

Enhancing a Livable Futures Curriculum through Transformative Experiences

Introduction

Creating Livable Futures is a university-wide initiative housed in the Honors College. It is a student-centered, humanistic and broadly interdisciplinary environmental program. The initiative is interested in envisioning better futures and fostering resilience and antifragility during a time of convergent global challenges. A coalition of interested faculty offers courses under the banner of Livable Futures each semester, and thanks to a TrUE Transformers grant, this semester Drs. Bryan Giemza and Jerod Foster are offering a course called "The Path Chooses Us," which takes students on an odyssey along the Guadalupe Ridge Trail, which spans 100 miles from the highest peak in Texas to the desert floor of New Mexico. It's a class where the great outdoors is both classroom and coteacher, and where students learn about themselves as well as natural and human history.

Faculty Voice

"We are just beginning our journey this semester, but I can already see its transformational value."



"They (the students) so often teach me new things, and to see things differently, because of the transformative power of collaborating in a different environment."

-- Dr. Bryan Giemza

Team

Faculty: Dr. Bryan Giemza, Dr. Jerod Foster

Student Voice

"Blending intellectual and creative pursuits through thought-provoking discussions alongside photography and videography assignments, The Path Chooses Us is truly unparalleled. When I say that I've learned more about human and natural history in the past month than I have in my entire educational career, I mean it. Through our readings and discussions, this class has opened my eyes to how people have lost their ability to describe nature, impairing our communication about it. Since it is becoming increasingly more important to convey the value that our environment has to others, this class could not have come at a better time. Dr. Foster and Dr. Giemza's passion to share their wealth of knowledge and provide us with a space to question, create, and explore the natural world, not only conceptually but physically, makes this class one of a kind. My experience at Texas Tech University would not be the same without transformative classes such as this one."

- Daniela Rodriguez



Transformative Experiences

Impacts/Results

Students have the heart and courage to take this journey.

Students are supportive of each other, which makes programs like this possible.

**TrUE
Transformer**

My Top 3 Transformative Priorities

Supported More Than One Undergraduate Researcher

Potential for Continuation Post-Grant

Intentionally Recruited Underrepresented Students