

Dennis D. Tarasi

Assistant Professor of Biology
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Employment

2018-Present

Assistant Professor of Biology
St. Ambrose University, IA
Department of Biology

2016-2018

Assistant Professor of Ecology
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, IN
Department of Sciences and Mathematics

Education

2016

PhD, Ecology

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC
Robert K. Peet, Faculty Advisor

Thesis: Community interactions and impacts of exotic plant species in the southeastern United States

2011

MA, Education

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO
Unified Science, Endorsement in Biology

2010

BS, Biology (Cum Laude)

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO
Minor in Chemistry

Teaching Experience

Instructor

2018-Present

SAU Courses:

Campus Courses: Environmental Science (*introductory course for environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum*), Principles of Biology (*introductory course for allied health sciences majors*), Biological Literature and Communication (*upper level research methods course for majors-in development*)

Online Course: Environmental Science (*introductory course for environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum- in development*)

2016-2018

SMWC Courses:

Campus Courses: Ecological Math Modeling (*upper level course for mathematics and environmental science majors*), Applications of Environmental Science (*upper level course for Biology and environmental*

science majors), Ecology (*upper level course for Biology and environmental science majors*), Sustainability capstone (*interdisciplinary senior-level course for students of all majors*), Principles of Biology (*introductory majors sequence*), Integrative Science I & II (*science sequence for education majors*), Scientific Communication (*undergraduate research methods sequence*)

Online Courses: Environmental Concerns (*required course for humanities majors*), Sustainability Capstone (*interdisciplinary senior-level course for students of all majors*), Biology: Unity and Diversity (*non-majors introductory biology*), Integrative Science II (*science sequence for education majors*)

- 2013-2014 Environmental Biology Instructor,
Durham Technical Community College, Durham, NC
Introductory non-majors course; developed discussion-centered curriculum, designed and implemented inquiry-based laboratory exercises, created formative and summative assessments, developed academic writing assignment
- Teaching Assistant**
2015-2016 **Head Teaching Assistant:** Human Anatomy and Physiology Lab,
UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
Developed inquiry-based course curriculum, organized 20+ sections with 500+ students, created formal assessments, advised students
- 2013-2016 **Teaching Assistant/Lab Instructor:** Human Anatomy & Physiology,
UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
Provided individualized introductory lecture, guided students through inquiry-based course material, evaluated students formally and informally throughout semester
- Fall 2012 **Teaching Assistant/Recitation Instructor:** Environment and Society,
UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
Led students through critical discussions of course content, organized local case studies for students to explore, developed and evaluated academic writing assignment
- Research Mentor**
2017-18 Jacklyn McClain, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (Senior Thesis)
2016-17 Amanda Phillips, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (Senior Thesis)
2015 Taek Lee, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Jessica Richmond, post-graduate with Catawba Lands Conservancy
2014 Victoria Millsap, Davidson College (Senior Honor's Thesis)
Daniel Tarasi, University of Northern Iowa
Shakira Marshall, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Braedon Shelton, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Academic Publications

- 2017 **Tarasi, D.D.** & R.K. Peet. The native-exotic species richness relationship varies with spatial grain of measurement and environmental conditions. *Ecology* doi: 10.1002/ecy.2028
- Hakkenberg, C.R., **D.D. Tarasi**, & R.K. Peet. Community/Continuum. *International Encyclopedia of Geography*.

Academic Leadership and Service

- 2016-2017 **Chair**, Greening the Woods Committee, SMWC
- Board President**, Ouabache Land Conservancy
- Member, Aspire Higher Strategic Plan Academic Committee, SMWC
- Member, Curriculum and General Studies Committee, SMWC
- Chair**, Experiential Learning Working Group, SMWC
- Advisor**, Sustainability Club, SMWC
- Organizer and Emcee, Sustainability Summit at SMWC
- Co-Organizer, TWIST/Oakley Science Camp for Middle Students, SMWC, June 2017
- Judge, Indiana State Junior Science and Humanities Symposia, SMWC, March 2017
- 2015-2016 **Co-Organizer**, “Educating the Interdisciplinary Ecologist -- assessing educational ecosystems to help ecologists succeed, get hired, and push boundaries”, Workshop at Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD.
- 2013-2015 **President**, Graduate Ecology and Environment Association, Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology, UNC-Chapel Hill.
- 2014-2015 **Chair**, Seminar Committee, Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology, UNC-Chapel Hill.
- 2012-2016 **Chair**, Student Research Symposium Organization Committee, Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Scientific Outreach and Community Relations

- 2017 [Terre Haute Tribune Star: Ouabache Land Conservancy Cleanup](#)
- [Terre Haute Tribune Star: Pollinator Garden and Trayless Initiatives](#)
- [SMWC Social Media: Passive Solar Greenhouse at White Violet Center](#)
- Steering Committee, Emily’s Walk Fundraiser for Wabashiki Fish and Wildlife Area, West Terre Haute, IN

Hiring Committee, Otter Creek Watershed Coordinator Position, Ouabache Land Conservancy and IN Department of Environmental Management

- 2015 Invasive Species Removal Project Coordinator, Directed Undergraduate & Adult Volunteers for a Campus Conservation Project, UNC-Chapel Hill
- 2014 Summer Conservation Steward, Redlair Farm and Forest, N.C. Plant Conservation Preserve, Gaston County, NC.

Awards and Honors

- 2017 Club Advisor of the Year (Sustainability Club), Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
- Wabash Valley Community Foundation Grant, Development of Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve, Ouabache Land Conservancy, \$1000
- 2016 Odum Award for Best Student Oral Presentation in Ecology, Association of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting
- BSA Award for Best Student Oral Presentation in Plant Biology, Association of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting
- 2015 Future Faculty Fellowship, Training Program for Graduate Students, UNC Center for Faculty Excellence, Chapel Hill, NC
- Impact Award, Graduate Research Award for Work Directly Benefitting North Carolina, UNC Graduate School, Chapel Hill, NC

Continuing Education and Professional Development

- 2017 "Innovations in Invasive Species Management." Invasive Plant Control Workshop and Conference. Nashville, TN, 13-15 Dec 2017.
- "Sustainability Across the Curriculum." Association for the Advancement of Higher Education Online Workshop. June-July 2017.
- "Classroom to Career: Integrating Career Ready Skills Into Course Curriculum." Indiana Commission for Higher Education Faculty Leadership Conference. Indianapolis, IN, 16 Feb 2017.
- 2016 "A Practical Workshop on Proposal Development." Independent Colleges of Indiana Workshop. Indianapolis, IN. 9 Nov 2016.

Selected Academic Presentations and Seminars

- 2017 **Invited Seminar**, Indiana State University Department of Biology Seminar Series. Community interactions and impacts of exotic plant species in the southeastern United States. 5 September 2017. Terre Haute, IN.
- 2016 Tarasi, D.D. Biotic and abiotic community changes with species invasions. Association of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting. 1 April 2016. Concord, NC.

2015 **Invited Seminar**, Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology Seminar Series. Educating the Interdisciplinary Ecologist: Benefits, Challenges and Future Directions for CEE and Similar Graduate Programs Across the Country. 22 October 2015. Chapel Hill, NC.

Invited Seminar, Davidson College Biology Department Seminar Series. Invaders in our midst: exotic plant species dominance and its impacts in N.C. forests. 24 March 2015.

Tarasi, D.D. and R.K. Peet. Plant species invasion alters the composition and structure of invaded communities. Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting. 10 Aug 2015. Baltimore, MD.

Tarasi, D.D. Invaded communities differ in composition and structure from uninvaded communities. NC Invasive Plant Council/SE Exotic Plant Pest Council Joint Meeting. 28 May 2015. Chapel Hill, NC.

Tarasi, D.D. Invaded communities differ in composition and structure from uninvaded communities. Association of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting. 2 April 2015. Chattanooga, TN.

Professional Membership and Certifications

2015 Safe Zone Certification, UNC LGBTQ Center
 Certificate, "Introduction to Citizen Science: Explorations in Educational Settings", Citizen Science Academy

2011-Present Member, Ecological Society of America