



# BIOSPHERE

## The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

Biology Colloquium: Friday, 16 March 2012, 2:00 pm in CR 5125

### “A Time Capsule from Early Earth: The Geomicrobiology of the Sudan Iron Mine”

Zarath Summers, Ph.D.

University of Minnesota

### Alumna Gives Colloquium

This week alumna **Dr. Zara Summers** will be returning to give the Biology colloquium (see above). After earning her B.A. in Biology at CSUN in 2006, Zara did graduate work in the lab of Dr. Derek Lovley at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her thesis work showing a novel interspecies electron-transfer mechanism culminated in a publication in *Science*. She is now conducting postdoctoral research at the University of Minnesota in the laboratories of Dr. Daniel Bond and Dr. Jeffrey Gralnick where she is using electrochemical techniques to study unexplored iron-oxidizing and reducing bacterial communities enriched from the bottom of an iron mine. Her talk will be about how bacteria eat and breathe iron in the deep subsurface.

### Marine Search Continues

Dr. Cascade Sorte is the next job candidate for the professorship in Marine Biology. Her job talk will be Monday 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 in Jerome Richfield Hall JR 2516. Students are encouraged to attend.

### Holds on Registration for Juniors & Seniors—Get Advisement Now!

In an effort to avoid potential academic problems, the Department requires that all Biology majors who have completed >60 units (i.e., juniors and seniors) receive advisement before registering for fall 2012 classes.

To assure that this happens, a registration “hold” has been placed on the records of these students; only after an academic advisor removes the hold can registration proceed.

Because fall registration begins in just a few months, please take action immediately. The rules for advisement are described below.

(1) All advisement is on a walk-in basis; no appointment is required. The hours of operation of the Biology Advisement Center are posted on the door (CR 5104) and on its website. During the registration period advisors are in great demand and wait times are often long, so seek advisement well in advance of your registration date.

(2) To facilitate the advisement process, you must come with a plan. A form is available upon which you can indicate the

courses in which you are currently enrolled as well as the courses you hope to take in fall 2012. To download the form click on “advisement form” at:

[www.csun.edu/biology/advisement/hold.htm](http://www.csun.edu/biology/advisement/hold.htm).

(3) In your planning we encourage you to use the University’s online MAP (My Academic Planner) program. This program allows you to create a multi-semester plan, identify graduation requirements you have already met, and determine requirements you still must complete. A guide to accessing and using your MAP program is available at:

[www.csun.edu/anr/degreeprogress/map.html](http://www.csun.edu/anr/degreeprogress/map.html).

(4) If you already have >90 units and have not yet filed for graduation, you must do so at the time of advisement. Such students **must** bring: (a) A printed copy of your MAP program upon which you have identified the courses you plan to take to complete your degree; and (b) A copy of the “Application for Bachelor’s Degree and Diploma” with the first two sections completely filled in. The form is available at: [www.csun.edu/anr/forms](http://www.csun.edu/anr/forms).

### Minimum Grade of C now Required for BIOL 106 and 107

Upper division courses for Biology majors that used to require “BIOL 106/L and 107/L” will now require “BIOL 106/L and 107/L **with grades of C or better.**”

This change will go into effect this fall (2012). Current students who have not or will not pass 106/L and/or 107/L with a C or better have the option to retake these courses in the summer. Because the change does not go into effect until fall, the new policy will not apply to summer 2012 offerings. That is, a student who earned a C- in 107 this spring, could still take BIOL 322, 360, and/or 380 in this summer—but only this summer.

Why the change? Data show that poor performance in BIOL 106/L and 107/L is a strong indicator that a student will not

graduate in the Biology major. Furthermore, poor performance in these courses predicts poor performance in upper-division Biology courses. The message: we want Biology majors to be successful in their chosen major. To advance in the major, students will either have to get serious about these introductory courses or change to a more suitable major. It is better to earn a degree in another major than perpetually earn low C and D grades as a Biology major and never be able to graduate (a minimum 2.00 GPA is required in the major).

Still, if you want to persist, then take BIOL 106/L and 107/L again with redoubled effort and new study techniques. Students will only be able to attempt these courses twice. The Department offers free tutoring for both courses.

### Algae Improve Quality of Life

**Dr. Janet Kübler** is anticipating the announcement, sometime in March, of Finalists in the 2011 International Algal Design Competition—Landscape Category. Kübler collaborated with engineers from Canada, industrial and graphic designers from the Netherlands, and another Biologist from Bulgaria to design a modular algal and bacterial water treatment system suitable for use in areas lacking municipal infrastructure. The team used post-earthquake Haiti as the case study and worked for more than seven months designing *Algae Connects*, a village-scale system that links education, fish farming, and habitat restoration through algal water treatment. The group’s next project is already underway for the Morph My City Challenge sponsored by the City of Regina.

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