

The Student Alumni
Connection Edition



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Director's Letter: Moving Forward



Greetings, and welcome to the Fall-09 edition of Crossroads. Since our last edition, the Program in the Environment (PitE) has continued to expand in student, staff, and faculty numbers. As of November 16th, PitE has 405 declared concentrators and minors, which is up 28% from last fall, and marks the highest fall enrollment in the program's eight year history.

In anticipation of this growing trend, PitE began to expand the numbers of jointly appointed faculty. I would like to welcome Richard Norton (Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning) who joined PitE in September. Joint appointments for Professors Barry Rabe (Ford School of Public Policy), Jeremy Semrau (College of Engineering) and Michaela Zint (SNRE) are also working their way through the approval process. All

are teaching environment courses this year. They join Professors Ben Vander Pluijm (LSA-Geological Science), Rita Loch-Carusio (School of Public Health), Paul Webb (SNRE and LSA-Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) and me (LSA-Geological Sciences) as PitE Faculty Members. Also new to the program is Dr. Anne Axel, who holds the position of Lecturer III. Dr. Axel is jointly appointed in the Department of English Language and Literature in LSA. Professor Zint will serve as Interim Associate Director of PitE during Paul Webb's leave in the W-10 semester.

New to the PitE staff this year are Shante Galloway (Program Secretary) and Jaime Langdon (Concentration Advisor). Congratulations are in order for all of the PitE staff, who recently received the F-09 LSA Spotlight Award for their achievements.

I would like to thank all those alumni and friends who have contributed to our scholarship funds to help support our students as they fulfill their field experience requirement. These gifts make it possible for our students to pursue enriching environmental experiences throughout the country and abroad. This support is both much appreciated and, in light of our growing numbers, much needed.

During this period of rapid expansion, we continue to increase the number and scope of academic and social events for students, which I invite you to read about in this edition of Crossroads.

Respectfully,

Robert M. Owen



photo by : Rick Richter

PitE Staff Recognized by LSA Spotlight Staff

The growing PitE staff is committed to serving the needs of their students. On November 23 the PitE staff was recognized by the College of Literature, Sciences, and the Arts for their efforts in serving our students.

The LSA Spotlight recognizes and celebrates achievements and contributions staff make to the successful operation of the college. An article and picture of the PitE staff can found at: <https://lsa.umich.edu/facstaff/hr/spotlight/winners>.



Matt Gacioch

PitE Faculty



Barry Rabe
B.A. Carthage College, History
M.A., Ph.D. University of Chicago, Political Science
Barry Rabe is a Professor of Public Policy in the Ford School and also holds appointments in the School of Natural Resources and Environment and the Program in the Environment. He was named a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration this September. He is also a non-resident senior fellow in the Governance Studies Program at the Brookings Institution. Much of his recent research examines state and regional development of policies to reduce greenhouse gases, which has been conducted in collaboration with the Brookings Institution and the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. In 2006, Rabe became the first social scientist to receive a Climate Protection Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in recognition of his contribution to both scholarship and policy making.



Jeremy Semrau
PhD, Environmental Engineering Science, California Institute of Technology
BS, Civil Engineering, University of Texas
It is my general research goal to enhance our understanding of in situ microbial diversity and activity by developing new biochemical and molecular techniques to better monitor in situ microbial communities. This work is inherently interdisciplinary and I interact to a great degree with my colleagues in hydraulics, geostatistics, aquatic chemistry, and surface chemistry to develop new solutions to persistent problems.



Richard K. Norton
Ph.D., City and Regional Planning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
J.D. with Honors, Law Review, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
M.A., Public Policy Studies, Duke University
M.E.M., Environmental Management, Duke University
B.A. with Departmental Honors, Biology, College of Wooster
Richard K. Norton is an associate professor in the urban and regional planning program and serves as faculty coordinator for the land use and environmental planning concentration. Dr. Norton teaches and conducts research in the areas of sustainable development, environmental planning, and planning law. He is interested in local governance for land use and development management, particularly as it relates to the theory and practice of urban and regional planning for sustainable development. Prior to completing his graduate studies, he worked in professional practice as a consulting environmental policy analyst and planner in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, California.

Touching the Earth: Student Reflection of the Field Experience

Matt Gacioch (PitE '10)

PitE Peer Advisor and Soon-to-be-Alumnus Matt Gacioch shares his double field experience of a geology field course at the University's Camp Davis, in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, as well as an internship in Ann Arbor with the non-profit group, "Brewing Hope."

Unique Experiences Provided by...

Camp Davis: Learning about rock types and geologic formations in a place where I could just look around and see that geology everywhere!

Internship: Practicing hands-on organizing to help integrate action experience with synthesized knowledge gained from PitE coursework.

How These Experiences Help With Life After Graduation...

Camp Davis: Exposure to the natural science side of environmental studies fostered an increased interest in a new potential career path.

Internship: Taught me how to plan fundraising events, how to work closely with different organizations, and how create an effective business model.

Have questions for Matt about his field experience? Email him at gaciochm@umich.edu

Getting to Work:

Recent PitE Graduate Max Baker did not waste any time finding employment after graduation this past Spring 2009. Currently working in the Environmental Spatial Analysis Lab of the School of Natural Resources, Max explains how he uses his understanding from ENVIRON 309 course (entitled GIS EXPLORATIONS) in his current position. He also shares some graduate wisdom with his former classmates.



PitE: Why did you take GIS?

MB: As a PitE student with a specialization in Urban Studies, I thought it would be advantageous to familiarize myself with the different types of software related to Geographic Information Systems that I might encounter along my career path.

PitE: What did you learn in the GIS course?

MB: How to utilize and navigate through GIS software such as ArcMap, ArcCatalog and ArcGlobe, the basic and most widely used GIS applications on the market.

PitE: How are you using that information now?

MB: I am currently working in the Environmental Spatial Analysis Lab of the School of Natural Resources and Environment on the Central African Forests and Institutions Project, researching and mapping deforestation patterns in the Congo and Cameroon over the past 25 years.

PitE: What would you recommend to students who are considering, or may not be considering this course?

MB: "An understanding of GIS software is a helpful and in many ways vital skill for a student of environmental studies to have upon graduating college. Though some may imagine work involving GIS to solely take place in a computer lab, GIS research often requires extensive field research, granting one the option to work both inside and in the great outdoors."

PitE: Advice for soon to be PitE Alumni?

MB: "Never limit yourself. An understanding of the world, its problems and its solutions, does not fall within one field. Diversify your knowledge, question everything, but never take yourself too seriously. Seriously!"

Events: 09-10

February

Speaker Series: Philip Myers
Public talk about how northern migration of mammals and climate change.
Open to the Public
Reception to follow
Co-sponsored by the Exhibit Museum

March

Alumni Career Panel
PitE alumni return to campus to talk to students about life after PitE, and how to prepare for this transition.

Pizza with Professors
PitE's bi-annual academic fair which brings teaching faculty and students together over pizza to learn about upcoming environment classes

Speaker Series: Dan Esty, Yale Law School Environmental Law and Policy Program.
Co-sponsored by the Law School

April

PitE Midnight Breakfast
A study break provided for PitE students, complete with breakfast buffet and raffled prizes.

PitE Graduation Reception
A reception to honor Spring and Summer graduates. Open to graduating PitE Seniors and their family and friends.

Spring Commencement
Commencement exercises for all students graduating from the University of Michigan.

Michael G. Smith
A.B. 2006, PitE Minor



Recent Alumni Speaks Up: Alumnus Perspective on Giving

Look to higher education (and Michigan's Program in the Environment) to provide education on environmental issues to young students in our country. Working at a web startup company in San Francisco Bay Area, I don't have as much time as I would like to be directly involved with environmental causes. My monetary donations might seem to represent the fact that I'm not directly involved with these causes, but yet I still know that my dollars are helping foster environmental education for undergraduate students coming

to Michigan from the entire planet -- no matter their future plans. Despite the fact I only have a minor in environmental studies, the staff at PitE provide timely and relevant communication to all alumni, no matter the physical distance between the alumni and the University. It is truly hard to identify a program such as PitE's so immediately relevant in today's political, economic, and social issues, therefore, I know my contribution is helping advance the state of environmental education throughout the world.

**"The world is so big,
and I love all of it."**

Elena Levin,
PitE Concentrator

I want to make a difference! Enclosed in my tax-deductible gift of:
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 other: \$ _____

Please designate my gift to the Program in the Environment for:
 Barry Rabe Environmental Policy Field Experience Fund (570939)
 Field Experience (internships, study abroad) Fund (308449)
 PitE Director's Strategic Fund (308524)
 Endowed Environmental Experience Scholarship Fund (571743)
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Program in the Environment
University of Michigan
1120 Undergraduate Science Building
204 Washtenaw Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2215
734-763-5065
www.lsa.umich.edu/pite

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Thanks to the generosity of the Goldring Family Foundation, PitE is able to bring one notable environmental leader, writer, organizer or researcher to campus to present a public lecture to foster interaction among PitE students and the wider environmental community.

Goldring Family Distinguished Visiting Lecturer

This year's Goldring Family Distinguished Lecturer is Mr. Robert Whitcomb. Mr. Whitcomb, co-author of the book "Cape Wind: Celebrity, Energy, Class, Politics, and a Valiant Battle for Unobstructed Ocean Views on Nantucket Sound" will give a public talk on December 2nd, 2009 about the controversial "Cape Wind" off-shore wind farm project in Nantucket Sound. Discussants Matthew Wagner and Sally Churchill will follow up by discussing the challenges of siting wind turbine facilities in Michigan. Mr. Whitcomb will be visiting campus Dec 2nd-3rd.

Robert Whitcomb is the member secretary of the Aga Khan University Media Thinking Group, and the editor of several books. He is also the vice president and editorial-page editor of The Providence Journal. Before joining The Providence Journal, he was the financial editor of the International Herald Tribune, based in Paris; an editor and writer for

The Wall Street Journal, based in New York; and a writer for The Boston Herald Traveler and the News Journal, in Wilmington, Delaware. He has contributed to Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Weekly Standard, the New York Times, and Cape Business Magazine, among many other publications. He has twice won the first prize from the Associated Press in the AP's annual press awards for New England for editorial writing. Bob is the co-author of Cape Wind: Celebrity, Energy, Class, Politics, and a Valiant Battle for Unobstructed Ocean Views on Nantucket Sound, and for the past few years he has been writing and editing articles about the Cape Wind controversy—publishing numerous pro-and-con pieces. You can follow Mr. Whitcomb on his blog, entitled, This New England.

PitE will be co-sponsoring Mr. Whitcomb's visit with the Center for Local, State and Urban Policy in the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

