An award-winning poet and writer of nonfiction on nature and the environment, Christopher Cokinos joined the UA's creative writing program as an assistant professor in 2008. Cokinos was one of 10 national recipients of the Whiting Writers’ Award, and his first book, Hope is the Thing with Feathers: A Personal Chronicle of Vanishing Birds, was critically acclaimed. He is also the winner of fellowships and grants from the Antiquarian Society, the Utah Arts Council, and the National Science Foundation. In 2003–04 he was a member of the Antarctic Search for Meteorites expedition as part of his research for his 2009 book The Fallen Sky: An Intimate History of Shooting Stars.

Joey Hmielewski specializes in how the consumption of disparate political messages influences democratic outcomes. Two lines of research include how the composition of one-sided and two-sided messages influences public opinion and how the use of politically-oriented entertainment media functions alongside traditional news use. He has been named a 2013-14 Udall Center Fellow. As a post-doctoral assistant in the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies at Yale University, he published on public opinion surveys about Americans’ beliefs and attitudes on global warming and climate change, public support for climate and energy policies, and Americans’ actions to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gases. He earned his Ph.D. from Ohio State University.

School of Government & Public Policy

Adam Henry’s research is grounded in well-developed theories of environmental politics but remains problem-driven by focusing on how social network structures facilitate better political outcomes. Joining the UA from West Virginia University, he has a $200,000 National Science Foundation grant to study how urban environments on government policy. Prior to WVU, he was a Georgio Ruffalo Doctoral Research Fellow in Sustainability Science at Harvard University. He is also an alumnus of the Johns Hopkins University Center for Chinese and American Studies in Nanjing, where he conducted research on the environmental impacts of population growth in China.

School of Anthropology

A biological anthropologist interested in physiological and behavioral strategies used by primates to cope with dynamic environments, Tracey Tecot joined the UA from Stony Brook University. She studies how species, particularly lemurs in Madagascar, distribute energy in response to changes in physical environment, including deforestation and climate change, to determine how they resolve the competing needs of growth, reproduction, and survival. She has established a hormone assay lab with enzyme immunoassay capabilities at the UA.

Water Resources Research Center

Jean E. McCarty joined the WRRC as associate director. She also is an associate research scientist at the WRRC and in the department of soil, water, and environmental science. With a strong focus on environmental microbiology, she has directed numerous research projects focused on establishing the health and environmental risks of using reclaimed municipal wastewater for irrigation. She also has managed studies examining potential health and environmental risks of using reclaimed municipal wastewater for irrigation. She also has managed studies examining potential health and environmental risks of using reclaimed municipal wastewater for irrigation.

Hydrology and Water Resources

Guo-Yue Nie is an assistant professor in the department of hydrology and water resources with a joint position as an assistant research professor at Biosphere 2. Current projects include investigating the processes and patterns in the North American monsoon system and developing hybrid 3-D hydrological modeling for the National Center for Atmospheric Research Community Earth System Model (NCAR/CESM). Nie’s research centers on the numerical modeling of land surface processes, including terrestrial hydrology and ecology, for climate studies. His main focus is on the development of process-based land surface models that simulate water, heat, and carbon storage in snow, soil, vegetation and their fluxes into the atmosphere.
With primary research interests in natural and anthropogenic climate changes, the role of the ocean in the climate system, and climate system modeling, Jianjun Yin joined the UA as an assistant professor. Previously he worked as a postdoctoral research associate at NOAA’s Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory at Princeton University and at the Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies at Florida State University. He has written benchmark papers on oceans, including a study on sea-level rise that was published in Nature Geoscience since his arrival at the UA.

David Christianson brings his expertise in wildlife ecology and large mammals to the UA as an assistant professor. He focuses on how predation, risk, land use, landscape heterogeneity, and climate shape behavior, physiology, and demography in species that are of conservation concern and economically or culturally significant to local communities. This includes research on elk in Yellowstone National Park, predators and prey in Africa, and wolf reintroduction in the Rocky Mountains West. He joined the UA from Montana State University, where he was a post-doctoral research ecologist.

Stephen T. Jackson is the center director for the Department of the Interior Southwest Climate Science Center, which is headquartered at the UA and received $1.4 million for a range of climate change studies pertinent to the Southwest region. He is also an adjunct research professor in Wildlife at the UA and an adjunct professor in the geosciences department. Jackson’s own research employs tree rings, fossil seed, and pollen from lakes and bogs to investigate how past climatic changes and human activities have affected species distributions, biodiversity, and ecosystem properties. Before coming to the UA, Jackson was a botany professor and founding director of the doctoral program in ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His research focuses on how microbial communities in both terrestrial and marine habitats support and drive earth systems and how they respond to anthropogenic change. Current projects, including a $2.9 million DOE grant, examine microbial roles in carbon emissions from thawing permafrost and also microbial degradation of pollutants at the Great Barrier Reef.

Karletta Chief is interested in the spatial and temporal characterization of soil air permeability and hydraulic properties of arid soils to improve our understanding of the processes that control the movement of air, water, carbon dioxide, and contaminants in the soil. She is also interested in tribal environmental issues and is a member of the Navajo Nation. She has a Ph.D. in hydrology from the UA, where she received the University-wide Centennial Award. In 2010 she received the American Indian Science and Engineering Society award for the most promising scientist.

Virginia Rich joined SWES as an assistant professor after working as a postdoctoral researcher in the UA’s department of ecology and evolutionary biology. Her research focuses on how microbial communities in both terrestrial and marine habitats support and drive earth systems and how they respond to anthropogenic change. Current projects, including a $2.9 million DOE grant, examine microbial roles in carbon emissions from thawing permafrost and also microbial degradation of pollutants at the Great Barrier Reef.

Society

Brian Mayer’s primary research focuses on the intersection of environmental sociology, medical sociology, social movements, and the sociology of science, where social movement actors contest with scientists and policymakers over environmental causes of disease. He is also interested in energy transition and renewable energy research along the eastern coast of the Gulf of Mexico as part of a five-year, $1.3 million dollar grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to examine how communities were affected by the BP oil spill. He joined the UA’s sociology department from the University of Florida.

History

Valerie Trouet joined the UA as an assistant professor. Her research interests include tree-ring analysis, fire ecology, palaeoecology, atmospheric circulation patterns, and tropical forest ecosystems, with a regional focus on the American West and southern Africa. After earning a Ph.D. in applied bioclimatic sciences from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium in 2004, she held a postdoc at Penn State and then worked as a research scientist in the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research.

Biosketches

David Moore’s research focuses on integrating long-term ecological observations with ecosystem models using data assimilation over a range of scales. The goal of his work is to improve our understanding of ecological processes and our ability to predict system function under different climate change scenarios. He was a postdoctoral researcher at the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Science in Boulder and joined the UA as an assistant professor as part of a joint funding and research initiative with the U.S. Geological Survey in phenoclimatology. Moore recently was a lead author of a study that found massive tree die-offs release less carbon into the atmosphere than previously thought.

Roachel Gallery focuses her research on the ecological processes that structure communities and the mechanisms that promote species coexistence among tree species in tropical forests. She uses ecological and molecular tools to study the impact of host-pathogen interactions on community diversity and to study how soil habitats could be used to more effectively prevent the invasion of non-native plants and allow native reclamation efforts. She is a scientist and microbial ecologist for the National Ecological Observatory Network, which has its southwestern base at the Santa Rita Experimental Range, where she joined the UA as an assistant professor.

Stephen T. Jackson is the center director for the Department of the Interior Southwest Climate Science Center, which is headquartered at the UA and received $1.4 million for a range of climate change studies pertinent to the Southwest region. He is also an adjunct research professor in Wildlife at the UA and an adjunct professor in the geosciences department. Jackson’s own research employs tree rings, fossil seed, and pollen from lakes and bogs to investigate how past climatic changes and human activities have affected species distributions, biodiversity, and ecosystem properties. Before coming to the UA, Jackson was a botany professor and founding director of the doctoral program in ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His research focuses on how microbial communities in both terrestrial and marine habitats support and drive earth systems and how they respond to anthropogenic change. Current projects, including a $2.9 million DOE grant, examine microbial roles in carbon emissions from thawing permafrost and also microbial degradation of pollutants at the Great Barrier Reef.

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