

# Eustace B. Nifkin

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(315) 470-6900

## QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

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Systems scientist interested in the process of solving complex social-ecological problems in domains of conservation biology, ecology, and natural resource management through collaborative team science. Dedicated to the exploration and conservation of ecological systems through instruction and research that provides foundations and field experience to apply systems thinking for more effective approaches to conservation science and practice.

- Significant experience in course design and teaching including Conservation Biology, Systems Ecology, Ecology, and Environmental Studies.
- Skilled at incorporating research and field components into classroom teaching through the use of conceptual and computer modeling as a teaching tool, including scenario analysis.
- Recent research focus on improving the process of interdisciplinary collaboration at scale of individuals, research teams, and institutions.
- Strong leadership skills including organization, communication, and project management.
- Significant experience in the practice and facilitation of interdisciplinary research collaboration

## EDUCATION

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### M.S. in Conservation Biology

August 2008

SUNY-ESF, Syracuse, NY

Thesis Title: *Abundance, Growth, and Reproduction of Cyrilla racemiflora as a function of Environmental Gradients in the Luquillo Mountains of Puerto Rico.*

### B.S. in Biology, Minor: Applied Statistics

May 2006

State University of New York at Oswego, Oswego, NY

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Graduate Teaching Assistant**, SUNY-ESF: Dept. of Environmental and Forest Biology  
2012-2013

Aug. 2007-May 2013

- *General Biology I Laboratory* (EFB 102; Spring 2013): Organized and led laboratory activities and field trips for two lab sections.
- *Geographic Modeling* (EFB/ENS 519; Fall 2012): Co-led weekly lab sessions in GIS and IDRISI focused on spatial modeling. Advised students on independent research projects.
- *Biophysical Economics* (EFB 522; Spring 2012): Led discussion groups, managed grading, and occasional lecturer. Advised students on independent research projects.

2008-2009; 2009-2010

- *Ecosystems* (EFB 522; Spring 2009): Led class discussion sections and assisted with creating and grading assignments. Occasional lecturer.
- *Systems Ecology* (EFB 519; Fall 2008): Led class discussion sections and co-instructed lab sessions focused on computer modeling. Assisted with creating and grading assignments. And advised students on their final projects. Occasional lecturer.

**Graduate Teaching Fellow**, SUNY-ESF Outreach Office ESF in the High School Program

Aug. 2010-May 2012

- Collaborated with local high school teachers to develop a high-school curriculum for ESF 122: Ecology of the Economic Process.
- Co-instructed in high school classrooms and served as student mentor for carrying out research projects.
- Finalized a curriculum to be distributed across high schools to offer three college credits; developed and led corresponding professional development programs.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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**Dissertation Research**, SUNY-ESF

Aug. 2011-May 2013

- Designed and conducted a meta-analysis of social-ecological systems research in natural resource management to develop guiding principles for conducting social ecological systems science.

- Investigated response of conservation institutions in Costa Rica to historical socio-economic drivers of conservation policy and environmental conflict.
- Evaluated the evolution of regional, polycentric conservation policy in Costa Rica using institutional and policy analysis.
- Used a scenario analysis to explore future vulnerabilities to the conservation system in Costa Rica with a focus on food security and the tourism industry.

**Research Project Assistant, Graduate Mentor**, Undergraduate Mentoring in *Aug. 2010-May 2011*  
 Environmental Biology (UMEB) Program, SUNY-ESF Dept. of Environmental and Forest Biology  
 • “Understanding Conflicting Values: Invasive Species Management in Adirondacks State Park.” Funded by McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Executive Director**, United States Society for Ecological Economics (January 2014-Present)

- Execute administrative duties for national organization, including membership management, communication, vision development, and finances.
- Planning committee for the 2015 Joint Conference of the U.S. and Canadian Societies for Ecological Economics in Vancouver, B.C.
- Oversaw 2014 elections of Board of Directors and website redesign.

### Professional Facilitation

- Great South Woods Planning Project between the Department for Environmental Conservation, Adirondack Park Agency, and ESF Researchers. Adirondack Ecological Center (September 2015).
- SUNY Brain Network of Excellence Collaborative Activity and Workshop (December 2014).
- SUNY Green Composite Network Academic-Industry Partnership, SUNY-ESF Syracuse NY (May 2014) and SUNY Albany, Albany NY (August 2014).
- USSEE Board Meeting and Visioning Workshop, SUNY-ESF Syracuse New York (April 2013).

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## ADVISING AND MENTORING

### *Undergraduate*

Donald J. Klaczko, Environmental Studies Major and SUNY Network of Excellence Summer Scholar (May 2015-Present)

Ryan Roberts, Conservation Biology Major Dissertation Research Project Assistant (2012-2013).

Natalie Garcia, Biology Major, Graduate Mentor for UMEB Program (2010-2011).

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## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

**Nikfin, E. B.**, C.A.S. Hall, and W. Wu. 2013. Using gradient analysis to simulate the spatial structure and function of the Luquillo Experimental Forest. *Ecological Bulletins* 54:223-232.

### In review:

**Nikfin, E. B.**, V.A. Luzadis, and A.M. Stewart (2014). From Positivism to Pluralism: Principles for Linking the Natural and Social Sciences in Research. *Ecological Economics*.

### In revision:

**Nikfin, E. B.** and V.A. Luzadis. A Meta-analysis of Social-Ecological Systems in Natural Resources Research. *Ecology and Society*.

### In preparation:

**Nikfin, E. B.**, P. Hirsch, K. Shockley, K. Friedman, C. Nomura, V. Luzadis, R. Johnson, and C. Carrion-Flores. Overcoming Barriers to Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration: Institutional Space, Intellectual Openness, and Facilitative Leadership. (Expected submission: November 2015).

## **UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND OUTREACH**

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Steering Committee, SUNY-ESF in the High School Center (2015).  
President, SUNY-ESF Graduate Student Association (2012-2013).  
Graduate Student Representative, SUNY-ESF Committee on Research (2012-2013).  
Event committee, SUNY-ESF Spotlight on Graduate Student Research (2011-2013).  
Chair, Professional Development Committee, SUNY-ESF Graduate Student Association (2009-2012).  
Committee Member, SUNY-ESF Middle States Reaccreditation Self-Study (2009-2011).  
Graduate Student Representative, SUNY-ESF Committee on Curriculum (2011-2012).

Invited Speaker for a “Gund Tea” at the University of Vermont Gund Institute for Ecological Economics (2015).  
Invited Speaker, “Approaching Conservation as a Social-Ecological System: A Case Study of Costa Rica” Intersociety Symposium: Society for Conservation, SUNY-ESF (March 2012).  
Invited Speaker, “Preparing for your Final Project: Research and Scientific Literature” EFB 120: The Global Environment, (2012, 2013).

## **CONFERENCE RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**

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**Nikfin, E. B.**, Managing Complex Social-Ecological Systems: Polycentric Conservation Institutions in Costa Rica. Presented at the Canadian and U.S. Societies for Ecological Economics Joint Conference (CANUSSEE), University of British Columbia. October 2015.

**Nikfin, E. B.**, P. Hirsch, K. Shockley, K. Friedman, C. Nomura, V. Luzadis, L. Rickard, R. Johnson, C. Carrion-Flores. Creating a Culture of Collaboration: Operationalizing Interdisciplinary Research. Presented at the Canadian and U.S. Societies for Ecological Economics Joint Conference (CANUSSEE), University of British Columbia. October 2015.

P. Hirsch and **E.B. Nifkin**. Institutional Space, Intellectual Openness, and Facilitative Leadership: Overcoming Barriers to Interdisciplinary Collaboration. Presented at Association for Interdisciplinary Studies 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Michigan State University. October 2014.

**Nikfin, E. B.**, S. B. Balogh, and V.A. Luzadis. Evaluating Resilience of Urban Social-Ecological Systems: Adaptive Cycles in Syracuse, New York” Syracuse, New York. October 2013.

**Nikfin, E. B.** and V.A. Luzadis. “Principles for Conducting Research in Social-Ecological Systems” presented at United States Society for Ecological Economics biennial conference. Burlington, Vermont. June 2013.

## **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

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### Funded:

- SUNY 4E Networks of Excellence Research Grant (\$135,000; 2014)
- Randolph G. Pack Environmental Institute Research Travel Grant (\$500; 2011; 2012)

## **SELECTED HONORS**

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Excellence in Public Service Award, SUNY-ESF Graduate Student Association (2013).  
Outstanding Student Presentation, Great Lakes Research Consortium 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Student Faculty conference (2012).  
Excellence in Teaching Award, SUNY-ESF Graduate Student Association (2010).

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

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Research Ethics and Cultural Competence in Environmental Science, Engineering and Related Field (2011)

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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Society for Conservation Biology  
Association for Interdisciplinary Studies  
Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences