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The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to present the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*. The series is dedicated to helping faculty to stay connected with one another while working remotely. Every week, a faculty member will have the opportunity to answer ten questions about themselves and about navigating the changes brought about by COVID-19. This week, we are pleased to feature Dr. Angus Cameron, Professor of Biological Sciences.



Dr. Angus Cameron
Professor, Biological Sciences

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Scotland and moved to Florida in 2015.

Which college or university did you attend?

I attended the University of Glasgow, UK, for both my BSC in zoology and PhD in ecology and evolutionary biology.

When did you begin teaching at FSW?

I was hired as a full-time faculty member at the Hendry/Glades Curtis Center in August 2018. I love being part of our growing campus community and I am proud to be involved with work expanding access to higher education in rural communities.

What made you become interested in your academic discipline?

I've always been obsessed with wildlife. Back in the late 80's when all the other kids at school were watching Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, I was watching documentaries on killer whales and predators of the Serengeti. This interest in wild animals eventually led me to study zoology in my undergraduate degree, where I also developed a morbid fascination with the role disease plays in ecosystems. It was during this period I learned of the transdisciplinary study mathematical biology. In this field I was able to combine my love of wildlife AND infectious disease by building mathematical models of ecological processes. My first big research project was to design a targeted rabies vaccination strategy for a population of endangered African wild dogs, *Lycaon pictus*, in Kenya. My vaccination strategy was ultimately employed and successfully protected the population from the short-term threat posed by a rabies outbreak in neighboring domestic dog populations. I've been hooked to this discipline ever since!

What is your favorite food and local restaurant?

I love all the foods! If I had to pick just one I think I would have to go with something I miss from home. The Scottish chip shop delicacy that is deep-fried pizza. So bad for you, but so delicious! Served with a Glasgow salad (chips to the rest of the UK, and fries on this side of the pond), because obviously you need to have a vegetable, and potatoes definitely count. It's pretty slim pickings for restaurants here in LaBelle, but I'm a big fan of Rock'n Sushi in Gateway, Ft Myers. I am yet to try the sushi restaurant/laundrette in Clewiston, but I'm going to assume that the drive to Gateway is worth it.

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?

It would have to be the legendary wildlife film maker Sir David Attenborough. He has probably seen, and documented, more of the natural world than any other person alive today. I would have far too many questions to ever narrow it down to just one, but I think we can all learn from his insights on how we treat the world around us.

What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 & working remotely?

It's hard to believe we've all been living our best COVID lives for almost a year! Time has somehow managed to drag while simultaneously flying by. During lockdown and over the summer I had time to start exploring the forested areas around our house. I started placing trail cameras in areas where I spotted animal tracks and have discovered that we have bobcats, panthers, and coyotes all within a few hundred meters from our house! I'm a nature dork and I get stupidly excited about things like this. I think I've learned to stop and be intentional about making time to do things I enjoy, rather than being permanently at the mercy of my email accounts.

COVID-19 has increased online learning, and as a result, the need for promoting inclusivity in virtual learning environments. What ideas can you share with your colleagues about how to ensure inclusivity in the virtual classroom?

I've found in my classes that students attending flex or blended classes remotely are most at risk of getting left behind. It certainly takes some extra work to make sure these students are as engaged as their classmates who attend physically. One thing that has helped immensely has been the Swivl (or Zoombot as my students call it) that the IT department provided for me. This allows me to easily pair remote students with those who are physically present for group activities, helping those who attend remotely to feel less isolated, and more involved with their peers.

What are you doing (exercise, cooking, reading, etc.) to take care of your mental and physical health

during social isolation?

While working from home I found it way too easy to overindulge in screen time. I've been trying to read more books instead of diving down YouTube rabbit holes to fill the time. I'm currently reading "Rabid: A cultural history of the world's most diabolical virus". Probably not a book for everyone while we live through this pandemic. Maybe I should have pretended to take up knitting instead? As I said earlier, morbid fascination with infectious disease. What was the question again?

What advice do you have for your colleagues on how to navigate social isolation and changes from COVID-19?

As a somewhat socially awkward introverted person I haven't hated some of the changes we've had to make over the past year, so I'm probably not the best person to offer advice. I think moving forward as educators though, we need to recognize that knowledge is power, and we can use our platforms to combat misinformation in the classroom and our communities. We may not be able to stop this pandemic by ourselves, but if enough people do the right thing, we can get back to whatever "normal" is more quickly.

If you would like to be featured in the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*, please contact Kelly Westfield, Coordinator of Marketing & Technology for the Teaching and Learning Center: kwestfield@fsw.edu



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