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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program



Volume 10, Issue 10

Dr. Prádanos and his book cover for *Postgrowth Imaginaries: New Ecologies and Counterhegemonic Culture in Post-2008 Spain*.

Prádanos Presents Postgrowth Imaginaries by Dr. Peter Brewitt

The economy has to grow. If it doesn't grow enough...disaster. Everyone knows this.

Or do they? Last night Wofford welcomed Dr. Iñaki Prádanos, an environmental humanist from Miami University, Ohio. Hosted by Dr. Laura Barbas-Rhoden in a packed Olin Teaching Theater, Dr. Prádanos challenged many of the bedrock assumptions of the past few centuries of Western economic and political history. His subject was postgrowth imaginaries and degrowth. He laid out the strains and suffering that spring from the focus on Gross Domestic Product and showed us the impossibility of an assumption of constant growth on a biophysically limited planet. His approach went far beyond the 20th century tension between capitalism and communism – communism, too bases its assumptions on GDP growth. He imagines an entirely transformed outlook on prosperity and sustainability, and a fairer, more sustainable world. All of this was based

on Dr. Prádanos' book *Postgrowth Imaginaries*, which you can access for free [here](#).

Dr. Prádanos stoked two reactions in me. The first, and simplest, was excitement about our new humanist. Whoever they might be (and you'll all get to meet the candidates later this fall), they will bring a dynamic and original perspective like the one we heard last night. The second was, of course, some deep reflection on growth. At their core, people don't really care about having more money. We care about having a better life, which we use money to provide. Can we build a society where prosperity and happiness don't depend on resource depletion, and how? It is hard to envision. But one thing is certain – we all do and believe things that will seem ridiculous or even immoral to our grandchildren. Their world, in 2119, will be very, very different than ours. Perhaps they'll look back at us and shake their heads at how much we cared about growth.



Students in ENVS 203 learned about soil production and erosion, and observed variability in soils at Glendale Shoals Preserve during lab.



Upcoming Events and Opportunities

**These count toward your two required extracurricular events for the semester.*

November 16th
5:00-5:30pm
Great Oaks Hall

Painting Dedication Ceremony: Please join us for the dedication of the painting commission by the Ruffin Family in memory of ENVS major MacGregor Ruffin. The artist, Roger Nelson, is from Blowing Rock, NC. The painting includes a North Carolina landscape with some of MacGregor's and her family's favorite places.

November 27th – 29th

HAPPY
Thanksgiving

December 9th
Application Deadline

Job Opportunity with Clemson Extension: Seeking applicants for an extension agent for their Florence County Extension Office. This person will join the Water Resource Extension team and coordinate the Carolina Clear program in Florence and Darlington Counties. [Job details and application.](#)

Ongoing

Job Opportunities in Conservation and Restoration: [The Great Basin Institute](#) is a nonprofit organization that specializes in conservation and restoration all throughout the West. They are currently hiring for over 60 paid positions ranging from ecological monitoring, wildlife monitoring, trail maintenance, range land management, and fuels reduction.

PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

Ohio State University – Environmental Sciences Graduate Program

The Environmental Sciences Graduate Program (ESGP) at Ohio State University emphasizes research and applied teaching that will contribute to solving the world's environmental problems.

ESGP is comprised of many departments within the OSU community providing an interdisciplinary education across physical, biological, and social sciences that deal with environmental issues.

ESGP students can pursue and obtain either a MS degree (thesis or non-thesis) and/or a Ph.D. degree. These students can select from four program options:

general study with no specialization; agroecosystems, a whole system approach to sustainable agriculture and food systems; climate change science and policy, research at both the scientific and policy-making level that can bridge the gap between social and natural sciences; and water issues, addressing global change, water quality and consequences of human activities.

[Ohio State University – Environmental Sciences Graduate Program](#)