



ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING & WATER RESOURCES ENGINEERING SEMINAR



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Date: Monday, April 8, 2013

Place: Todd 420

Video conference to Tri-Cities and Vancouver

Time: 4:10 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

The Right Stuff: Preparing a New Generation of Scientists and Engineers for the Challenges of our Changing Planet

The physical world is changing at an accelerated pace due to human activities. New technologies and intellectual breakthroughs have profoundly improved our understanding, but have also revealed vast chasms of ignorance at the boundaries between disciplines. The academic institutions in which students are trained and may eventually work are reconfiguring to meet current intellectual and societal demands, but it is a slow process. Interdisciplinary collaborations are increasingly needed to extend research frontiers, and academics must increasingly address the many pressing issues at the interface of science and society. While change can be daunting, it also brings novel and exciting opportunities. A new breed of Earth system scientists is needed to meet today's challenges. Small changes in training could better prepare students and early career scholars to meet the challenges ahead. Dr. Susan Weiler, Senior Research Scientist at Whitman College, founder of the Dissertations Initiative for the Advancement of Climate Change Research (DISCCRS, <http://disccrs.org>) and a former program director at the National Science Foundation, will share her perspectives on building successful careers in the growing field of Earth system science, including some easily implemented strategies to help fresh cohorts survive and thrive.