



Department of Biology Masters Distance Learning Program

# MASTERS DISTANCE MONITOR

January 2022

Issue 41

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## WELCOME

### **New Online Masters Students for Spring 2022:**

Celestial-Dawn Arnold, KS; Armando Arvizu, AZ; John Becker, CA; Kathryn Black, NE; Sonia Chaudhary, PA; Neil Coleman, FL; Levi Cornelius, CA; Brian Fico, NY; Jackson Fischer, NE; Chelsea Gaunt, NE; Thomas Grace, PA; Jamie Kavan, NE; Kathryn Menezes, CA; Avery Misfeldt, NE; Jacob Muldoon, IL; Kyle Myers, NJ; Henry Richard, ME; Chaya Rothschild, NJ; Louis Sanchez, TX; Clara Smith, Grand Cayman; Molly Sten, MO; Zuzana Sulcova, NE; Andrea Talbot, NE; Hannah Yucht, FL

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## CONGRATULATIONS

### **December 2021 Graduates:**

Kerrigan Anspauch, Mark Badtorff, Jessica Bourbeau, Mikalah Brown, Malcolm Campbell, Meg Endicott, Leeada Fredrickson, Gabriele Gecaite, Luke Hamilton (Thesis), Cristina Hillje, Si Noon Hong, Audra Keehn, Jenny Lee, Nichole Mayer, Christina Meadows, Cassidy Proce, Daniel Quiring, Luke Rogers (Thesis), Cailea Rusnak, Nousha Sabet, Monica Sackuvich, Emily Schmit, Kevin Separa, Jim Smerecky, Cameron Sonnenfeld, Holly Westad, Laura Woerner

Five graduates were able to attend the commencement ceremony on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am in the Health and Sports Center. Nichole Mayer carried the Graduate College gonfalon at ceremony.



Pictured above, back row (left to right): Cameron Sonnenfeld, Jake Redenius (MSE STEM graduate), Luke Hamilton, Dr. Nick Hobbs, Dr. Paul Twigg; front row (left to right): Meg Endicott, Dr. Letty Reichart, Cristina Hillje, Dr. Janet Steele, Dr. Julie Shaffer, Kaleb Christensen (MSE STEM graduate)



Pictured left: Nichole Mayer marching during the recessional with the Graduate College gonfalon

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# Grants, Meetings, Publications

## Meetings

- Carlson, Z. and **Dolence, J.J.** November 2021. Development of vaping peanut allergy models. 49th Annual Autumn Immunology Conference. Chicago, IL. Poster Presentation.
- Cooke, T., M. R. Wuellner, and K. Koupal.** November 2021. Dynamics of fish-habitat relationships in the North Platte River-Lake McConaughy interface. American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Virtual Presentation.
- Koupal, K., J. Davis, and M. R. Wuellner.** November 2021. Impact of canal operations on the fish communities and biomass of a connected prairie stream. American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Oral Presentation.
- Lehmann, L., **Vininski, M.S.,** Rajput, S., and **Dolence, J.J.** November 2021. Examination of sex-specific differences in type 2 innate lymphoid cells and adaptive immune responses following peanut exposure. 49th Annual Autumn Immunology Conference. Chicago, IL. Oral and Poster Presentation.
- Schreiner, W., K. Koupal, and M. R. Wuellner.** November 2021. Is reservoir water elevation and habitat availability a linear relationship? American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Oral Presentation.
- Shaner, T., **Vininski, M.S.,** Rajput, S., and **Dolence, J.J.** November 2021. Dendritic cells display sex-specific differences in ability to mount immune response to peanut. 49th Annual Autumn Immunology Conference. Chicago, IL. Oral and Poster Presentation.
- Vininski, M.S.,** Rajput, S., **Hobbs, N.J., and Dolence, J.J.** November 2021. Sex hormones modulate the allergic immune response to peanut. 49th Annual Autumn Immunology Conference. Chicago, IL. Oral and Poster Presentation.
- Wuellner, M. R.,** J. Ruoss, B. Mason, and **K. Koupal.** November 2021. Reversing what time has taken away: Mother Nature's experiment with cove connection in Harlan County Reservoir. American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Oral Presentation.
- Wuellner, M. R.,** S. Wallick, and **K. Koupal.** November 2021. Fish community changes following fall drawdown in an irrigation canal. American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Oral Presentation.

## Publications

- Bridger, A.E., and **K. Geluso.** 2021. Importance of woodland patches as hibernacula for gartersnakes in a prairie river floodplain of central Nebraska. *Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences*, 41:71-87.
- Brinley Buckley, E.M., A.J. Caven, J.D. Wiese, and **M.J. Harner.** 2021 Assessing the hydroregime of an archetypal riverine wet meadow in the central Great Plains using time-lapse imagery. *Ecosphere*, 12(11): e03829. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ecs2.3829>
- Cale, J.A., N. Scott, **G.J. Pec,** S.M. Landhäusser and J. Karst. 2021. Choices on sampling, sequencing, and analyzing DNA influence the estimation of community composition of plant fungal symbionts. *Applications in Plant Sciences*, 9(9-10): e11449.

- Caven, A. J., K. G. Leung, C. Vinton, B. Krohn, J. D. Wiese, J. Slater, and **D. H. Ranglack**. 2021. A behavioral index for assessing bison stress level during handling and demographic predictors of stress response. *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888705.2021.1963250>.
- Farriester, J.W., **B.C. Peterson, K. Geluso**, and W.W. Hoback. 2021. Threatened American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*) consumed by Northern Short-tailed Shrew (*Blarinabrevicauda*) and trap avoidance by Silphidae. *Western North American Naturalist*, 81:443-452.
- Grace, M. K., H. R. Akçakaya, E. L. Bennett, T. M. Brooks, A. Heath, S. Hedges, C. Hilton-Taylor, M. Hoffmann, A. Hochkirch,...**D. H. Ranglack**,...and S. Young. 2021. Testing a global standard for quantifying species recovery and assessing conservation impact. *Conservation Biology*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13756>.
- Moghe S.**, Baumgart K., **Shaffer J.J.**, and **Carlson K.A.** 2021. Female mentors positively contribute to undergraduate STEM research experiences. *PLoS ONE*, 16(12): e0260646. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0260646>
- Rohde, M.L., **K. Geluso**, C. Kruse, and **M. Harner**. 2021. Use of soapweed yucca (*Yucca glauca*) by rodents and other vertebrates in western Nebraska. *Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences*, 41:61-70.
- Rose, J.P., Kriebel, R., Kahan, L., DiNicola, A., González-Gallegos, J.G., Celep, F., Lemmon, E.M., Lemmon, A.R., Sytsma K.J., and **Drew, B.T.** 2021. Sage insights into the phylogeny of *Salvia*: Dealing with sources of discordance within and across genomes. *Frontiers in Plant Science*, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2021.767478>.
- Rowles, G., M. Wuellner, and K. Koupal**. 2021. Spatial distinction and temporal stability of water microelements in the North Platte River and Lake McConaughy, Nebraska. *River Research and Applications*, <https://doi.org/10.1002/rra.3873>.
- Rowles, G.W., K.D. Koupal**, B.A. Roberg, and **M.R. Wuellner**. 2021. Examination of non-game fish use of a Denil fishway on the Cedar River, Nebraska. *The Prairie Naturalist*, 53: N1–N8.
- Schlater, S.M., J.M. Ringenberg**, N. Bickford, and **D.H. Ranglack**. 2021. White-tailed jackrabbits (*Lepus townsendii*): A review and call for research. *The Southwestern Naturalist*, 65(2): 173-184. <https://doi.org/10.1894/0038-4909-65.2.161>
- Tarullo, C., Rose, J.P., Sytsma, K.J., and **Drew, B.T.** 2021. Using a supermatrix approach to explore phylogenetic relationships, divergence times, and historical biogeography of Saxifragales. *Turkish Journal of Botany*, 45: 440–456.
- Turner, B. L., **M. Wuellner**, E. Cortus, and S. Chumbley. 2021. A novel approach to teaching complex systems problem solving using interdisciplinary system dynamics and a multi-university cohort model. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.2778>.
- Uiterwaal, S.F., J.P. DeLong, and **K. Geluso**. 2021. *Anaxyrus woodhousii* (Woodhouse Toad): Predation. *Herpetological Review*, 52:604.
- Yipeng, S.**, Meng, Z., Chen, J., Liu, J., Hernandez, R., Gonzales, M.B, Gwag, T., Morris, A.J. and Zhou, C. 2021. Effects of Dicyclohexyl Phthalate Exposure on PXR Activation and Lipid Homeostasis in Mice. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 129(12). <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP9262>

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](mailto:msbiology@unk.edu).

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# Director's Desk from Dr. Austin Nuxoll

Greetings!

I hope everyone remained healthy and enjoyed their holidays. We are gearing up for another spring semester and there are a few changes within the Department. Dr. Kim Carlson and Dr. Julie Shaffer will be co-chairs beginning this semester. Dr. Bryan Drew took over as the Graduate Program Chair with Dr. Luedtke's departure. Dr. Simon was appointed the Director of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (URCA). Each of these individuals will continue to be a vital part of our MS Biology program, in addition to the positions they have recently accepted.

We have made a few changes to the comprehensive exam beginning this semester. Students can only take the comprehensive exam once per semester. Upon failure of the comprehensive exam, students will be given one more attempt to pass; however, they must wait until the following semester, reapply for graduation, and pass with a 70% or higher.

This summer, there will be reduced course offerings compared to previous years, so please plan accordingly. Register early and please email [msbiology@unk.edu](mailto:msbiology@unk.edu) to be placed on a waitlist if a class is full. There will not be any 1 or 2 credit special topics courses offered this summer. However, in the fall we will have 1 and 2 credit options again. This does not apply to BIOL 881 – Current Issues in Biology or the 831A-F Biological Research courses and these will still be offered in the summer session.

Have a great semester and please let me know if I can assist with anything! You can contact me at [nuxollas@unk.edu](mailto:nuxollas@unk.edu) or 308-865-8602.

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## Faculty News



**Dr. Melissa Wuellner** began her two-year term as the president of the Education Section of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) during the AFS annual meeting in Baltimore, November 5 – 10. In this role, Dr. Wuellner will work on issues related to improving the quality of college and university education for fisheries professionals, promote exchange of information among educators, students, and fisheries professionals.

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# Student News

**Joshua Barbara (May 2021 graduate)** recently began two adjunct faculty positions, one at Viterbo University and another at Western Technical College in La Crosse, Wisconsin. He is teaching anatomy and physiology, human biology, and exercise physiology courses.

**Pedro Bento (December 2011 graduate)** accepted a role as Senior Director of Global Quality Assurance with Aucta Pharmaceuticals in Piscataway, New Jersey. In his role, Pedro is responsible for the oversight of all QMS processes both in the US and China.

**Solveig Perrett (current distance student)** just finished setting up three phenology hikes. One is only 3 trees that she used with her middle school students, the other two are along the Niobrara River as part of her summer job with the National Park Service. If you ever find yourself in Valentine, NE, download the Nature's Notebook app, join the NiobraraNSR group, and hike the Ft. Falls trail at Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, or the MacAllister Trail at Smith Falls State Park and participate in citizen science by recording the phenophase of the tagged trees.



**Emily Schmit (December 2021 graduate)** welcomed her first child, Oliver Charles, on October 10<sup>th</sup>. He weighed 6lbs 5oz and was 19 ½ inches long at birth. (pictured left)

Please let us know what is going on in your lives; email us your news at [msbiology@unk.edu](mailto:msbiology@unk.edu).

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# Office Space

## Spring 2022 Deadlines:

January 24<sup>th</sup>–Spring classes begin

January 28<sup>th</sup>–Last day to add/drop class on MyBlue with no penalty

February 1<sup>st</sup>–Last day to apply for May graduation

February 3<sup>rd</sup>–E-bill notifications sent to Lopermail account

February 24<sup>th</sup>–Tuition & Fees due in full

March 12<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup>–Spring break, all classes dismissed

March 25<sup>th</sup>–Last day to drop a course on MyBlue (no refund at this time)

April 4<sup>th</sup>–Early Registration for Summer and Fall 2022 classes begins for all currently enrolled students

April 8<sup>th</sup>–Comprehensive Exams (for graduating students) are due to the Biology Dept

April 12<sup>th</sup>–General Registration for Summer and Fall 2022 classes begins for all admitted students

April 15<sup>th</sup>–Summer 2022 graduation application opens on MyBlue

May 9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup>–Finals Week

May 13<sup>th</sup>–Commencement ceremony at 10:00 am in the Health and Sports Center

May 16<sup>th</sup>–Summer 2022 term begin

May 17<sup>th</sup>–Deadline for faculty to submit final grades for spring classes

**Students planning to graduate this May 2022 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 spring graduation is **February 1<sup>st</sup>**. 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 13<sup>th</sup> in the Health and Sports Center. Please consider making the trip to Kearney to walk in graduation and if you do, please let the Biology Department know.