University of Alaska Fairbanks Climate Scholars Program Intensives

provide students from all disciplines with experiences that integrate classroom knowledge with experiences away from campus in field settings that both provide site specific opportunities for experiential learning, as well as an opportunity to experience some very special places with dedicated faculty as guides. All CSP students are encouraged to participate in at least one Intensive during their undergraduate studies.*

*PREREQUISITES REQUIRED FOR ELIGIBILITY
ALL INTENSIVES ARE 2 CREDITS UAF COURSES AND GRADED P/F
LIMITED TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE
What: This intensive will provide students and up to six faculty members, all engaged in different disciplines, with an opportunity to tackle a real-world aspect of the wicked problem of climate change in an explicitly transdisciplinary mode. This innovative approach, hip-waders and mosquito nets included, will focus on a pre-identified problem space to investigate at this northern latitudes field site. Equal emphasis will be placed on the contributions of social science, natural science and humanities disciplines deliberately disrupting the common roles played by social science and humanities as translators of natural science projects rather than contributors of meaningful and actionable insights in their own rights. Students who complete this intensive will be better equipped to communicate and collaborate to solve problems using the aggregate energy and knowledge of multiple participants.

Requirements: Toolik Research Station requires all visitors to have 5-8 day quarantine and tested for COVID prior to their arrival at the site. It will be possible to isolate together in ‘pods’. Please contact Dr. Alexander for details.

Program Leaders: Dr. Elizabeth Alexander (Climate Scholars), Dr. Mark Nuttall (Professor and Henry Marshall Tory Chair of Anthropology at University of Alberta), Dr. Mary Beth Leigh (Institute of Arctic Biology), Madera Mason (Assistant Director eCampus)

Where: The Toolik Field Station’s mission is to understand the Arctic in a global context is a research station operated and managed by the Institute of Arctic Biology at UAF located at mile 284.5 of the Dalton Highway, 370 miles north of Fairbanks. It is an internationally recognized site of scientific research where a diverse procession of scientists from across the globe conduct their research.
What: Find your voice in the climate movement with this summer intensive focused on climate change communication and advocacy. The serene and rugged Tidelines Institute Inian Islands campus provides an unparalleled setting for students to learn about and reflect on the societal and cultural transformations that are needed to address the climate crisis. The campus gives students an opportunity to directly engage in living within a smaller ecological personal footprint, exploring what’s possible in micro renewable energy, wild foods gathering, and small-scale agricultural and composting systems. Through challenging outdoor activities and opportunities for quiet reflection, students will have space to interrogate, reflect, and discuss their relationship to the natural world. Classroom instruction and activities will focus on the history of anthropogenic climate change advocacy and engagement; ability to connect with different audiences; tactics for effective advocacy; and exercises to increase student confidence to initiate and tell meaningful, motivating personal stories to bring others into their work on climate change. Students who complete this intensive will be better equipped to actively participate in climate action, communication, and advocacy.

Where: Tidelines Institute’s Inian Islands Campus is a field school that occupies a five-acre historic homestead on a small island near the Gulf of Alaska. The campus is surrounded by a rich ecosystem of pristine temperate rainforest and rich marine life. It is accessible only by boat or charter plane from Juneau, Alaska. There is no permanent community on the island and the only persons present in addition to our students and faculty will be the Tidelines Institute staff and volunteers.

Requirements: Tidelines Institute requires all participants to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

Costs: Students are responsible for buying commercial airfare to and from Juneau, Alaska. Other costs may include rental of a dry suit for sea kayaking, but this is to be determined.

Program Leaders: Dr. Kristin Timm (UAF IARC) and Dr. Zach Brown (Tidelines Inst. Co-Executive Director)
What: Experience climate change field research at ground zero. In Alaska, rapidly warming temperatures are thawing permafrost, changing vegetation, and increasing wildfires at unprecedented rates. This 8-day research program immerses students in research on the impacts of climate change. Students will gain experience in ecological fieldwork, lab procedures, and data analysis and design their own research project alongside professional climate change scientists. All students will leave with a completed project and completed project poster suitable for presentation at a professional science conference. The intensive includes additional field excursions to points of ecological interest and climate change research, such as the Permafrost Tunnel research site, a working reindeer farm, a geothermal energy facility, and Denali National Park.

Requirements: Prerequisites do not need to be completed to apply.

Program Leaders: Dr. Katie Spellman (UAF IARC) and Dr. Elena Sparrow (UAF IARC) and 4 co-instructors from climate change science fields

Where: The first 5 days of the intensive will be located at the Bonanza Creek Long Term Ecological Research (BNZ LTER) program sites and the labs on the UAF campus. Bonanza Creek LTER operates several sites that span a range of boreal forest and watershed conditions just outside of the Fairbanks area. Sites include areas recently burned by wildfire, sites with different vegetation types and environmental conditions, and sites with different degrees of wetland or permafrost change, making it perfect for almost any boreal forest change question we can cook up in this intensive. We will spend two and a half days exploring Denali National Park and applying our new research findings in a boreal forest region at higher elevation.