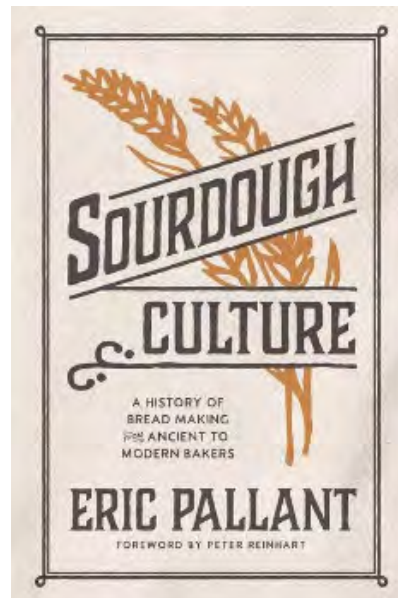
Eric's Accomplishments

Celebrating 37 years of dedicated service at Allegheny, Professor Eric Pallant has left an unforgettable mark on the ESS Department. Having taught a diverse array of courses, from introductory courses to specialized topics like Soil Sciences and Geography of Consumption, Eric's impact extends far beyond the classroom. He played an important role in creating project-based learning Junior Seminars and opinion-based ESS Freshman Seminar classes. Some of his most memorable projects in these classes include the creation of the experimental garden, the design of Carr Hall's lobby, the North Village 1 and 454 House designs, and the renovation of the Market House bridge. Beyond the classes he taught, Eric is proud of his book, being the first full-time member of the ESS Department, and serving the chair of the department for 20 years in both the 80s and the early 2000s.

Flour, Water, Salt, and Eric Pallant

What do Eric Pallant and baking sourdough have in common? They are always teaching you something new, and they both are loved by many! As one of Eric's students in Soil to Plate, I recall the class we spent doing fermentation projects. That day, a handful of us went back to our dorms with little jars of sourdough starters. Now we are dots on Eric's Sourdough map that pinpoint where his starters have ended up all over the world.

Sourdough Culture is Eric's first book, which details the history of sourdough bread. The book traces the discovery of sourdough baking all the way to modern time, discussing how it was made in different places and who relied on it for survival. The publication of this book took lots of work, since it is difficult to publish a book without prior publications. But the main win for Eric is that he learned to write something you'd really be interested to read.



The cover of *Sourdough Culture*!



Fresh Bread: A New Book by Eric Pallant

After the release of his first book in 2021, *Sourdough Culture*, Eric Pallant knew he wanted to continue writing. However, fans will have to wait several years before the next installment in his bread-based anthology.

This new book, entitled *Loaf*, will explore the complex journey of how bread is made and all the people who are needed to produce just one loaf of bread. Pallant got his inspiration from one of the classes he taught for many years: Soil to Plate. With Pallant at the helm, this class would dive into food manufacturing methods and analyze the life cycle of different food products.

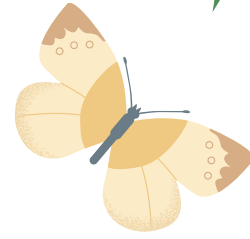
This new book will be dedicated to understanding all the people and other inputs that go into just a loaf of bread. Until this anticipated read is released, fans can get their bread-literature fix from *The Perfect Loaf*, an online site where Pallant writes columns four times a year.



Student Remarks

“He came to visit the farm and thoughtfully used our harvested wheat to make us some delicious bread!”

- Adrienne Hanas, '25

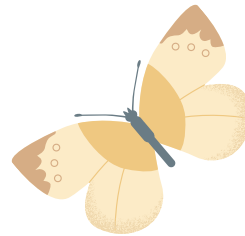


“Loves his work and inspires us students and future environmental scientists!”

- Ryan Cox, '26

“One of the most supportive, enthusiastic, and caring person you'll ever meet”

- Elizabeth Dyer, '25



“One of the speediest swimmers and someone who has kindness baked into their personhood.”

- Emily Tekelenburg, '23

“Most understanding and influential guy, super funny, always wears sandals! , challenges you to be the best, GSOCS dad, bread guy, makes you feel at home in the ESS dept <3”

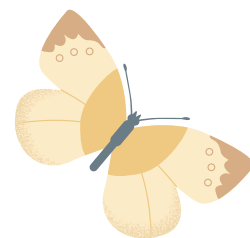
- Bianca Sanchez, '24

“There has never been educator that has made me more emotionally charged.”

- Nathalie Paz Saucedo, '25

“Thank you for always being willing to discuss things at depth and offer endless advice!”

- Julia Sonen, '24





Eric's Hobbies!

It goes without saying that Eric has been an integral part of the local community both on and off campus throughout his time here. Since his start at the college as an Associate Professor of Environmental Science in 1987, he has witnessed the graduation of roughly 1,200 out of all 1,500 ESS majors! Outside of campus life and baking sourdough bread, Eric's main hobbies include reading, eating, and being a member of U.S. Masters Swimming. With the rest of his spare time, he can typically be found completing really difficult crossword puzzles or working hard to become a professional napper, claiming to have mastered the 15-minute power nap! Thank you for everything that you've done and continue to do, Eric! Best of luck with all of your future endeavors!

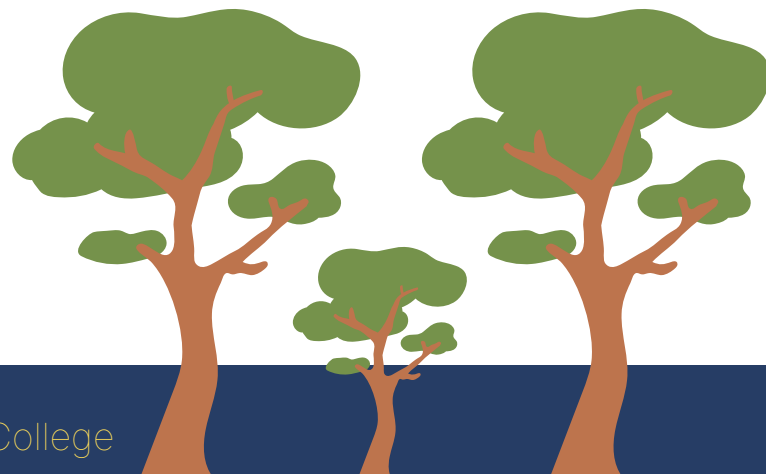
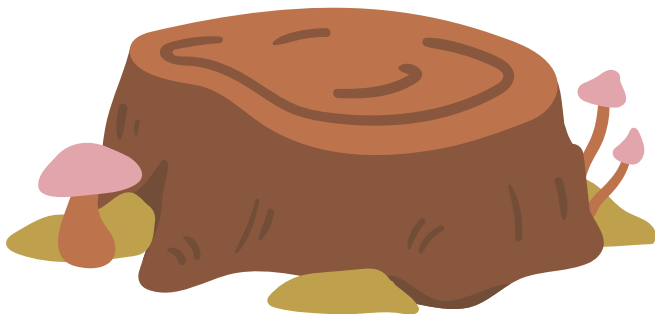
Faculty Remarks

"Visionary, multidisciplinary, fermenter, soil-enthusiast, cheerleader, big-picture-thinker, colleague, planet-sustainer, empathetic, leader, humble, stellar teacher, creative, FRIEND"
- Richard D. Bowden



"One of the best mentors I have ever had."
- Ian Carbone

"Biggest cheerleader, fearless leader, greatest listener"
- Casey Bradshaw-Wilson





Eric's Retirement Plans

Even though Eric Pallant is on sabbatical, he's not slowing down. This year, he has continued to work with the admissions, development, and alumni departments on campus, helping to recruit new students and further develop the college's community.

Next year, Eric's office (and all the witty graphics on his door) will no longer be housed in Carr — but he has no intentions of parting ways with Allegheny. Eric will continue to live in Meadville and stay involved with the Allegheny community as much as possible. Throughout his retirement, Eric plans to meet regularly with the ESS Department once a month for as long as he can.

Eric's first year of retirement will be spent mostly writing and traveling for his book, Loaf. Already, Eric has journeyed to Morocco to learn about phosphorus mines there. Next, he's on a mission to track down the people and places from cradle to grave who participate in the process of making bread. Who knows where that will take him around the world! Hopefully, he sends the department some pictures.



Alumni Remarks

"Eric is the person who convinced me that I could do something bigger."

- Kurt Hatcher



"Funny, charismatic, foodie, bread baker. A gem of a human and a wonderful mentor."

- Danielle Mawhir

"Eric uses humor for good and genuinely cares about you. Generous, solutions-mindset, amazing."

- Fiona Hensley



"Just like his sourdough, devoted to seeing his students rise, thrive, create, and storytell."

- Cameron Neiblum





Alumni Remarks (Continued)

“When I was 18, Eric told me they didn’t need more liberal hippies on the west coast, and if I actually wanted to change the world, to try first in a place like Meadville. His support was always something I could rely on and strongly influenced the course of my life. I feel so lucky to have known him.”

- Hannah Tonsmann



“Encouraged me to study abroad, encouraged me to explore all options and possibilities. You rock!!!!”

- Shannon Wade



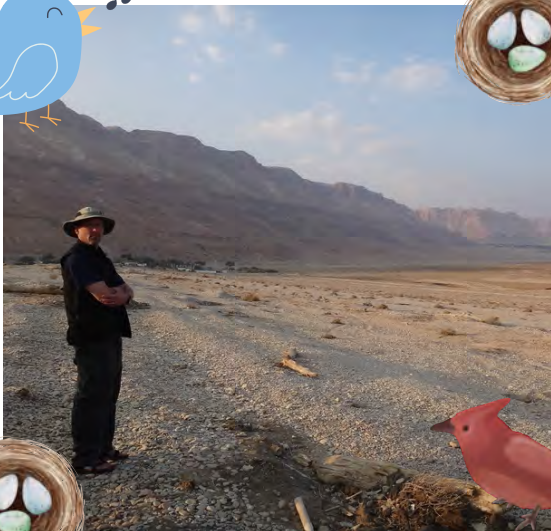
“He challenged and pushed me beyond what I thought I was capable of.”

- Nate Smith



“Him taking the time to meet me as a prospective student greatly helped me decide to attend Allegheny”

- Chris Resek



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Interested in writing for the ESS Newsletter?
 Contact our editor at:
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Additional Announcements!

Join Professor Pallant for a leap year zoom-a-thon and virtual celebration on Thursday, February 29, at 7 p.m.! [Click here](#) to register and receive login information. And don't forget, Reunion Weekend is May 30 - June 2. Registration opens in late March.

