Fall came slowly to Cache Valley this year. We were harvesting tomatoes during the second week in October for the first time in my 30 years at USU. The unseasonably warm autumn fit perfectly into the 2020 year of “firsts”. We started the year with an earthquake centered just west of Salt Lake City, moved into a pandemic, shifted spring classes to remote delivery, cancelled our annual awards banquet and commencement ceremonies. We all felt relief that we made it through the spring and held out hope for normality to resume by fall.

Fall semester started with a burst of activity with surprisingly large numbers of students taking classes in hybrid, online, and in person modes of instruction. Students are resilient. They want to learn, to gain the knowledge needed to fix our battered planet, to complete their degrees and enter the job market. The faculty show tremendous creativity. Field trips are conducted with caravans of cars, classes are taught under the ash grove, and Zoom events have become routine.

Hats off to the students, faculty and staff of the Quinney College who have succeeded in overcoming the obstacles placed before us each day. Our campus plan has kept the infection rate down, and the energy of the students. I smiled when one undergraduate told me that this has been his best fall in that he has spent almost all his free time outside. Outside works for the Quinney College.

Best regards,
Chris

Faculty and Staff in the News

Clark Rushing | Warming Climate is changing where birds breed

David Stoner | Blinded by the Light: “Sensory Danger zones: how sensory pollution impacts animal survival”

Peter Howe | All summer long: Heat waves and COVID-19
Layne Coppock, Mark Brunson | Two college of natural resources professors recognized by the society for range management

Janice Brahney | More than 1000 tons of plastic rains into western US protected lands annually

Wayne Wurtsbaugh | USU professor discusses threats to the great salt lake

Trisha Atwood, Karen Beard | Earing like a bird: NSF grant keeps tabs on geese herbivory and carbon in the Yukon

Terry Messmer | Ask an expert- smartphones and wildlife a bad combination

Chris Luecke, Patrick Belmont | President Cockett commits to reducing USU’s greenhouse gas emissions

Trisha Atwood, Edd Hammill, Karen Beard | Herbivores, not predators, most at risk of extinction

Sarah Klain | Octopus’s garden under the blade: Boosting biodiversity increases willingness to pay for offshore wind in the United States
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