



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

EAS MONTHLY

APR 2026

[Departmental Newsletter]

WHAT'S INSIDE

Message from the Chair, Murray Gingras

[EAS Outreach](#)

Wellness Committee

[End of Year Party](#)

[Pet Therapy](#)

Health, Safety, & Environment (HSE) Committee

[Register for Field Skills Day](#)

[Upcoming Intermediate First Aid Sessions](#)

Faculty & Staff Events, Resources & Announcements

[Have You Met...?](#)

[Call for Donations: Field Gear](#)

[Mountains on the Edge: Learning in & from the Mountains](#)

Student Events, Resources & Announcements

[2026 Three Minutes Thesis Finalist](#)

[ATLAS Symposium](#)

[ATLAS Bowling Night](#)

[2026 ATLAS Field Trip](#)

EAS Outreach

As we head into the final couple of weeks of classes, I would like to wish all of our students the very best on their final exams, and all faculty the best as they wrap up their courses. Please also remember to encourage students to complete their SPOTs. Their feedback is valuable to both the department and individual instructors.

In March, the department participated in two outreach events focused primarily on geoscience education in northern communities, with a particular emphasis on Métis students, while remaining open to the broader community. The first event was held in Fort McMurray on March 16th, and the second followed in Grande Prairie on March 23rd. These events brought together students from several schools, including Wandering River and Fort McKay in the Fort McMurray region, and Valleyview, Sturgeon Lake and Spirit River in the Grande Prairie area.

The Fort McMurray event was led by me, with support from PhD candidates Sanaa Mughal and Arzu Acikelli. In Grande Prairie, we were joined by Kurt Konhauser and Cody Lazowski. At both events, our team had the opportunity to share favourite rock samples, discuss geoscience careers, and connect with engaged students.



Interest was especially strong in paleontology, environmental geoscience, and geology related to mineral exploration. The enthusiasm of the students was striking and served as a strong reminder that Earth sciences can resonate with northern and Indigenous communities. If these efforts encourage even one or two students to join us at the University of Alberta, they will have been well worth it. Overall, the outreach was an excellent success, and we hope to build on it again next year.

End of Year Party

We had a great turn out at the End of Year Party last month. Thank you to all who stopped by to celebrate!



WELLNESS COMMITTEE CONT'D...

Pet Therapy

We will be getting a visit from one or two furry friends this Friday! Be sure to stop by if you're needing some stress relief.



Riddle of the Month

I'm not alive, but I can grow, I don't have lungs, but I need air.
What am I?

[See answer](#)



HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT (HSE) COMMITTEE

Register for Field Skills Day!

On **Thursday May 7, from 8:00am - 4:00pm**, there will be 50-minute hands-on sessions, covering:

- Vehicle Maintenance (and Tire Changing)
- Bear Spray Training
- Loading and Securing an ATV
- Camping Skills
- Human Conflict Management
- Communication Devices
- Navigation
- Water Safety
- Scary Small Stuff (Identifying Insects)
- TDG/Spill clean-up

REGISTER EARLY. Once sessions are full (12 participants), they will close and be removed from the registration form. **Registration deadline: Friday, April 30, 2026**



Upcoming Intermediate First Aid Sessions

Scheduled through the Faculty of Science. In this two-day blended learning course, students will learn to recognize and provide interventions for life-threatening emergencies until medical aid arrives. Topics include: shock and unconsciousness, severe bleeding, head & spinal injuries, major medical conditions, AED training and certification, head and spinal injuries and fractures of the upper and lower limbs. This course includes Level C CPR training and certification (adult, child, infant, and two-rescuer resuscitation) and AED training and certification. Day 1 is completed asynchronously; budget about 7 hours to complete the online portion prior to the in-person portion. Day 2 is completed in person. Recertification is available. To qualify for the recertification option you must hold a valid first aid certificate at the time of the Day 2 in person training date.
Cost: \$125.00 + GST

Scheduled dates:

April 13, 2026 (priority reserved for Field school instructors/TAs)
April 20, 2026 (priority reserved for Field school instructors/TAs)
May 13, 2026
May 14, 2026

Pre-register [here](#)



Have you met...

[Gavin Bradley]

What do you do in the department?

I coordinate and develop our big online courses (MOOCs), teach the intro vertebrate palaeontology courses, and do lots of outreach!

What is your first U of A memory?

Way back in 2009, I came to the U of A on international exchange from Queen's Belfast. In the week before classes started, they had "International Week of Welcome", where they would bung us all into a big tent in the business quad in the hope that we'd make friends. By chance, I sat down next to another exchange student from Queen's who, fifteen years later, would end up being best man at my wedding...a good first memory!

What's something your coworkers might not know about you?

I feel like most people know I do writing on the side, poetry and plays mostly, but I've also played singer-songwriter shows for about 15 years. My biggest musical achievement is that I was once on the same gig poster as "Men Without Hats". Glory days.

What's your favourite distraction?

Our old farm cat, Zazzles, now living a pampered retiree's life indoors, where he does nothing but nap, cuddle, and pretend that he wasn't once the most feared predator in rural Alberta.

If you were enrolling in one course, program or degree right now, what would it be?

Social Work.

You can invite anyone – alive or dead, real or fictional – to dinner. Who would it be?

Hmmm...David Lynch maybe? Black coffee and donuts only though.

If you could see any live performance tomorrow, what would it be?

R.E.M. and Tom Waits are two groups/artists that I love who will probably never tour again, so I'll go with them on a double bill, at a nice, tight venue like The Aviary.

What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

Lining your holey shoes with cardboard will not make you write like Bukowski, but it will give you frostbite. Also, use conditioner. Take care of those beautiful ginger locks while you have them...

What's one thing you can't live without?

Cliché answer, but art (films, music, books) and coffee.

What's something that makes you happy to come to work?

I get to drive in with my wife every day, so that's pretty good. I also love how campus looks in the winter too.

Do you have any upcoming projects or initiatives you are looking forward to at work?

We just released a big, free online course called "Famine as Genocide: The Holodomor in Ukraine", which I'm excited to finally see on the platform, and are working on a new one: "Climate Change along the Mackenzie River", which I think will be totally unique!

FACULTY & STAFF EVENTS, RESOURCES, & ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT'D...

Call for Donations: Field Gear

Just a reminder that we are still collecting gear for the upcoming end of term field schools.

Items can be left in the main office (ESB 1-26).



Mountains On the Edge: Learning in and from the Mountains

As part of our department's "Making Mountains" partnership with the Edmonton Public Library, our very own fearless leader **Dr. Murray Gingras** will be giving a talk at **Stanley Milner Library, April 7th at 7pm**, entitled: "Mountains On the Edge: Learning in and from the Mountains." This will be the second talk in our "Making Mountains" speaker series, which will run between January and April. Attendance is free and all are welcome, so please come listen to Dr. Gingras' tales about research, exploration and teaching in the mountains over the past twenty years, and feel free to bring a friend!

Presenter: Dr. Murray Gingras, Chair of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

When: Tuesday, April 7th, 2026 (7:00 pm - 8:00 pm)

Where: Stanley A. Milner (Downtown), Civic Room #1, Main Floor (just past the Digital Wall)

For more information and registration:

[Mountains on the Edge: Learning in and from the Mountains](#)



STUDENT EVENTS, RESOURCES, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2026 Three Minute Thesis Finalist

PhD student Sreejita Chatterjee recently competed in the Three Minute Thesis competition, and was the only student from the department to advance to the finals on March 26, 2026.

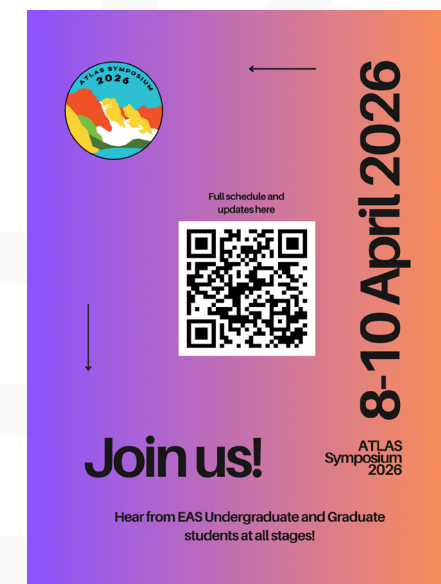
The Three Minute Thesis (3MT™) is an academic competition where participants have just three minutes to explain the breadth and significance of their research projects to a non-specialist audience.

Congratulations Sreejita!



ATLAS Symposium

A reminder that from **April 8th - 10th** will be the annual ATLAS Symposium. The symposium is an annual event that allows students to present their research and learn about ongoing projects within the department. Faculty members, postdoctoral researchers and staff are all invited to attend.



ATLAS Bowling Night

ATLAS is excited to invite you for a Bowling Night at **6pm April 23rd** (Bonnie Doon Bowling Lanes).

This will be a fun and social evening with friendly competition, and a great opportunity to connect with fellow students. All skill levels are welcome, so feel free to come out whether you are an experienced bowler or just looking to have a good time! **A registration fee of \$5/person is required to participate.** If you would like to attend, please register [here](#). We look forward to seeing you there!



2026 ATLAS Field Trip

This year's ATLAS field trip will take place from **September 4th - 7th**. This four-day trip is a great opportunity to explore the Canadian Rockies, experience the geology of western Canada, and connect with fellow graduate students outside the classroom.

Our main destination will be **Stanley Glacier in Kootenay National Park**, where we will take a guided hike to an area where Cambrian fossils related to the **Burgess Shale** have been discovered. After Golden, we will continue west toward **Revelstoke and Shelter Bay**, where participants can enjoy a mix of activities. We will explore the area around **Upper Arrow Lake**, take the Shelter Bay ferry across the Columbia River, and enjoy the incredible mountain landscapes of the interior Cordillera.

Participation will be limited to approximately 10 students, and spots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. **A \$50 deposit is required to secure your place.**

If you are interested in joining the trip, please add your name to the [sign-up sheet](#).



Call for Submissions

This will be the last newsletter for the 2025/2026 academic year. We will resume back in the Fall term.



Riddle Answer: Fire

Newsletter Contributors

Editor: Sarah Hemrick

Assistant Editor: Sherry Eklund

Contributors: Rebecca Funk, Marilyn Huff, Murray Gingras, Tara McGee, Anne Myers, Tahya Weiss-Gibbons, Christine Williams, Sasha Wilson, Sarah Woodland, Dean Zaragoza