

Dennis D. Tarasi

Associate Professor of Biology
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Employment

2018-Present St. Ambrose University, IA
Department of Biology

2022- Present Associate Professor of Biology
2018-2022 Assistant Professor of Biology

2016-2018 Assistant Professor of Ecology
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, IN
Department of Sciences and Mathematics

Education

2016 **Ph.D., 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 **M.A., Education**
Truman State University, Kirksville, MO
Unified Science, Endorsement in Biology

2010 **B.S., Biology (Cum Laude)**
Truman State University, Kirksville, MO
Minor in Chemistry

Teaching Experience

Instructor

2018-Present St. Ambrose University (SAU):
Campus Courses:
General Biology I and II (*introductory courses for biology & exercise
science majors*)
Ecology (*upper level course for biology majors*)
Environmental Science (*introductory course for biology minors,
environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum*)
Principles of Biology (*introductory course for health sciences majors*)
Biological Literature and Communication (*upper level research methods
course for majors*)
Climate Change and Human Health (*introductory course for biology
minors, environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum*)
Biological Research I and II (*independent research advising for biology
majors*)

Honors Research Project (*independent research advising for students in Honors Program*)

Environmental Studies Capstone (*internship supervision for environmental studies minors*)

Online Course:

Environmental Science (*introductory course for biology minors, environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum*)

Research Mentor

2022	Jaylon Foster, SAU (Undergraduate Summer Research Institute; USRI) Nathan Mirr, SAU (USRI)
2020-22	Andrew Powell, SAU (Senior Thesis and USRI)
2021-22	Rylie Danner, SAU (USRI) Jacob Le, SAU (USRI)
2020-21	Noah Hoogestraat, SAU (Senior Thesis)
2020	Alyssa Keene, SAU (Honor's Thesis) Jena Mogenis, SAU (USRI)
2017-18	Jacklyn McClain, SMWC (Senior Thesis)
2016-17	Amanda Phillips, SMWC (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

2022	Powell, A.L. & D.D. Tarasi . A Predictive Model of the Abiotic Conditions Preferred by Three Major Invasive Prairie Plant Species. <i>Prairie Naturalist</i> (in review).
2020	Tarasi, D.D. An Analysis of Student Makeup Exam Results and Performance in Undergraduate Biology Courses. <i>The American Biology Teacher</i> doi: 10.1525/abt.2020.82.5.308 Hakkenberg, C.R., D.D. Tarasi , S.C. Cushman & R.K. Peet. Community/Continuum. <i>International Encyclopedia of Geography (2nd Edition)</i> .
2017	Tarasi, D.D. & R.K. Peet. The native-exotic species richness relationship varies with spatial grain of measurement and environmental conditions. <i>Ecology</i> doi: 10.1002/ecy.2028 Hakkenberg, C.R., D.D. Tarasi , & R.K. Peet. Community/Continuum. <i>International Encyclopedia of Geography</i> .

Academic Leadership and Community Engagement

2022-Present	Co-Chair, Faculty Development Committee, SAU
	Member, Campus Master Plan Steering Committee, SAU
	Member, Learning Philosophy and General Education Task Force, SAU
	Member and SAU Representative, Investing in an Inclusive Quad City Environmental Movement Committee, Walton Family Foundation
2020-Present	Co-Chair, Sustainability Committee, SAU
	Co-Program Director, Environmental Studies Minor, SAU
	Chapter Reviewer for Textbooks (incl. <i>Biology Now</i> and <i>Human Health and the Climate Crisis</i>)
	Volunteer Coordinator, Explore STEAM Student Event, SAU
2019-Present	Member, Scott County Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Steering Committee, Scott County, IA
	Member, Undergraduate Scholars Conference Planning Committee, SAU
	Peer Reviewer, <i>Conservation Biology</i> , <i>Sustainability</i> and <i>Forests</i>
	Member, Introduce a Kid to STEAM Planning Committee, SAU
2018-Present	Co-Advisor, Green Life Student Organization, SAU
2021-2022	Chair-Elect, Faculty Development Committee, SAU
	Member, Admissions Audit Focus Group, SAU
2020-2021	Organizer, “Changing Climates: From Rising Seas to Societal Needs” Campus Theme, SAU College of Arts and Sciences
	Member, Student Leadership Scholarship Work Group, SAU
2019-2020	Co-Organizer, Commuter Student Focus Group, SAU
2016-2018	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.

Awards and Honors

2011-2022 Funding Support for Campus Sustainability Events and Activities from Catholic Climate Covenant, Quad Cities Community Foundation, River Action, and Prairie Oaks Farm

2021-2024 Stoffel Fund for Excellence in Scientific Inquiry, Endowed Research Grant, SAU

2020-Present Undergraduate Summer Research Institute, Endowed Research Grant, SAU

2021 Invited Presentation and College of Arts and Sciences Representative, SAU Board of Trustees Meeting, Student Research Initiatives

Bee Campus USA Certification, SAU (Xerces Society)

2017 Club Advisor of the Year (Sustainability Club), SMWC

Wabash Valley Community Foundation Grant, Development of Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve, Ouabache Land Conservancy

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

2022 Global Conference on Sustainability in Higher Education, Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Oct-Nov 2022.

“Thinking Ahead: A Tale of Joining Environmental and Social Justice Forces for a Stronger Future,” Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Workshop, 4 May 2022.

“Facilitating Student-Driven Interventions for Sustainable Behavior Change,” Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Workshop, 7 April 2022.

“Universities in the Face of Climate Change and Sustainability,” Inter-University Sustainable Development Research Programme Workshop, 2 Feb 2022.

“Energy Star Certification and Tools for Higher Education Institutions, EPA Online Workshop, 13 Jan 2022.

2019 “Protecting Human Research Participants” Online Training Certificate

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.

2015 “Introduction to Citizen Science: Explorations in Educational Settings” Certificate, Citizen Science Academy

Selected Academic Presentations and Seminars

2022 **Invited Seminar**, Climate Change and Impacts on the Midwest, St. Anthony’s Church Book Club. 24 October 2022. Davenport, IA

2021 **Invited Seminar**, Student Research Initiatives and Mentorship, St. Ambrose University Board of Trustees Fall Meeting. 5 October 2021. Davenport, IA

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. (Best Oral Presentation Award)

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

2021-Present	Member, Upper Midwest Association for Campus Sustainability
2019-Present	Member, National Association of Biology Teachers Member, The Nature Conservancy, Quad Cities Botanical Center and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
2011-Present	Member, Ecological Society of America
2015	Safe Zone Certification, UNC LGBTQ Center