



# THE INNOVATORS GUIDE

## CREATING INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES WITH REAL-WORLD APPLICATION

Top tips from Josh Lawler, professor of Environmental and Forest Sciences and Dargan Frierson, associate professor of Atmospheric Sciences

### 1 Expand and use your network

Lawler and Frierson pooled their connections — including external partners such as non-profits and local high schools — to “shop around” their idea. Then they drew on those connections to set up a formal working group.

### 2 Create opportunities for learning transferable skills

While some students need to fulfill a requirement or to add to their portfolio, all students want to work on something meaningful. The work can also help them strengthen applications for scholarships, graduate school or jobs.

### 3 Don't be afraid to offer enrollment to all majors

Open enrollment can result in a productive mix of disciplinary backgrounds, such as the different types of games created by EarthGamesUW teams.

### 4 Make use of the resources available at a major research university

Including [Innovators Among Us](#), [UW-IT Teaching and Learning](#) web resources, the [Center for Teaching and Learning blog](#) and others. Check out this resource list, but don't forget to ask your colleagues and network for recommendations:

- The [eScience Institute](#) offers seminars, working groups and a Data Science Studio in which researchers share ways of fostering collaboration with technology.
- The [Office of Global Affairs](#) supports scholars across disciplines, institutions and continents in service of international research, education and outreach.
- The [Digital Future Lab at UW Bothell](#) brings together scientists and product designers to develop interdisciplinary projects through a commitment to “radical diversity”.
- [Academic Affairs at UW Tacoma](#) supports teaching and learning and offers faculty a range of resources.

[Learn more about how Lawler and Frierson created EarthGamesUW](#)