



April 8, 2024

Hello GDPE Community,

It's a busy time of the year. Many GDPE students are gearing up for the next field season while others are defending their theses/dissertations. With regard to the latter, there was a recent editorial in the journal *Nature* lamenting that dissertations and their assessment have not changed much since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-00718-0>). I disagree, but rather than quibble about this editorial, let's revisit the purpose of a dissertation. I share the following with students that take one of the classes I teach.

At its core, the dissertation is a document that both demonstrates and follows the accepted principles and practices of scholarship. It provides the graduate committee evidence, in a well-written and internally consistent document, of a student's ability to (1) plan and execute original and substantive research, (2) rigorously analyze the results, (3) interpret them in the broader context of the field, and (4) logically argue a coherent thesis (a hypothetical proposition or point of view) that is defensible, and ultimately, provides new knowledge and understanding for the discipline.

My impression is that GDPE graduate students do a great job of producing modern dissertations (and theses). And that by doing so, they are not completing some outdated requirement. They are instead demonstrating their mastery of a discipline (ecology) and the process by which new ecological knowledge is created. Who could quibble with that?

Have a great week.

Alan Knapp  
Your GDPE Senior Ecologist

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**A Note About the Digest:** *Since this digest comes from a non-CSU email address, you may need to click "trust content from this external sender" in Outlook to see images, or you could be missing important information each week!*



GDPE Event Calendar

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## DEADLINES

### **GDPE Deadlines**

**April 26** - Fall 2024 GDPE Assistantship Applications [due](#)

## GDPE EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



**AIDA CUNI-SANCHEZ**

Norwegian University of Life Sciences  
Associate Professor  
International Environment & Development Studies

*"Taking the pulse of tropical forests"*

17 April 2024 4:00pm LSC University Ballroom

Tea and Cookies at 3:30pm  
Reception at 5:00pm

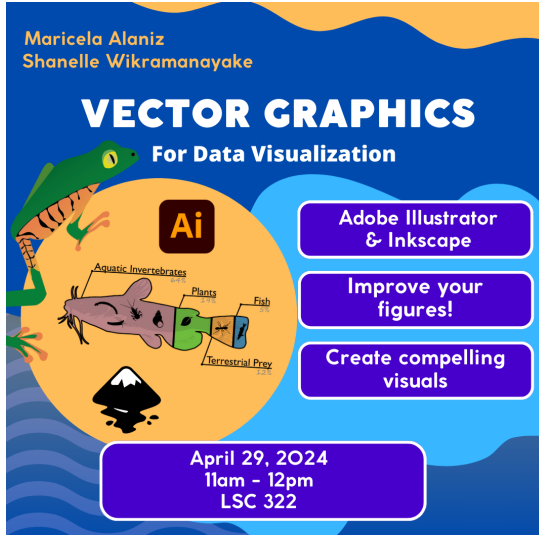
### Distinguished Ecologist Seminar

Our Rising Star Distinguished Ecologist, Dr. Aida Cuni-Sanchez, will be giving her seminar "Taking the pulse of tropical forests" on Wednesday, **April 17th at 4:00pm** in the LSC University Ballroom.

Dr. Cuni-Sanchez is an Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences where she researches tropical forest carbon dynamics, social-ecological systems, and sustainable forest development under climate change in Africa. **You can sign up to meet with Aida during her visit [here!](#)**

### GDPE Science Communication Workshop

Join GDPE for this science communication workshop led by two of our very own graduate students, Maricela Alaniz and Shanelle Wikramanayake! In this workshop, you will learn how to improve your data visualization skills using vector graphics software including Inkscape (free & open source) and Adobe Illustrator (paid subscription). We'll be covering how to clean up your plots quickly, make great conceptual figures, and improve graphics made in R. Additionally, you will learn about Scalable Vector Graphics (.svg) files, how to make your own clipart, and the basics of copyrighted vs. public domain images. **April 29 from 11am - 12pm in LSC 322.**



Maricela Alaniz  
Shanelle Wikramanayake

## VECTOR GRAPHICS

For Data Visualization

**Ai**

Aquatic Invertebrates  
Plants  
Fish  
Terrestrial Prey

Adobe Illustrator & Inkscape

Improve your figures!


Create compelling visuals

April 29, 2024  
11am - 12pm  
LSC 322

## CSU EVENTS

### Being in the Field Workshop Series (Sponsored by SoGES)

Being in the field is an integral part of sustainability and environmental sciences, yet are such experiences inclusive? If so, which elements are critical to inspiring persistence for underrepresented groups? This learning experience seeks faculty, researchers, undergraduate students, and graduate students involved in or interested in fieldwork. In this workshop, we will focus on how to respond to biases and microaggressions in the field. For those now submitting Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork Plans for NSF, this workshop will present some ideas on how to address the



WORKSHOP SERIES

## BEING IN THE FIELD

Undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, researchers, lab groups, and all individuals involved in or interested in fieldwork are encouraged to attend the second part of our workshop series focusing on **diversity** and **inclusion** in field work! This workshop will focus on initiating and navigating dialogue and responses to biases and microaggressions in the field.

**LUNCH PROVIDED!**

**APRIL 12**  
11:30AM-1:30PM  
LOCATION TBD

REGISTER HERE

Attendance at the Fall 2023 Workshop **not** required to attend!

SAIF requirements. [Register](#) early to be counted for lunch!

Date & Time: **Friday, April 12th** from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

Location: On campus (location TBD)

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### **Science Communication Networking Fair**

The CSU Science Communication Club has organized a networking fair **today from 4-6 pm** in LSC Room 304-06. Come meet professionals in the field of science communication, grab some snacks and network!



### **GDPE's Laura Lukens awarded NSF GRFP**

Laura Lukens, a GDPE student in the [Mola Lab](#), was recently awarded an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship! Laura studies how anthropogenic change influences population dynamics and species interactions, with a focus on endangered species conservation. Great job, Laura!



Share your Recent Publication or Research Highlight

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## **JOBS, GRANTS, & INTERNSHIPS**

### **Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Global Change Biology at the University of Michigan**

The University of Michigan Institute for Global Change Biology (UM-IGCB) in collaboration with the Utah State University (USU) is seeking a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to lead an exciting project assessing the causes and consequences of lagging ecological community responses to climate change. The successful candidate will be co-advised by Drs. Kai Zhu and Peter Reich (UM-IGCB) and interact closely with Dr. Peter Adler (USU). The candidate will analyze and synthesize global change experiments and observations, with a focus on the plant communities and ecosystem acclimation to climate change. [Click here](#) for more details and to apply.

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### **GS-12 Perm Computer Scientist (Software Engineer)**

This position will provide support for ongoing projects in the Ecoinformatics & Wildlife Technology

Branch (ECOTECH). The major duties of the position are listed below: Designs complex software systems: interfaces and client facing websites and tools in open-source web environment. Designs and develops automated information processing algorithms using advanced computer science methods, techniques, and technologies to resolve complex information transformation challenges. Develops, reviews, and maintains software systems while working as part of an agile scientific software development team using a variety of frameworks and languages including Angular, React, Python, Django, JavaScript, SQL, and Typescript. For more details, see the job listing [here](#).

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### **Ecologist / Research Program Manager at Rocky Mountain National Park**

For more details, check the USA Jobs [listing here](#). Duties include co-producing various research projects, managing research permitting process, data analysis, public outreach, volunteer organization, training, and implementation of data collection events. Process and analyze complex datasets and geospatial data using statistical programming software and ArcGIS. GS 9 - 11 pay grades. Government housing may be available on a temporary or permanent basis.

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### **Seeking post-doc for tropical forest modeling**

The [Xu Lab at Cornell University](#) is seeking a motivated post-doc for predicting tropical forest dynamics. Two years' funding (with potential of further renewal) will be provided and there are no hard constraints on research topics (flexible based on applicants' research experience and interests). Candidate research topics include but not limited to (1) sensitivity of tropical forest growth/mortality to long-term climate change; (2) tropical forest ecohydrological dynamics under changing hydroclimates; and (3) novel schemes to consider functional diversity in vegetation models. Experiences with process-based/theoretical modeling and/or spatial analysis of remote sensing data are preferred. [Apply here](#).

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### **Two summer job opportunities: Teaching Assistant for Ecosystem Field Studies**

Our 21-day condensed field study courses in Colorado & the Caribbean are rewarding & rigorous hands-on learning opportunities. [Learn more here](#). To apply, email cover letter & resume/CV to Steve Johnson, Course Director at [steve@ecofs.org](mailto:steve@ecofs.org)

1. Caribbean Ecosystem Field Studies: Course dates are May 22 - June 11, 2024. (TA must arrive in Cancun, Mexico on May 20.)
  2. Colorado Ecosystem Field Studies: Course dates are July 19 - August 8, 2024 . (TA must arrive in Boulder CO on July 18.)
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### **Applications Open for the Rocky Mountain National Park Scholar-In-Residence Program**

The Scholar-in-Residence Program allows a selected scholarly and scientific expert to live and conduct research in Estes Park, Colorado near RMNP. Financial support gives scholars the opportunity to be creative, productive, and successful in conducting research or observations that are uniquely connected to the park. The selected Scholar also works closely with RMC's Field Institute and the Continental Divide Research Learning Center to connect their research to the community and educational programming of RMNP. **The application deadline is April 15**. Click [here](#) for details.

Submit a Job Announcement

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**GDPE Social Listserv** - Please make sure to sign up [here](#) for the GDPE Social Listserv to keep up with all the fun events we have planned this year!

**GDPE Student Teams Channel** - Join our Teams Channel [here](#) for all GDPE-related questions, ideas, and discussions with fellow students.

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Submit Photos

We want your photos! What are you up to, how is your field and lab work? Share them with us here.



**GRADUATE DEGREE  
PROGRAM IN ECOLOGY**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



CSU Graduate Degree Program in Ecology | Colorado State University, Johnson Hall rm 102,  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1021

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