

Dennis D. Tarasi

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Education

2016 **Ph.D., Ecology (Interdisciplinary Curriculum for Environment and 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; Unified Science, Endorsement in Biology**

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO

2010 **B.S., Biology (Cum Laude); Minor in Chemistry**

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO

Employment and Academic Leadership

2018-Present **St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA (SAU)**

2022-Present Associate Professor of Biology

2020-Present Founding Co-Chair, Campus Sustainability Committee

2018-Present Co-Director, Environmental Studies Minor

2018-Present Co-Advisor, Green Life Student Environmental Club

2022-Present Chair-Elect, Biology Department

2022-Present Co-Chair, Faculty Development Committee

2018-2022 Assistant Professor of Biology

2016-2018 **Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, Terre Haute, IN (SMWC)**

Assistant Professor of Ecology

Chair, Greening the Woods Campus Sustainability Committee

Director, Environmental Science Major

Advisor, Student Sustainability Club

Chair, Experiential Learning Working Group

Organizer and Emcee, Sustainability Summit

Academic Service and Community Engagement

2022-Present Member, Campus Master Plan Steering Committee, SAU

Member, Learning Philosophy and General Education Revision Task Force, SAU

Member and SAU Representative, Investing in an Inclusive Quad City Environmental
Movement Committee, Walton Family Foundation

2021- Present Leadership Team, Earth Day Celebration (Spring Campus and Community Event),
partnering with NAACP, Waste Commission of Iowa, Partners of Scott County
Watersheds, QC Botanical Center, Niabi Zoo, and others

Leadership Team, Sustainability Fest (Fall Campus and Community Celebration),
partnering with Partners of Scott County Watersheds, Diocese of Davenport, QC
Farmer's Market Vendors, and others

2020-Present Volunteer Coordinator, Explore STEAM Student Event, SAU
Reviewer for Textbooks (incl. *Biology Now & Human Health and the Climate Crisis*)

2019-Present Member, Scott County Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Steering Committee, Scott County, IA
Peer Reviewer, *Conservation Biology, Sustainability and Forests*

2023 Member, Director of Student Success Hiring Committee, SAU
SAU Representative, Quad Cities Innovation Summit, SAU

2021-22 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

2018-2022 Member, Undergraduate Scholars Conference Planning Committee, SAU

2016-2018 Board President or Member, Ouabache Land Conservancy
Member, Aspire Higher Strategic Plan Academic Committee, SMWC
Member, Curriculum and General Studies Committee, SMWC

2017 Co-Organizer, TWIST/Oakley Science Camp for Middle Students, SMWC
Judge, Indiana State Junior Science and Humanities Symposia, SMWC

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.

Institutional Sustainability Grants and Certifications

2022-Present External Grant: Sustainability Round Table Series, Quad Cities Community Foundation
Schweibert Fund for Environmental Studies, SAU
External Grant: Quad Cities Environmental Film Series, River Action, SAU
External Grant: Campus Water Initiatives, Catholic Climate Covenant, SAU

2021- Present Bee Campus USA Certification, SAU (Xerces Society)
Upper Midwest Association for Campus Sustainability, SAU Representative

2020- Present External Grant: Lewis Hall Greenhouse, Private Memorial Fund, SAU

2017 External Grant: Development of Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve, Wabash Valley
Community Foundation Grant, SMWC
External Grant: Pollinator Garden Installation, Duke Energy, SMWC

Individual Awards and Honors

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

- 2023 Council of Independent Colleges, Chairs and Directors Leadership Workshop, Des Moines, IA, March 2023
- 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 Ed. Faculty Leadership Conference. Indianapolis. 16 Feb 2017.

- 2016 A Practical Workshop on Proposal Development, Independent Colleges of Indiana Workshop. Indianapolis. 9 Nov 2016.
- 2015 Introduction to Citizen Science: Explorations in Educational Settings, Certificate, Citizen Science Academy
- Safe Zone Certification, UNC (Renewed in 2019 at SAU)

Teaching Experience

Instructor

2018-Present

St. Ambrose University (SAU):

Campus Courses:

Climate Change and Human Health (*introductory course for biology minors, environmental studies minors and liberal arts curriculum*)

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

Environmental Studies Capstone (*for environmental studies minors*)

Ecology (*upper level course for biology majors*)

Biological Literature and Communication (*upper level research methods majors course*)

Biological Research I and II (*independent research advising for biology majors*)

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

General Biology I and II (*introductory courses for biology & exercise science majors*)

Principles of Biology (*introductory course for health sciences majors*)

Online Course:

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

2016-2018

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC)

Campus Courses:

Sustainability Capstone (*interdisciplinary senior-level course for all majors*)

Applications of Environmental Science (*upper level course for biology and environmental science majors*)

Ecological Math Modeling (*upper level course for mathematics and environmental science majors*)

Ecology (*upper level course for biology and environmental science majors*)

Principles of Biology (*introductory majors sequence*)

Integrative Science I & II (*science sequence for education majors*)

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

Durham Technical Community College, Durham, NC

Environmental Biology (*introductory non-majors course*)

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 and USRI)

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. (student author) & D.D. Tarasi. A Predictive Model of the Abiotic Conditions Preferred by Three Major Invasive Prairie Plant Species. *Prairie Naturalist* (in review).

2020 Tarasi, D.D. An Analysis of Student Makeup Exam Results and Performance in Undergraduate Biology Courses. *The American Biology Teacher* doi: 10.1525/abt.2020.82.5.308

Hakkenberg, C.R., D.D. Tarasi, S.C. Cushman & R.K. Peet. Community/Continuum. *International Encyclopedia of Geography (2nd Edition)*.

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*.

Selected Academic Presentations and Seminars

2023 Invited Seminar, Environmental Justice, St. John Vianney Parish. 30 March 2023. Bettendorf, IA

2022 Invited Seminar, Climate Change and Impacts on the Midwest, St. Anthony's Parish. 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

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