

# Leah J. Shaffer

Arizona State University  
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[LinkedIn](#)

## EDUCATION

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| <b>PhD in Sustainability</b><br><b>Arizona State University</b><br>Dissertation: Navigating governance and livelihood dynamics across Alaska's landscapes and seascapes | Tempe, AZ<br>2020 - Present     |
| <b>Graduate Certificate in Environmental and Sustainability Economics</b><br><b>School of Sustainability, Arizona State University</b>                                  | Tempe, AZ<br>2021 - Present     |
| <b>B.A. in International Economics, Minor in Mathematics</b><br><b>Stead Department of Business Administration and Economics, Coe College</b>                           | Cedar Rapids, IA<br>2015 - 2019 |

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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| <b>Worldviews in Alaska and their Role in Decision-making</b><br><u>Co-PI, Arizona State University</u>   | Tempe, AZ<br>2024 - Present |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding how community members and government practitioners who live or work in remote Alaska actualize their underlying beliefs, values, epistemologies, and ontologies within all aspects of resource management and land stewardship decision making.</li></ul>                         |                             |
| <b>Assessing the Distributional Effects of US Catch Shares</b><br><u>Graduate Research Associate, Arizona State University</u>  | Tempe, AZ<br>2023 - Present |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluating the distribution of economic impacts on communities that participate in catch share fisheries, by combining datasets previously unused for catch share evaluation.</li></ul>   |                             |
| <b>Change, Resilience, and Sustainability of Frozen Commons in Alaska</b><br><u>Graduate Research Associate, Arizona State University</u>   | Tempe, AZ<br>2022 - Present |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyzing qualitative data in the form of interviews and government documents to understand the role of underlying worldviews in decision making and multi-stakeholder collaboration that affect the changing frozen landscapes that are critical for interior Alaskans' livelihoods.</li></ul> |                             |
| <b>Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council</b><br><u>Environmental Conservation Intern, Alaska Conservation Foundation</u>   | Anchorage, AK<br>2022       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Investigating the complexities of federal and state water law for the purpose of collaborating with Tribal stakeholders to design a useful road map toward Indigenous water sovereignty in the Yukon River Basin.</li></ul>   |                             |
| <b>Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy, and Water Systems</b><br><u>Graduate Research Associate, Arizona State University</u>  | Tempe, AZ<br>2021 - 2022    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluating the dynamic impacts of myriad future scenarios on the Food-Energy-Water nexus according to various farming adaptations that were proposed as a way to contend with long-term water reductions for Arizona's agricultural communities.</li></ul>                                      |                             |

## AmeriCorps VISTA: Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District

Fairbanks, AK

Project Development Specialist: Farmer Education and Food Security Cooperative

2019-2020

- Understanding the extent and roots of food security and food sovereignty challenges for diverse groups living in Fairbanks, AK, and connecting local grassroots groups to build a farmer training cooperative.

## GRANT WRITING EXPERIENCE

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### National Science Foundation: Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant

Fully Funded at \$62,194

[Award Abstract # 2413780](#)

Tempe, AZ

(2024-2026)

### National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Community Food Projects Grant

Fully Funded at \$375,213, with a 1:1 match

Award 2020-33800-33139, to the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District

Fairbanks, AK

(2020-2023)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Undergraduate Research Mentor, Arizona State University

Sustainability Undergraduate Research Experience, In-person instruction

Research Apprenticeship Program, Virtual instruction

Tempe, AZ

Spring 2025

2023-2024

### Teaching Assistant, Arizona State University

Sustainable Cities, Virtual instruction

Sustainable Cities, In-person instruction

Tempe, AZ

Fall 2020

Spring 2021

### Lead Instructor, Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District

Fairbanks Youth for Habitat, Field-based instruction

Fairbanks, AK

Summer 2021

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Working Papers & Submitted Reports

1. "Conceptualizing Frozen Commons at Multiple Scales" with Dr. Shauna BurnSilver, Dr. Vera Kuklina, Dr. Andrey Petrov, and Pauline Mnev. Target Journal: *Nature Communications* Target Submission: May, 2025.
2. "Preparing students and early-career researchers for ethical decision-making in community-engaged research in the Arctic" with Dr. Malory Peterson, Maria Monakhova, Dalia Maeroff, Pacifica Kitrea Takata-Glushkoff, Fopefoluwa Praise Anjolaoluwa, Miguel Arteaga, Priscilla Frankson, Chandlee Begay, Dr. Shauna BurnSilver, Dr. Stephanie Pfirman, and Dr. Abigail York in *The Polar Journal* (Submitted March, 2025).

### Conference Presentations

1. Shaffer, L.J., Bridging Jurisdictional Divides: Polycentric and Multi-Level Governance for Climate Resilience and Sustainable Resource Management, *Workshop on the Ostrom Workshop 7 Conference, June 2024*
2. Shaffer, L.J., Icy Intersections: Worldview-based Decision-making in Arctic Frozen Commons Governance Under Climate Change, *Co-creating Knowledge of Frozen Environments: Collaborative Experiences between Indigenous Peoples, Artists, and Scientists, March 2024*  
*Navigating the New Arctic Annual Community Meeting, March 2024*

## Products & Media

1. Shaffer, L.J., (June, 2025) [Divided by Belief, United by Change: Worldviews in Arctic Decision-Making](#) - 20th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons: Regenerating the Commons
2. Shaffer, L.J., (April, 2024) [Icy Intersections: Worldview-based Decision-making in Arctic Frozen Commons Governance Under Climate Change](#) - Arizona State University SOS Seminar Series
3. Shaffer, L.J. & BurnSilver, S.B., (2023) [Arctic Worldviews and Decisions](#) - Arizona State University Institute for Social Science Research

## ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND RESEARCH GROUPS

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- Arctic Scholars Research Lab, School of Human Evolution and Social Change at ASU - Member
- Economics for Sustainability Research Lab, School of Sustainability at ASU - Member
- Omicron Delta Kappa, National Leadership Honor Society - Nominee
- Omicron Delta Epsilon, International Honor Society for Economics - Nominee

## SOFTWARE AND LANGUAGES

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- **Programming:** R (Intermediate), Python (Intermediate), Command Line (Basic)
- **Presentation:** R-markdown ,  $\text{\LaTeX}$ , Microsoft Suite
- **Spatial Analysis:** Esri Suite (Intermediate), QGIS (Basic)

## AWARDS

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- *Cum Laude* award for graduating top of class in B.A. Economics at Coe College (2019)
- First Place Writing Award, The Pearl Literary Magazine, Coe College (2018)