WELCOME

New Online Masters Students for Spring 2021:
Bridgette Bailey, OH; Joanna Berry, WV; Alicia Bonin, CT; Katie Boyle, NJ; Thuy Bui, MA; Emily Butts, NC; Ted Carryl, NY; Alyssa Cooley, KS; Jason DeFuria, NJ; Caitlin Eaton, TX; Johnathan Ehle, KY; Levi Fettig, SD; Antonya Harris, TX; Ashley King, IL; April Knapp, MD; Sarah Latham, CA; Christin Macpagal, CA; Adam Maire, NE; Celeste Mildenstein, NE; Zachary Millender, TX; Erin Miranda, HI; John Molina, NY; Hana Moosa, TX; Trey Moss, KS; Anahi Palacios, TX; Sara Palombo, PA; Alexander Richards, CA; Abigail Rupp, MN; Monica Sackuvich, CO; Brianna Sage, SC; Lauren Schramm, GA; Kathleen Seeland, PA; Kajuania Tate, IL; Michael Thompson, SD; Jenna Williams, NC; Jason Yepa, NM

New Online Faculty

Dr. Jayne Jonas-Bratten will be joining the Biology Department this January 2021. Prior to UNK, she was a Research Scholar at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO, where she taught online and on-campus courses in rangeland science and natural resources management at both undergraduate and graduate levels, including Ecology of Grasslands and Shrublands, Advanced Ecological Restoration, Vegetation Measurements and Monitoring, and Rangeland Conservation and Stewardship. Her research interests lie at the intersection of grassland and restoration ecology, particularly with regard to understanding drivers of and interactions between plant and insect communities. She will be teaching BIOL 830 Grassland Ecology and BIOL 827 Biological Statistics this spring.
Awards:

Assistant Professor, Dr. Joseph Dolence was awarded the 2020 Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association (SMSA) Distinguished Scholar Award. SMSA selects one of their former scholarship recipients each year to receive this award. Dr. Dolence received the scholarship as an undergraduate and is the 24th winner of the award. Since 1972, SMSA has awarded almost 1,000 scholarships to children and grandchildren of US Navy Seabees. Dr. Dolence’s father served as a Seabee for 20 years.

December 2020 Graduates:

Allison Anderson, Ashley Blanchard, Marilyn Brooks, Rayleen Candelario, Patricia Echeverria, Kilee Goff, Kyndal Holmes, Jesse Hope, Jillian Jamieson, Janet Lockett, Monica Macoubrie, Hannah Marfia, Victoria McIlwain, Delaney Miller, Michael Murphy, Nicole O’Grady, Michelle Ostrem, Katrina Poremba, Amanda Rocker, Michelle Santiago, Natalie Sater, Lori Splett, Clarissa Thompson, Jordan Valla, Melinda Wannes, Ykeara Wilson, Becky Wood

Due to COVID-19 protocols, fall commencement was split into 2 ceremonies, an undergraduate and graduate. The Graduate Commencement ceremony was held on Thursday, December 17th at 7:00 pm in the Health and Sports Center. Three graduates were able to attend: Kyndal Holmes, Rayleen Candelario, and Michelle Ostrem. Kyndal Holmes carried the Arts and Sciences gonfalon at the ceremony. Dr. Kim Carlson, Professor in the Biology Department, was the keynote speaker. You can view the ceremony, including Dr. Carlson's address to the graduates, at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8O5P-QSvaE.
Left: Dr. Kim Carlson addressing the graduates
Below: Kyndal Holmes carrying the gonfalon in at ceremony
Middle Left: Rayleen Candelario

Photos above and right by Todd Gottula and Kosuke Yoshii, UNK Communications

Above: Rayleen Candelario and Michelle Ostrem
Left: Kyndal Holmes
Publications, Meetings, Grants

Meetings


Publications


Dolence, J.J. and Kita, H. 2020. Allergic sensitization to peanuts is enhanced in mice fed a high-fat diet. AIMS Allergy and Immunology, 4:88-99.


Geluso, K., C. Kruse, and M.J. Harner. 2020. Wetland edge trampled by American Bison (Bos bison) used as basking site for Painted Turtles (Chrysemys picta). Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences, 40:39-44.


Continue to send us updates on any meetings, publications, grants, or awards that you have been involved with. Please email details to msbiology@unk.edu.
Greetings!

I hope you enjoyed the holidays and extended break. Looking forward at the semester, you may have noticed a change to the academic calendar. UNK is not having a Spring Break, therefore the spring semester will only be 15 weeks instead of the traditional 16. This change is to minimize COVID-19 risks to the campus and community.

We continue to see growth to the MS in Biology program. Following our highest fall enrollment numbers in the program’s history, this semester is the highest spring enrollment in program history. Once again, we would like to thank you for your support and continuing to spread word of our program. Word of mouth from current students and alumni are major factors in our continued growth and expansion.

With our continued growth in enrollment, our department continues to grow. As you enroll in courses, you will notice new faculty joining the department this spring and summer. Dr. Jayne Jonas-Bratten is teaching two courses in our online program this semester, Biological Statistics and a special topics course (Grassland Ecology). Additionally, we will be welcoming Dr. Yipeng Sui over the summer.

Keep a look out for some new summer course offerings as well as some not typically offered during the summer. Natural Science Curriculum, Scientific Illustration, Environmental Biology, Conservation of Birds and Mammals, and Insects in Human Society will all be offered this upcoming summer term in addition to those classes normally on rotation.

Remember, as you register for classes, please email msbiology@unk.edu if you would like to be placed on a waitlist for a course that has filled. Have a great spring semester and stay healthy! If you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to contact me at nuxollas@unk.edu or 308-865-8602.

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**Student News**

**Douglas Ayega (May 2018 graduate)** is pursuing a PhD in Learning Technologies at the University of North Texas, Denton. As part of the portfolio requirement for his degree program, he has published six journal articles and presented at five international conferences.
Sarah Franks (May 2020 graduate) welcomed her daughter, Alexandria Celeste Franks-Foss, on December 2nd. Alexandria weighed 6lbs 15oz and was 19.5 inches long. (pictured left)

Katie Hamilton (current distance student) gave birth to daughter, Erin Mackenzie, on December 26th. Erin weighed 8lbs 15oz and was 20 inches long. (pictured right)

Daniel Hissong (May 2019 graduate) was part of a team that received a $950,000 Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant from the Department of Defense. They have been tasked with studying IAQ measures that can combat SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens. His team is specifically studying plasmaclustering (Biopolar Ionization) technology. They wrote the grant in conjunction with another company, Nitride Solutions out of Wichita, Kansas, which makes components of UV-C lamps. They are currently in phase I of the grant and will be testing their technology during phase II at MRI Global Labs. MRI has SARS-CoV-2 and will directly test the efficacy of the technology.

Curtis Reese (July 2015 graduate) had David Pogue guest lecture via Zoom in his General Biology class this past October. David has hosted several specials for NOVA on PBS, has won Emmy's and is currently on the CBS Sunday morning show. (pictured left)

Dorothy Artale Salinas (December 2014 graduate) gave birth to her second daughter, Livie Rae, on September 8th. Livie weighed 8lbs 13oz at birth and was 21 inches long (pictured right). On this same day Dorothy became tenured as an Assistant Professor of Biology at County College of Morris in Randolph, New Jersey.

Adam Sullivan (current distance student) is teaching 8th grade science and coaching track and field at Bailey Middle School in Pensacola, Florida.

Holly Trimble (December 2016 graduate) completed her doctorate in physical therapy from Arcadia University in 2020.

Please let us know what is going on in your lives; email us your news at msbiology@unk.edu.
Office Space

Spring 2021 Deadlines:
January 25th–spring classes begin
January 29th–Last day to add/drop class on MyBlue with no penalty
February 1st–Last day to apply for May graduation
February 4th–E-bill notifications sent to Lopermail account
February 25th–Tuition & Fees due in full
March 26th–Last day to drop a course on MyBlue (no refund at this time)
April 2nd–Comprehensive Exams (for graduating students) are due to the Biology Dept
April 5th–Early Registration for Summer and Fall 2021 classes begins for all currently enrolled students
April 15th–Summer 2021 graduation application opens on MyBlue
April 26th–General Registration for Summer and Fall 2021 classes begins for all admitted students
May 3rd–6th–Finals Week
May 7th–Commencement ceremony at 10:00 am in the Health and Sports Center
May 10th – Summer 2021 semester begins
May 11th–Deadline for faculty to submit final grades for spring classes

Students planning to graduate this May 2021 must apply for graduation on MyBlue. Even if you do not plan to attend ceremony you must apply in order to receive your degree. The deadline to apply for May graduation is Feb 1st. There is a $25 application fee which can be paid on-line during the application process. Commencement ceremony will take place at 10:00 am on May 7th in the Health and Sports Center.