

Natural Resources Seminar
NRM 497 (1 credit)
Fall 2026

Course Information

Meeting Time: Thursday 11:30-1:30 pm
Location: Elvey Auditorium, Geophysical Institute
Course Type: seminar, hybrid delivery: in person, online synchronous

Instructor

Kate Hayes
Office: 317 O'Neil
Email: khayes23@alaska.edu

2026 Theme: Boreal Ecosystems

A department seminar series accomplishes two goals: 1) to expose faculty and students to a wide range of natural resource research that may stimulate new perspective, research directions and potential collaborations, and 2) to promote and share research within the department with visiting researchers. A seminar series works best when the entire departmental community regularly participates. This course encourages this participation, with a little extra structure to practice absorbing and synthesizing the context, evaluating the research and the delivery, and conveying your research interests and ideas to seminar speakers in a one-on-one or group context.

Date	Speaker	Affiliation	Title (can be changed later)
Aug 27	NRE Community		NRE slideshow and social. NRE students and faculty will share one slide about themselves and their research interests, 1-minute each. All are encouraged to attend. Those introducing themselves, please RSVP here .
Sept 3	TBD		
Sept 10	TBD		
Sept 17	TBD		
Sept 24	TBD		
Oct 1	TBD		
Oct 8	TBD		
Oct 15	TBD		
Oct 22	TBD		
Oct 29	TBD		

Nov 5	TBD		
Nov 12	TBD		
Nov 19	TBD		
Nov 26	No Seminar. Happy fall break!		
Dec 3	TBD		

Course policies

Each week a speaker will present their research in a ~45-minute talk, followed by ~10 minutes for questions and discussion. A different student will introduce the speaker each week. Following the seminar, there will be a one-hour meeting between students and the speaker. This is an opportunity for you to learn more about the speaker and their research, and for them to learn about you and yours.

Section **901**: in person
 Section **701**: online

The zoom link for online participation will be emailed to all students and to email lists associated with Natural Resources and Environment at UAF.

Students living in Fairbanks are asked to register for the 901 in-person section in order to enhance the interactions among lecturers and fellow students. See attendance policies below.

Course description (from the catalog). Topics in natural resources management and geography explored through readings, student presentations, group discussions and guest speakers.

Representative course readings/materials

Supplementary readings and peer-reviewed papers as assigned. *Available on Canvas.*

Student learning outcomes

- o Accurately describe the main ideas and takeaways from a range of seminar topics.
- o Interpret basic elements of scientific presentations (figures, study design, terminology).
- o Develop relevant questions that demonstrate engagement with seminar content.

Communication

We will primarily use Canvas for all class updates and course materials; please make sure your current email address is correct, and that you have your settings adjusted to receive notifications. To contact me with course-related issues or questions, please email me (Kate, khayes23@alaska.edu) - I get a lot of them, so I'll

get back to you as quickly as I can. If you email me, and I haven't responded in a few days, nudge me - I'll appreciate the reminder.

Assignments

Pre-seminar reading and reading response

Each speaker will provide us with a paper of theirs to read prior to their seminar. PDFs of each will be posted on Canvas at the beginning of the semester. To get primed for the talk, we will read each and complete a pre-seminar reading response. These will be due via Canvas, each Wednesday before the seminar (10pm). The reading response will ask you to:

1. Summarize the research question/objective/hypothesis in 1-sentence.
2. Describe the methods or approach used in 3-4 sentences.
3. Using the speaker's CV, website or google scholar, summarize the speaker's research interests in 1-2 sentences.
4. Note two ways that your own research or interests might be related to those of the speaker.
5. List three questions you had about the paper, or that you'd like to ask the speaker during the discussion.

Speaker Introductions

Each student will provide a ~1-2-minute introduction for one speaker during the semester. This will give you an opportunity to learn more about the speaker, will provide some public speaking practice and is important for making the speaker feel welcome and priming the audience for what's to come. A good introduction will focus on the strongest parts of a speaker's CV, mention a few interesting facts if you can get them, and provide some context on the speaker's professional background. Sign-up will occur in the first week of class, and you will submit a draft to me (Kate) on Wednesday prior to your introduction by 10 pm.

Post-seminar discussion

Following each seminar, there will be a students-only discussion with the speaker. This gives you a chance to connect with each speaker, and is meant to be an informal, free-form discussion about research, professional development or whatever else comes up.

Post-seminar written summaries

During the course of the semester, each student will be required to turn in one written evaluation of a talk on their choosing, due by 5 pm on the Friday following the talk. The evaluation, less than a page long, should contain the following:

- A summary of the scientific content of the seminar
- Your assessment of the speaker's effectiveness in conveying the material
- Connections between material you have learned from classes (or outside classes) with the material presented in the seminar

Class policies

How many classes can I miss?

As many as you need and as few as you possibly can. Strive for perfect attendance!

I know that's vague, so let me explain - I hope you don't miss any classes, since missing even 1 may have an effect on your learning. My goal is to make sure class is useful to you, but you also make class useful to us - your input and presence in class is valuable and the class is not as good without you there.

However, obviously, stuff happens. Life doesn't stop just because you have a class. You may get sick this term. Worse things could happen too. So there needs to be some flexibility. How much? That's hard to say. We'll figure it out together as we go.

What should I do if I miss class?

1 class: if you know you're going to miss class (your car won't start, there's 10 inches of snow in your driveway, that cough turned into the flu...), email me as quickly as you can. If it's an emergency, go deal with the emergency, and then check in with me. I don't need to see doctor's notes, you don't have to tell me why you'll be absent - I just want to make sure you're okay and have what you need to get caught up.

If you miss a seminar, you will be required to view the recording and complete a corresponding evaluation, following the format described above and in addition to the 1 you're required to submit per semester.

More than 1 week of class: Communicate with me about what's going on as soon as possible (me = Kate, khayes23@alaska.edu, 317 O'Neil). I'm not going to yell at you, judge you, or criticize you. We just need to chat to make sure you've got a plan for passing.

How much effort is expected of me?

Since this course is 1 credit pass/fail, the UA Board of Regents policy translates to 3 hours of effort total per week: 1 for the seminar and 2 for the pre- and post-seminar work. I'd encourage you to keep your pre-and post-work to within 2 hours (except when the topic is particularly relevant to your research or interests!)

How is this course graded?

Pass/fail! Passing requires 85 out of the 100 points available throughout the term. See breakdown below:

Assignments	Count	Points each	Total
Seminar Attendance	14 seminars	3	42
Pre-seminar Reading Response	14x	3	28
Speaker Introduction	1x	15	15
Seminar Evaluation	1x	15	15
Total			100

Required syllabus addendum. Go [here](#).