



ARCTIC &
NORTHERN
STUDIES


2025


ARCTIC AND NORTHERN STUDIES PROGRAM RECEPTION

*Study the circumpolar North at
America's Arctic university*


April 11, 2025
SEED Lab
Anchorage, AK

Keep in touch with us

907-474-7126 

<https://www.uaf.edu/arctic> 

uaf-northern@alaska.edu 

ArcticNorthernStudies 



Donate to the
UAF Arctic and
Northern and
Studies Program



Dear Arctic and Northern Studies Community,

Welcome! We're thrilled to host this first-ever Anchorage reception to celebrate our vibrant and growing Arctic and Northern Studies (ACNS) community. Whether you're a current student or a graduate of the program, this event is for you—a chance to reconnect, share stories, and spark new ideas.

At UAF, Arctic and Northern Studies is thriving. Our programs continue to expand and evolve in response to the world's growing focus on the North. Today, we offer a B.A. in Climate and Arctic Sustainability, an M.A. in Arctic and Northern Studies, a Graduate Certificate, and opportunities to pursue an Interdisciplinary Studies Ph.D. rooted in ACNS. Enrollment is rising, and our students are helping shape conversations about climate, culture, and geopolitics in the circumpolar Northern world.



ACNS 2025 RECEPTION

As we look ahead, we're excited to grow this network and foster stronger ties across Alaska and beyond. Thank you for being here and for being part of this community. I hope tonight is full of meaningful connections and inspiration.

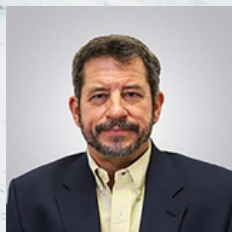
Warmly,



Brandon M. Boylan, Ph.D.

Director of Arctic and Northern Studies
Chair and Professor of Political Science
University of Alaska Fairbanks





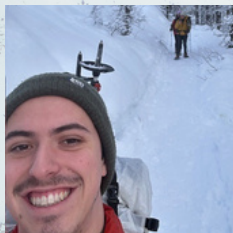
Frank Bass, student

fbass2@alaska.edu

Frank Bass is the North American editor for IEEEFA. He is an award-winning reporter and editor whose career has focused on the intersection of government, politics and business, with particular attention to the energy industry. Bass has lectured extensively on four continents and is the author of three books about using data for journalism. He is currently an ACNS graduate student and enjoys hiking with his English shepherd and camping in wilderness ranging from the Green Mountains in Vermont to the Brooks Range in Alaska.

Areas of Interest:

*Renewable energy
history*



Yannick Calvez, student

ycalvez@alaska.edu

I grew up on the west coast of the US and Canada and have a background in human geography, construction and environmental science/regulation, and land management. I currently am the Water Resources Program Manager for the State of Alaska serving the Alaska Army National Guard.

Areas of Interest:

Rural Infrastructure



Taran Christen, student

tchristen@alaska.edu

I'm Taran, I'm originally from Cape May, NJ where I worked with Cape Sea Excursions studying migration patterns and behavioral patterns of humpback whales and Atlantic bottlenose dolphins in the Delaware Bay and Mid Atlantic coastal region for 8 years. After that I was invited to apply for a position with Busch Gardens Williamsburg in VA to work in their Tours & Education department developing guest experience and Behind the Scenes tour products and summer camp programs for the park. During the COVID shutdown worked in the funeral industry and one day connected with a scientist whose research in the Arctic I had followed since I was a teenager and was encouraged to finish my degree and apply at UAF for the "Best in the Business" with anything polar science related. I am currently eyeing up graduate programs in Canada, Norway, Scotland and UAF to study how climate change is impacting animal migrations.

Areas of Interest:

*History of Polar
Exploration, Polar
terrestrial and marine
Ecology, Marine
Mammals*



Katie Craney, student

kicraney@alaska.edu

Katie Craney was named the 2025 Outstanding Graduate Student of the Year for the Arctic and Northern Studies Program.

Areas of Interest:

Art, history, and curation in the North



Gretchen Fauske, student

gwfauske@alaska.edu

A marketing-minded economic developer fueled by a passion for entrepreneurship, innovation, and small business, Gretchen is the SBDC Director of Special Programs & Strategy and has worked on a number of award-winning economic development projects, spoken at TEDx Anchorage, and was named to Alaska's Top Forty Under 40 in 2013. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from Whitman College and previously chaired the Anchorage Downtown Partnership board, Launch Alaska board, and the Municipality of Anchorage Library Advisory Board.

Areas of Interest:
Small Business and Entrepreneurship

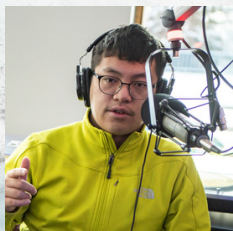


Willow-Creek Feighery, student

whfeighery@alaska.edu

ACNS Arctic Policy MA student living and working in Anchorage.

Areas of Interest:
Arctic Policy



Kevin Huo, student

khuo@alaska.edu

Kevin Huo is a ACNS Masters student focused on policy, politics, and people. In 2017, Kevin moved up to Fairbanks to attend UAF and graduated in 2021 with a degree in Anthropology and Political Science. Following his undergraduate degree he pursued the Alaska Fellowship program and then preceding that year joined the ACNS program. Kevin is a Californian turned Alaskan. Kevin is Taiwanese-American and speaks fluent Mandarin, learned Japanese, and interested in studying the Yupik language from his friends. Outside of schooling Kevin is the Student Media Coordinator at the Center for Student Engagement running a radio station, a newspaper, and the Concert Board. Beyond work and school, Kevin enjoys watching movies at the local cinema, playing Volleyball, and attending local events.

Areas of Interest:
Policy, Politics, and People



Elizabeth Klemm, alumni '22

eklemm@mac.com

Elizabeth has a background in nonprofit fundraising and is currently the Fund Development Manager for a state-wide nonprofit based in Anchorage. Originally from Texas, she moved to Alaska with her family in 2017, hoping to get away from the heat and the hurricanes. Before moving to Alaska, she worked in development at various arts organizations in Houston, Texas. She holds a B.A. in English and History from Rice University in Houston and graduated from UAF's Arctic and Northern Studies master's program in 2022.

Occupation:
Fund Development Manager



Neil Murphy, alumni '78

njm907@aol.com

After Northern Studies I entered the then WAMI Program. I worked in Bethel, Sitka, Anchorage, and Kotzebue since graduation. I am active in International Union for Circumpolar Health through our local American Society for Circumpolar Health.

Occupation:
Physician



Bateman Pierce, alumni '22

pabateman2@alaska.edu

Pierce A. Bateman is a historian who writes about Alaska, the Arctic, and the modern world. He is currently a doctoral candidate of history at the University of Oregon and works as Term Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage's History Department.

Occupation:
*Term Assistant
Professor*



Megan Pittas, student

mfpittas@alaska.edu

Areas of Interest:
*Climate, Gender,
Conflict Nexus*



Chloe Pleznac, student

cepleznac@gmail.com

Chloe was born in Alaska and raised in the woods and waters surrounding Homer. She spent the last six years working in newsrooms across the state (including KTOO in Juneau and KBBT in Homer) as the local host for NPR's weekday broadcast of Morning Edition. More recently, she began work in January as a reporter for the Homer News, which has been in circulation since 1964. In December 2024, she earned a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Alaska Southeast. She currently lives in Anchor Point with a 140 lb Mastiff named Maisie and two rescue cats, Bo and Beatrice.

Areas of Interest:
*Arctic history and
folklore*



Tim Rawson, alumni '94

TMarcellusR@gmail.com

The Northern Studies program launched my academic career. I've been at Alaska Pacific University since '98.

Occupation:

History professor



Adam Schwartz, student

aschwartz7@alaska.edu

I am Adam Schwartz and I am currently a graduate student in the Arctic and Northern Studies program. I am a full-time National Guardsman and currently serve as the Joint Forces Headquarters First Sergeant. My main focus of study is post World War II Alaska and homeland defense. My wife and I live in Eagle River and we share seven children together. The oldest is a current student at Montana State and our youngest is three months old.

Areas of Interest:

Arctic History



Kristi Swain, student

kswain@alaska.edu

Kristi Swain is an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Student with UAF's Arctic and Northern Studies Department and a Research Analyst at the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies. She previously worked in cultural resource management at Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, as a research assistant at UAF and an adjunct professor at UAA and the US Air Force Academy. She served 21 years as an intelligence and political military affairs officer in the USAF. Her career duties included Assistant Professor of History at USAFA, Policy Advisor to the US Ambassador to NATO, and Chief Strategic Analysis at NORAD/USNORTHCOM HQ.

Areas of Interest:

*History of Canadian
American military
cooperation in
Alaska, Cold War
History of Alaska*



Jus Tavcar, student

justavcar@gmail.com

I'm Jus Tavcar, a second-year MA student in Arctic and Northern Studies. Originally from Slovenia, I've been in the U.S. since 2018. Before moving to Alaska in 2023, I lived in Washington, DC, where I worked as a climate and energy policy lobbyist for a nonprofit. In my free time, I write opinion pieces on public policy, which have been published in various papers. My thesis focuses on the just energy transition in Alaska, and as I approach graduation this August, I'm actively looking for a job in the climate and energy policy field.

Areas of Interest:

*Climate and energy
policy of the
circumpolar North*

Invest in the North. Empower the Future.

The Arctic and Northern Studies program has shaped leaders, thinkers, and changemakers who understand the unique challenges and opportunities of the North. Your support ensures that future generations can continue to explore, preserve, and lead in this vital region. Whether you're an alum reflecting on the journey or a student shaping it now, every contribution helps strengthen our community, expand research, and open doors for those who follow. Join us in sustaining a program that's as bold and resilient as the North itself.

Support the next generation of Northern leaders.



Scan the QR code to make your gift, or visit engage.alaska.edu/giving-search and search for “Arctic and Northern Studies” to support the UAF Arctic and Northern Studies Program Support fund.



Honoring 50 Years of Arctic Insight

by Alison Bowen, CLA Staff Writer

Since its founding in 1975, the Arctic and Northern Studies program at UAF has brought together scholars, students, and communities to examine the dynamic realities of the Circumpolar North. Rooted in interdisciplinary inquiry and shaped by those who call the North home, the program has grown into a unique academic home for those seeking to understand—and influence—the future of the Arctic.



Read the full
article here



Professor Terrence Cole: A CLA Institution

by Mary Ehrlander and Kael Knight

For more than three decades, Dr. Terrence Cole brought history to life at UAF—arms full of books, mind brimming with stories, and heart fully invested in his students. A beloved professor, mentor, and historian, Cole's legacy stretches far beyond the classroom. He helped shape Arctic and Northern Studies, chronicled the university's own history, and inspired generations through his storytelling, scholarship, and irreverent wit. As we celebrate 50 years of Arctic insight, we also honor one of the voices who helped define it.



Read more about Cole's enduring impact—and why he believes failing a student was one of the best compliments he ever received.

Notes

