

# WINTER SEMINAR 2026

2025-26 U.S. GRANTEES TO NORWAY PRESENT THEIR PROJECTS

Thursday, February 12  
Eilert Sundts hus, blokk A: Auditorium 3



U.S.-NORWAY FULBRIGHT  
FOUNDATION FOR  
EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE



# **2026 WINTER SEMINAR PROGRAM**

Thursday, February 12

Eilert Sundts hus, blokk A: Auditorium 3  
Moltke Moes vei 31 (UiO Blindern campus)

**08:45 - 08:55 Welcome**

**08:55 - 09:45 Our Changing Planet**

Czeszynski, Latting, Tolrud, Seefeldt

**09:45 - 10:35 Biodiversity and Conservation**

Beauchemin, Bowser, Connolly, Kindsvater

**10:35 - 10:55 Break**

**10:55 - 11:35 Making Meaning of Ecological Issues**

Balgopal, Coughlin, Gusdal

**11:35 - 12:15 AI and Learning Narratives**

Knowles, Martey, Wang

**12:15 - 13:30 Lunch**

**13:30 - 14:00 Medieval Roots: Two Case Studies in Norwegian  
Identity Formation**

Miller-Renberg, Talcott

**14:00 - 14:40 Inclusion and Exclusion: Perspectives from Norway  
and the US**

Dawley, Freeman, Jeboda

**14:40 - 15:00 Break**

**15:00 - 15:40 Teacher Education in Norway: From Realities to Ideals**

Baily, Bassett, Limlamai

**15:40 - 16:30 Reflections on the Norwegian Pupil Experience**

Kiesel, O'Connell, Sloan, Gerwin



*The Winter Seminar is an annual event which provides a special opportunity for grantees of the U.S.-Norway Fulbright Foundation for Educational Exchange to share research findings and experiences from their time in Norway. For these grantees, the seminar is the scholarly and social capstone event of the academic year.*

*This seminar is also an opportunity for all who are interested to get a taste of the fascinating and enormously diverse intellectual pursuits of our students and scholars. Be it for the whole day or in part, we hope everyone who attends will find it enriching.*

*We wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the University of Oslo for accommodating the 2026 Winter Seminar.*



**SUPRIYA BAILY** studies how educators sustain their idealism in times of global turmoil. Through her work at the University of South-Eastern Norway, she is exploring how teacher educators navigate apathy, resistance, enthusiasm and idealism in their work to better prepare teachers to teach about democracy and citizenship in their classrooms.



**MEENA BALGOPAL** studies how undergraduate students integrate personal and academic knowledge to make meaning of social ecological issues, like climate change. At the University of Bergen, she is collaborating with natural science instructors to examine how human-nature connectedness might explain changes in their climate literacy.



**EMILY BASSETT** collaborates with educators to create culturally responsive spaces for pupils. At Høgskulen på Vestlandet, she hosts workshops for teacher education students and researches the national curriculum. At Bergen Cathedral School, she works in VGI classes, lectures on American politics and literacy, and supports introductory English curriculum development.



**ELISE BEAUCHEMIN** studies how human activities impact Arctic marine life. At the Norwegian Polar Institute, she analyzes underwater noise in Svalbard's busiest fjord and develops a machine learning model to detect beluga whales within a project assessing vessel traffic impacts. At the University of Tromsø, she holistically examines the larger implications for Arctic biota.



**GILLIAN BOWSER** studies environmental governance through the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change and international assessments. With her host and colleagues at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences she is working on projects associated with Inclusive Sustainable Development in the Highlands and co-teaching classes on environmental governance.



**ERIN CONNOLLY** is based at NTNU and studies hyperdiverse insect groups largely unexplored in northern Norway. Focusing on Finnmark phorid fly populations at varying elevations, Connolly is establishing a baseline of the diversity and abundance of these understudied groups in the setting of rapidly changing Arctic environments.



**JENNA COUGHLIN** studies how hydroelectric energy expansion is depicted in Norwegian literature and visual media. Based at the University of Oslo, she analyzes how aesthetic representations of water and hydropower technology promote critical energy literacy by equipping audiences to pose informed questions about the social and ecological impacts of new energy developments.



**VANESSA CZESZYNSKI** examines how lake microbes influence carbon cycling and greenhouse gas emissions under changing environmental conditions. At the University of Oslo, she studies methane oxidation, oxygen consumption, and organic carbon dynamics in Norwegian lakes.



**KRISTIN DAWLEY** visits upper secondary schools as a Roving Scholar with Fremmedspråksenteret at Høgskolen i Østfold. Her school sessions explore historical issues that help students understand the US today. Discussion, classroom engagement, and time for questions are central to her work. Her teacher workshops emphasize dialogue and writing to support inquiry-based learning.



**SHANIKA FREEMAN** studies the reentry of formerly incarcerated women, focusing on rehabilitation and the impact of incarceration post-release. With the support of the University of Bergen and Law Transform, she is interviewing those with lived experience and criminology experts to conduct a comparative study on reentry practices in Norway and the United States.



**DAVID GERWIN** travels Norway as a Roving Scholar with Fremmedspråksenteret at Høgskolen i Østfold providing VGS students with workshops on NYC, how the US discusses war, early slavery and servitude, MLK's Beyond Vietnam speech, and Starbucks workers. To promote individual exchanges his workshops prioritize 2-4 person small group conversations over larger settings.



**BENJAMIN GUSDAL** studies how Norway reconciles its role as a major petroleum producer with its ambitions as a climate policy leader. Based at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, he examines how social imaginaries of nature, the welfare state, and the Oil Fund shape elite discourse and policy debates on petroleum extraction and climate policy.



**DAMMY JEBODA** studies helping behaviors and willingness to help across social groups. At the University of Oslo, her research project leverages AI to encourage ethnic majority group members to rethink the social group affiliations of immigrants, and will measure effects on attitudes and prosocial intention. Her project will include parallel studies in the U.S. and Norway.



**RYAN KIESEL** researches culturally sustaining teaching practices through interdisciplinary, inquiry-based learning. In his work as the Elementary Roving Scholar and with the Fremmedspråksenteret at Høgskolen i Østfold he has been leading workshops for elementary school teachers and students embedding English language instruction in student-led interdisciplinary projects.



**HOLLY KINDSVATER** studies how aquatic ecosystems change in response to climate change and fishing. With Institute of Marine Research scholars, she uses machine learning methods to combine datasets on plankton, fish, and oceanographic conditions in the Skagerrak to understand how increased frequencies of marine heat waves have changed these communities in the last century.



**OLIVIA KNOWLES** is an English Teaching Assistant in Ås, where she promotes language-affirming pedagogy. In collaboration with her host at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, she is contributing to the creation of an AI-centered Pedagogical Toolkit to support students in academic publishing while investigating the effects of AI on the writing process.



**HELEN LATTING** is conducting research on the past deep water conditions off the northern coast of Svalbard. At the University of Bergen, she is using grain size and isotope chronology from recovered oceanic sediment cores to investigate the Arctic-Atlantic exchanges and their sensitivity to abrupt changes in climate.



**NAITNAPHIT LIMLAMAI** investigates the relationship between cultural and educational systems and how that relationship shapes teacher preparation. In her work at Fremmedspråksenteret at Høgskolen i Østfold and as a Roving Scholar, she focuses on questions of what it means to prepare teachers in an increasingly linguistic, racialized, and culturally diverse society.



**ROSA MIKEAL MARTEY** studies relations between humans and technology, especially generative artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT. At the Center for Digital Narrative at the University of Bergen, she is developing a book that draws on interviews and case studies to discuss how use of agentic technologies such as these can be understood as “summoning demons.”



**LYNNETH MILLER RENBERG** uses frameworks from dance studies to explore identity formation in premodern Fennoscandia. Working at the University of Tromsø, she analyzes chronicles, ethnographies, maps, witchcraft trials, Sámi drums, and contemporary Sámi dance to show how interpretations of movement shape hierarchies of race and gender in the Middle Ages and the present day.



**KATHRINA O'CONNELL's** Roving Scholar workshops for lower secondary school pupils have pivoted around politics of gun ownership, book bans, immigration, and news reporting. Hosted by Fremmedspråksenteret, she also provides workshops for teachers. For this group, "writing in all subject areas" has been the most popular topic; it contributes to preparation for year 10 exams.



**MARK SEEFELDT** will study widespread extremes in temperature and precipitation in the Scandinavian Arctic. With the Norwegian Research Center and University of Bergen, he will identify extremes in atmospheric reanalysis data to identify recurring atmospheric circulation patterns. This will improve understanding of the atmospheric conditions associated with the extremes.



**NINA SLOAN**, acting as an English Teaching Assistant, helps students hone English literacy, bolster communication skills, and develop their personal style and voice. At NTNU, she is analyzing patterns in student writing. Her work at Byåsen Videregående Skole has focused on English literature, American culture and politics, and domestic linguistic diversity.



**LORI TALCOTT** will investigate a family of medieval European brooches whose descendants are known today in Norway as *bolesøljer*. By connecting visual elements of the brooches with political and religious affiliations, she will examine their stylistic and iconographic development in relation to cultural contexts and historical events from the 13th century to the present.



**ELIZABETH TOLRUD** researches methods to improve the detection and analysis of microplastics in sea ice. At the Norwegian Polar Institute and NILU, she works to combine pyrolysis-GC-MS and Raman spectroscopy to holistically study particle amount, polymer type, and chemicals in samples. By standardizing methods, this project supports understanding and mitigating plastics.



**HELEN WANG** studies communication strategies that leverage the power of narrative experiences and emerging technologies for positive social impact. Working with the Game School at University of Inland Norway, she will explore the feasibility of using AI-enhanced MetaHumans as storytelling agents to help promote environmental sustainability and climate action.

*Kristin Dawley, David Gerwin, Ryan Kiesel, Naitnaphit Limlamai and Kathrina O'Connell are Roving Scholars. Unique in the Fulbright world, this program brings seasoned American educators to Norway to hold workshops for secondary school students, their teachers, and higher education students aspiring to become teachers. The Norwegian National Center for English and Other Foreign Languages in Education serves as host for the Roving Scholars and provides invaluable programmatic support for the program throughout the year.*

“OF ALL THE JOINT VENTURES IN WHICH WE MIGHT ENGAGE, THE MOST PRODUCTIVE, IN MY VIEW, IS EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE.”

J. William Fulbright



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