Enhancing Fieldwork Learning Showcase 2025

Fieldwork Collaborations

At the University of Edinburgh

Institute of Geography, School of GeoSciences, Drummond Street, EH89XP

Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th September 2025

Book of Abstracts

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Keynote 1 - Virtually in Ghana: an international collaboration for virtual fieldwork learning

Sarah Davies, The Open University

Students can't always go out and experience fieldwork. In Ghana, fieldwork is part of the school and university curriculum, but opportunities for students to take part are limited due to a lack of resources. Virtual field trips can be part of the solution.

OpenSTEM Africa, a collaboration between Ghana's Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling, Ghanaian schools and universities and the UK Open University, aims to support science teaching using onscreen practical work. At its heart is the co-development of locally appropriate, inclusive learning materials, including teacher and leadership support.

In 2019, workshops held in Ghana with science teachers identified how curriculum could be supported by onscreen applications. Whilst the initial focus was on laboratory-based science, it soon became clear teachers were keen to 're-imagine' field trips as immersive virtual experiences.

A planned visit to Ghana in March 2020 to collect virtual field trip resources with University of Ghana (UoG) colleagues was cancelled because of COVID-19. Instead, we worked remotely together to storyboard a virtual field trip focused on exploration, species identification and vegetation analysis. UoG colleagues collected imagery and data (drone flight video of the terrain, 360-panoramas, videos and photographs of flora and fauna, and quadrat data) and we created a prototype which we refined and extended.

We have now co-developed two virtual field trips – UoG's Legon botanic gardens and Sakumono nature reserve – which are available as Open Educational Resources. In this presentation I will demonstrate the virtual field trips and explore some of the benefits and challenges of this international collaboration for virtual fieldwork.

Field visits: a pathway to successful international collaboration

Sonja Rewhorn, The Open University

Geographical fieldwork can take many forms but in essence takes us away from the normal indoor settings. The opportunities offered through engaging with fieldwork activities can often lead to the development of softer skills, including fostering collaboration for common outcomes. The more successful groups are those which develop an understanding of the contexts of the individuals, often, building/relying on trust and associated rapport. With more and more university externally funded projects with a requirement for international partners, ways to successfully steer intercultural norms are vital if the common outputs of the projects are to be achieved. Using examples from Europe and Southeast Asia, the integration of field visits as a tool to navigate intercultural differences and nurture greater understanding with colleagues within international projects is explored in this presentation. With a focus on an example of a cross borders project between UK and Vietnam universities, the research with participants indicates a number of emerging themes such as working across boundaries can be challenging and exploring solutions of the same issues from different points of view is beneficial highlights the value of 'getting to know each other beyond the constraints of the formal meetings': in this case during cultural field visits. This presentation shows how field visits can be used to deepen the relationships between partners to transverse the challenges of predominantly working online to ensure the messiness of projects leads to success outcomes.

Cross-cultural collaborations enhance conservation competencies in an international professional Masters programme

Sophie Calmé, Birgit Schmook and Rehema White, University of St Andrews

Postgraduate opportunities can offer specialist learning for graduates who can address ecological and social challenges. The Masters in International Ecology is a shared programme between Université de Sherbrooke, Canada, and El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, Chetumal, Mexico. The programme was initiated in 2011 and is an innovative cross-cultural (across countries), inter-institutional, theory-praxis, pan-sectoral collaboration. There are classes and fieldtrips in Canada and in Mexico and field placements for students in countries that offer them a different language and cultural context. Each placement addresses partner's problems, and provides professional training for the students. Students learn community engagement and project management, alongside ecology. The aim of this study was to evaluate the extent to which this innovative Masters facilitated conservation competencies in graduates. We undertook a workshop with staff in Mexico and deployed surveys in Mexico and in Canada to assess how goals were met, how conservation competencies relate to generic sustainability competencies and the extent to which such competencies were met in each module and across the programme. We found that programme goals had changed over time and there was a porous boundary between concepts of conservation and sustainable development. Most graduates gained employment at the socio-ecological interface, suggesting employers' preferred competencies were acquired. The process of competency analysis and assessment itself enhanced future programme iterations. The collaborations at different scales and across cultures strongly enhanced the learning experience and could be replicated in other programmes. However, such collaboration required time, trust and careful nurturing of relationships.

Collaboration, Inclusivity and AI Underwater: KELP!

Glyn Barrett, University of Reading

This presentation highlights the design of a residential marine biology field course to South Africa to promote equitable participation, collaborative learning, and digital innovation. The course, centred on Scuba diving in the biodiverse Cape Peninsula, was co-developed with local partners and University of Reading staff, ensuring a shared commitment to both safety and inclusion.

The field course demonstrates how inclusive design and collaboration can support students with a wide range of needs, including those with physical disabilities or social anxiety while still delivering high-impact experiential learning. Through pre-departure planning, adaptive Scuba support, and ILPs, all interested students are able to participate confidently in marine science activities, including underwater data collection.

The course encourages student-led projects while embracing technology-enhanced learning, for example the use of AI-based shark spotting tools and automated video analysis of BRUV (Baited Remote Underwater Video) data. These approaches not only introduce students to a range of marine monitoring techniques but also allow for differentiated tasks, enabling participation without requiring diving.

The session will share practical strategies, and example outputs to show how inclusive, tech-driven fieldwork can be realised through co-creation, local-global partnerships, and inclusive course design. It aims to offer attendees insight into marine biology focussed fieldwork grounded in collaboration.

Learning for conservation futures: lessons for curricula, pedagogies and competencies in higher education

Rehema M. White, Elizabeth A.C. Price, Simon Kemp and James W.S. Longhurst, University of St Andrews

Learning underpins our potential to achieve conservation outcomes that support ecological integrity in just ways, that respect Indigenous and local rights. Through teaching and learning, we also establish (or push) the boundaries of our disciplines. In this session, we explore how principles and practices of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can inspire radical educational approaches, innovative pedagogies and engaging curricula for conservation students in higher education. ESD can be a critical change pedagogy, linking theory and practice to support educators and learners to develop competencies through formal, informal and non-formal curricula. Graduates working in conservation now need to develop a suite of competencies including key generic sustainability and specific conservation competencies. Systems, future and critical thinking; collaborative, problem solving and strategic competencies; and capacities for self awareness and normative and cultural aspects are facilitated through ESD. The transdisciplinary approach draws on natural and social sciences and collaboration with actors in and outside of academia. In this workshop, we draw on a recent book designed to traverse critical debate and practical suggestions in ESD, across all disciplines (White et al 2025). We will a) introduce the principles and practices of ESD and its relevance for education in conservation biology; b) trial a tool for participants to map their own or example curricula against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and c) introduce a survey tool for educators or learners to assess the extent to which a module or programme supports ESD and conservation competencies.

Redeveloping residential field trips into more accessible and inclusive experiences and practice

Adrian Gonzalez and Karen Parkhill, University of York

Residential field trips are an integral part of environmental studies (including geography, environmental science and ecology). However, whilst developing such trips present significant opportunities for out of the classroom learning, significant barriers for inclusivity whether relating to cost, physical health and disability, caring responsibilities, or mental health and neurodiversity, can present significant intersectional barriers. Using the Department of Environment and Geography, UoY as a case study, this presentation will outline efforts to redevelop residential fieldtrips into more accessible and inclusive experiences and practice. It will outline the steps taken to amplify the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) agenda through two main projects that were co-designed with student partners. The first project involved the development of a Principles of Best Practice for Designing EDI Field trips guide. Collectively, we evidence how this document provides a framework for staff to design, operate and reflect on their outdoor educational practice. The second project involved developing an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process that can serve as a powerful catalyst for scrutinising how the aforementioned principles operate thus improving discussion, design and reflection on inclusive field work through a more structured-process. Taken together, these projects highlight the importance of preparation, transparency and student empowerment around fieldtrip educational activities. Throughout this discussion, it will provide an honest reflection on the successes and challenges of co-creating EDI field trips that take account of the intersectionality using these methods.

Improving the fieldwork experience for all - a checklist

Imke Grefe, Lancaster University

Fieldwork is a central pillar of Environmental, Bio- and Geosciences with many benefits in addition to subject specific skills, for example increased student engagement, networking and creating a sense of belonging. On the other hand, fieldwork presents a major barrier to participation, as vulnerabilities of students and staff are heightened, in addition to socioeconomic, cultural and accessibility challenges. Fieldwork can easily become exclusive, and downright dangerous for many people.

The burden of making fieldwork safe, accessible and inclusive, in addition to working collaboratively on some of the most important challenges for humanity, often lies with individuals in charge of leading field activities, such as course convenors, PIs and expedition leaders. This increases workload and emotional labour on top of the stressors of organisation, logistics and actual research, with often little to no guidance or support on the institutional level. However, small steps, in particular improving communication and managing of expectations, can help students, researchers and academics feel safer and more confident in the field.

A checklist is suggested as a tool to improve the flow of communication between organisers and participants of field activities, enhancing accessibility, inclusivity and safety through low-level interventions, targeted preparation adjustments. The checklist addresses pre-fieldwork considerations, actions during field activities, as well as post-fieldwork debriefings and follow-up tasks. Having a document of best practices that is shared, updated and adjusted with experience, can be a powerful tool to reduce workload for organisers and improve the fieldwork experience for all participants.

The Field Trip Template: Supporting Students through Accessible communications

Laura Girling, University of Reading

A significant portion of our student population requires additional support to learn effectively during field trips. We identified that the quality of information provided by lecturers around field trips was often inconsistent, fragmented, and minimal; therefore, we saw an opportunity to enhance the student experience through more consistent and accessible communication.

Students and staff involved in field trips within the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development collaboratively designed and piloted an information leaflet template using Agile methods. The aim in designing this template was to enable lecturers to efficiently share key details while considering a range of student accessibility and learning needs.

The content and design of the leaflet, including what constitutes “key information,” visual layout, and suggested wording, was developed using multiple sources: individual and group meetings with project students, an online survey completed by field-trip students, individual design sessions with staff, published guidance on best practice, and findings from academic literature.

The process has revealed further areas for improvement- particularly for enhancing capacity for learning, and as such, we aim to embed further pedagogical approaches centred around preparatory learning. Alongside this, we are scoping out options for a suitable platform with which to host and distribute the template and follow-up further initiatives that have resulted through the collaborations. We aim to utilise the template during semester 1, and will continue to adapt the template following further feedback.

In praise of the personalised risk assessment for field courses

Martin Barker, University of Aberdeen

Field courses should, in theory, be open to all. But sometimes we have to make an extra (welcome) effort to include students with disabilities who might otherwise not be able to participate fully, if at all.

In the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Aberdeen, this year we have introduced personal risk assessments (PRAs) for students with disabilities who are going on field courses. The PRA is in addition to the field course's main risk assessment, which of course does not include personal information about students.

Here's how we put a PRA together. Well before the field course, information about students' disabilities is given to the course coordinators. They then identify potential difficulties for those students. As my department's inclusion officer, I meet individual student to discuss what might be a challenge for them. And we come up with solutions. The resulting PRA is then communicated back to those who are running the field course. The experience of students (and staff) who co-create the PRAs has been generally very positive. We follow up with students to ask how their PRA worked for them. One student described her PRA as "life changing". But another reported that agreed procedures were not followed through.
In this presentation I will give examples of student feedback on personal risk assessments and also discuss some remaining challenges, which can still prevent students with disabilities from being able to participate fully in field work.

Keynote 2 – Utilising peer learning and teaching – a framework for fieldwork collaboration

Alan Marvell, University of Gloucestershire

We present a framework for peer learning and collaboration based on the pedagogy of cooperation and scholarship. This framework integrates various educational approaches, including experiential learning, peer teaching, and critical reflection. We emphasise the importance of cooperative learning environments where students actively engage with one another and their surroundings. A reflective and responsive pedagogy facilitates a more tailored educational experience that addresses the diverse needs of learners. Experiential learning, which encompasses hands-on activities and real-world problem-solving, enables students to translate theoretical knowledge into practice, thereby enhancing both retention and understanding. In doing so, we acknowledge the relationship between experiential learning and the affective domain. We highlight how collaboration through teamwork and peer learning encourages deeper engagement with both the environment and the learning process. As a result, students develop higher-level skills, including reflexivity in the research process, a nuanced relationship with the landscape, and a greater self-awareness of their own learning. We also recognise both the value and the challenges of collaboration among students from different disciplinary backgrounds. In addition to exploring these foundational concepts, the presentation will offer actionable strategies and prompts for integrating this framework into educators' fieldwork teaching practices. By implementing this framework, educators can empower their students to collaborate more effectively and recognise the value of cooperative learning in their academic and future professional pursuits. Ultimately, this approach aims to cultivate not just knowledgeable individuals, but also skilled collaborators who are equipped to tackle diverse and complex challenges in the field.

The field as forum: Developing & delivering a transdisciplinary place-based course

Hannah Mathers, Anna McGregor, Natasha Walker-Milne, Millie Bompard, Tessa Poller, Holley McCoy, University of Glasgow

Few opportunities exist in current curricula for students to collaborate and interact across traditional disciplinary boundaries. This presents a disconnect with the workplace environment post-university and deprives students of opportunities for explorative and authentic learning experiences.

Working as student and staff partners from across four disciplines, we have shaped a place-based course that invites learners to reflect on their specialisms and motivations. With academic and community stakeholder input around Archaeology, Geo- and Biological sciences, we have curated a richly-immersive learning experience. The challenge and stimulation afforded by variation and alignment of disciplinary languages, methods and foci is common to staff and students.

By centring our course on place-based investigations and interactions, in the Isle of Lewis, we have created nuclei for explorations of individual and community identity. Through engagement with local stakeholders, students develop a meaningful grassroots-based approach to research design and delivery. We reflect on the iterative design and delivery of a field-based Honours course with student voice and community connection at its heart.

Watch: In Lewis by GAcademy https://vimeo.com/1068082961

Curated Festivals Field Trips as Catalysts for Joyful and Collaborative Learning in Higher Education

Estrella Sendra, King's College London

Learning in a world facing multiple crises presents significant challenges. Despite efforts by Higher Education Institutions to foster inclusive and liberating environments, rigid grading systems often perpetuate competition among students. This presentation advocates for joyful and collaborative learning through the integration of curated festival field trips. It explores the benefits of curated festival field trips across undergraduate and postgraduate Arts and Humanities programmes at Winchester School of Art (University of Southampton), SOAS, University of London, and King's College London. Drawing on bell hooks' emphasis on excitement in education, Paulo Freire's problem-solving pedagogy, and Lynne Segal's radical understanding of joy, I argue that these trips reflect the curatorial turn in education, enabling students to develop both subject-specific and social skills.

Participating in curated festival field trips can disrupt hierarchical classroom relations. Students come together to attend festivals, document their experiences, and engage in critical reflection. This collective, embodied learning beyond the classroom fosters well-being and strengthens collaboration through enriched social connections. Ultimately, curated festival field trips cultivate a joyful, collegial, caring, and respectful learning environment. They promote connection, well-being, and collaboration in teamwork, while encouraging students to engage in a continuous dialogue between the classroom and the wider world. This experience supports informed decision-making and boosts students' confidence and agency to contribute to transformative change.

Article: Joyful learning inside and beyond the classroom: integrating guided field trips to festivals and events in higher education

Co-Creating Inclusive Virtual Field Learning: Centering Student Voices to Advance Accessibility and Pedagogical Innovation

Denise Gabriel, Steve Quane, Lee Groat, Ilya Ghodousi, Grace Clarke, Drishti Aggarwal, University of British Columbia

While field learning is widely recognized for its potential to foster systems thinking, place-based knowledge, and deep interdisciplinary engagement, it often remains inaccessible to students with disabilities or other participation barriers. This project presents a collaborative model for the co-creation of immersive virtual field learning experiences that prioritize accessibility, inclusion, and pedagogical relevance. Central to this initiative is the integration of undergraduate students as equal partners in the design process. Drawing on the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the project engages students in every stage of development—from storyboarding and multimedia content creation to iterative evaluation—ensuring that learner perspectives directly inform design decisions.

The collaborative team brings together instructors and students with interdisciplinary backgrounds to address the structural and pedagogical barriers that have historically limited access to field-based education. By employing a range of technologies—including 360-degree video, soundscapes, virtual tours, and VR environments—the project seeks to recreate the immersive and experiential qualities of fieldwork in ways that are flexible, inclusive, and scalable. This presentation will share our design framework, highlight the benefits of collaborative pedagogical design, and reflect on how centering student perspectives contributes to more inclusive, engaging, and transformative learning experiences in field-based education.

Co-creating hypotheses with students during short field investigations

Julia Cooke, Kadmiel Maseyk, Philip Wheeler, Sarah Davies, The Open University

Developing hypotheses for student research projects in the field can be a challenge because of the diversity of potential investigations, short timescales and need for testable hypotheses appropriate for the data collection period and statistical knowledge of students. In our fieldcasts – live-broadcast field investigations delivered by field-based tutors to remote students at a distance education university – we used a site tour followed by a series of questions and decision points to arrive at a co-created hypothesis. This teaching design has been successful in terms of student engagement and development of testable hypotheses, but students have not always appreciated the function of hypotheses, or how the hypotheses were developed from observations. In re-writing our module, we have introduced a new hypothesis development framework (adapted from the PECO framework: Population, Exposure, Comparator, and Outcome). In this talk we will compare the two approaches. We will also ask for your experiences of supporting students to develop hypotheses in the field, and collect these through a short survey.

Smart data, Smart decisions: GIS-driven collaboration for modern fieldwork

Princewill Odum, University of Glasgow

This presentation, titled “Smart Data, Smart Decisions: GIS-Driven Collaboration for Modern Fieldwork”, explores the transformative role of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in enhancing interdisciplinary field research. It showcases how digital tools like GeoODK, ArcGIS Field Maps, and KoboToolbox, combined with e-questionnaires and GPS tagging, can streamline data collection, improve spatial accuracy, and promote real-time analysis. Drawing from a case study mapping microclimates and mental health on a university campus, the session illustrates how GIS integration fosters collaboration between disciplines such as geography and psychology. The presentation emphasizes centralized data management, cloud syncing, and interactive dashboards as key enablers of effective supervision and data-driven decision-making. With increasing demand for spatial literacy across sectors like urban planning, public health, and climate research, the talk advocates embedding GIS early in fieldwork training and promoting open-source, collaborative platforms. Attendees are encouraged to consider scalable, geospatial strategies to enrich field learning and prepare students for modern research demands.

App download: ODK collect for Android https://docs.getodk.org/collect-intro/

Using immersive technology to support student learning, inclusivity and diversity in practical ecology for University students

Lucy Garratt, Hartpury University

This project sought to combat areas of inclusion and diversity in the field of practical ecology whilst enhancing the experience for all students. Practical field ecology is by nature physical and requires attendance in person as well as ability to participate. Traditional lectures can be recorded and rewatched to support learning post session, whilst most practical sessions are not recorded and rely on student participation at a set time and date. The benefits of field practicals are high and often cited as the most beneficial aspect on student feedback. Our goal was not to replace practical sessions, but rather increase accessibility for students who were unable to attend for various reasons; benefit learners by reinforcing materials post attendance; and provide information for those who were not present for certain field elements, due to splitting of groups to sample different areas. We developed three virtual field trips (VFT) for our first year Principles of Ecology module taken by BSc Zoology students and delivered one of these to support their assignments in 2024-25. The VTFs consisted of a 360º video of the habitat where sampling took place together with introductory video clip and hotspots on the interactive video with further videos and resources highlighting the sampling methods, equipment used and the data collected. Feedback was gathered on the use and integration of the VFT via questionnaires. Feedback was very positive, with many wanting to see more for other sessions and the resource itself received over 900 views.

Breaking Barriers: Exploring Accessibility and Attainment of Biosciences Field Courses at The University of Sheffield

Charlotte Walton (MBiolSci Zoology Student), Dr Will Hentley (University Teacher), Dr Emma Hughes (Teaching Associate (Ecology)), University of Sheffield

Field courses are a cornerstone of Biosciences education, offering immersive, hands-on experiences that promote interdisciplinary collaboration and real-world skill development. Yet despite their pedagogical value, participation remains uneven and is often hindered by financial, health, or logistical barriers.

This study uses a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaire data and anonymised academic records from current and former students to investigate the relationship between field course participation, academic performance, and perceived value. While many students who attended field courses remained stable within their grade band, and some even saw declines in marks. However, the student voice revealed a more nuanced narrative.

Students consistently emphasised the personal and professional value of fieldwork, independent of academic attainment. Field courses were praised for exposing students to interdisciplinary science, fostering collaboration beyond disciplinary boundaries, and offering insights into future career paths.

Quantitative findings showed no significant academic increase directly tied to field course participation. However, qualitative responses strongly affirmed the broader benefits: 31.1% viewed field courses as very important for career development, while 66.6% rated them as quite important or above for academic growth. Notably, financial barriers emerged as the most limiting factor, cited by over 90% of respondents.

We argue that fieldwork must be reimagined not merely as an academic exercise but as a transformative, student-centred experience. Enhancing financial support, accessibility, and inclusive design will be crucial to broadening participation. Doing so will not only address structural inequalities but also enrich the collaborative and interdisciplinary potential of field education in higher education.

Reimagining ‘the fieldtrip’: eroding the boundary between authentic and digital experiences

William McVean, Rehema M. White and Althea L. Davies, University of St Andrews

‘The fieldtrip’ enables students to access authentic examples and apply learning. It enhances education through strengthening affective, practical and cognitive learning (heart, hand and head). However, fieldtrips can be time consuming and resource intensive. It can be difficult to offer fieldwork experience in distant lands and sensitive habitats. Digital technologies offer opportunities to bring experiences to people rather than people to experiences. Do we need to choose between authentic or digital learning experiences? In this paper we erode these distinctions, drawing on examples from the Sustainable Development Programmes at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. We illustrate a spectrum of experience from those that are fully digital, and translated by the educator, to those that are fully authentic and experienced through active field based learning. Some options integrate technological and experiential elements. We have explored various approaches, including static digital images, through documentary, digitised historical resources, 360 video, augmented reality, guided online fieldtrips, self-guided fieldtrips, neighbourhood walking transects, day fieldtrips, residential study fieldtrips, and residential research fieldtrips. This diversity of options creates a rich suite of possibilities for educators to re-imagine the fieldtrip and develop innovative pedagogies. We question common views on the fieldtrip. For example, we suggest that alternative digital perspectives may create different forms of neo-authentic experience and facilitate access to historical and minority contexts. Some sensory, in-person, embodied experience is critical to complement such approaches. We conclude that this suite of integrated options expands rather than diminishes fieldtrip potential.

Poster: Connecting people and place: A campus BioBlitz to enhance teaching, community and ecological insight

Alice Haughan and Becky Jerrome, University of Reading

Increases in student anxiety and feelings of disconnection are widely reported and impact wellbeing, attendance and attainment. Large university campuses can unintentionally contribute to a sense of isolation but hold great potential as living laboratories. Research shows that connection with nature and locally relevant, experiential course content are positively linked to wellbeing, enhancing engagement and learning outcomes. Citizen science is mutually beneficial to both researchers and students, providing opportunities for understanding how science can help solve local challenges as well as levels of critical thinking. In 2024, we launched a campus Bioblitz, creating a valuable teaching asset and strengthening connections across schools delivering ecological content. Early indications suggest a greater sense of connection among staff and students, while raising awareness of the biodiversity present on campus. Our poster aims to share the findings of our project and our approaches alongside developing collaborations with other universities for joint research and events.

Links to resources

- Enhancing Fieldwork Learning website https://enhancingfieldwork.org.uk/
- Deidre Macleod, University of Edinburgh https://www.deirdre-macleod.com
- In Lewis by GAcademy https://vimeo.com/1068082961
- ODK collect for Android https://docs.getodk.org/collect-intro/
- Joyful learning inside and beyond the classroom: integrating guided field trips to festivals and events in higher education https://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/view/1359
- Teaching Fieldwork in Geography, Earth and Environmental Science https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/gbp/teaching-fieldwork-in-geography-earth-and-environmental-sciences-9781035322381.html
- Enhancing Fieldwork Learning using mobile technologies https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-20967-8

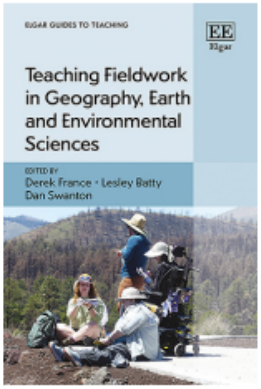
Edward Elgar PUBLISHING

www.e-elgar.com

Teaching Fieldwork in Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Elgar Guides to Teaching

Edited by Derek France, Division of Humanities, Cultures & Environment, University of Chester, Lesley Batty, School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham and Dan Swanton, School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh, UK



This book provides invaluable practical guidance for teaching and learning through fieldwork in higher education. Featuring contributions from a diverse range of experienced field educators, it delves into the challenges and opportunities of teaching beyond the classroom across Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES).

'This collection of edited chapters provides a timely contribution to the pedagogy of field teaching and learning. At the outset, the signature pedagogy of the Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences disciplines is conceptualised in its broadest terms, essentially defined as any learning activity that takes place beyond the limits of the classroom. Fundamentally fieldwork engages students with real-world experiences. The intent of this book is to provide both guidance and examples of how to create field courses (from moments to months) that can be delivered within the challenging and continually evolving framework of Higher Education in which we find ourselves at present. Covering three key themes, (1) ethical, responsible, safe and accessible fieldwork, (2) defining and redefining the field, and (3) fieldwork skills and competences, examples and resources to design and deliver field courses are shared throughout each chapter using a series of vignettes. The 'how to' emphasis of each chapter is backed up and informed by a robust pedagogy. This approach makes the content of the book, with its emphasis and focus on sharing practice and commitment to enhancing fieldwork, engaging, accessible and appealing, as well as generating and embodying a genuine community of practice in the discipline.

To underscore the practical emphasis of this book, a Fieldwork Audit Tool is introduced at the end, which provides educators with a tool comprising a series of questions to reflect on, review and enhance our field teaching. This is a valuable and thought-provoking resource for all involved in field teaching and its implementation will help ensure fieldwork is rigorously designed and delivered and fit for purpose to meet the needs of our students and adapt to the challenges faced in our disciplines.

I commend this book as a must-read for those who want to make use of real-world moments in their teaching design and delivery – and which of us doesn't want to do that?'
– Ian Fuller, Massey University, New Zealand

'The enthusiasm for fieldwork jumps off the page, particularly from the vignettes offering teachers practical hands-on tips to optimize fieldwork learning. A sound longitudinal view also permeates the book via innovative suggestions regarding continuous (student) evaluations before, during and after the actual fieldwork, and fieldwork material reuse by future learners' cohorts. The practical examples, firmly embedded in the literature, inspired me to jot down valuable takeaways so frantically that it was hard to decipher them afterwards.'
– Veronique Schutjens, Utrecht University, the Netherlands

2025 418 pp Hardback 978 1 03532 238 1 ~~£140.00~~ £126.00 ~~US$200.00~~ US$180.00
Elgaronline 978 1 03532 239 8

How To Order

Online

www.e-elgar.com

www.elgaronline.com

Get up to 20% discount when you order online

By Email

UK/ROW: sales@e-elgar.co.uk

N/S America: elgarsales@e-elgar.com

By Phone

UK/ROW: +44 (0) 1243 843291

N/S America: (800) 390-3149

Connect With Us

Read our Blog

For news, views and debate from our authors and readers.

www.elgar.blog

For More Information

UK/ROW: info@e-elgar.co.uk

N/S America: elgarinfo@e-elgar.com

www.elgaronline.com

We thank all the speakers for their contributions and the following for their kind support and sponsorship of this year's event:

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH