



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

School of Environment  
and Sustainability

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### **How is your research tackling some of the major challenges facing humanity in the 21st century?**

My research puts energy security as a pillar for individual and community satisfaction and wellbeing; it focuses on promoting renewable energy projects in remote, isolated and First Nations communities in Saskatchewan and beyond. Specifically, I look at the economics of these projects, identifying costs, benefits, and trade-offs of renewable energy systems. I also consider individual and community preferences, beliefs, and values to inform decision-making supporting these projects and the design of energy systems.

### **What impact is your work having locally and/or globally?**

Energy transitions towards renewable energies contribute to mitigate climate change and help communities adapt to changing climate conditions. Mitigation of climate change brings global benefits while adapting to it helps communities to minimize its impacts. Community energy projects, therefore, produce benefits locally and globally.

### **What was your inspiration for becoming a professor in the fields of environment and sustainability?**

My main inspiration for becoming a university professor has been my experience as a student with world-class academic teachers and my work with rural communities. From my teachers, I learned that research is a serious and ethical activity that must be enjoyable, and that researchers can produce knowledge to transform the places and communities they live in and work with positively. My experience working in the field with communities taught me to value different ways of knowing and worldviews, which inform and help me define my research agenda. As a teacher, I enjoy sharing what I know and learning from my students' knowledge and experiences.

### **What is your favourite course to teach and why?**

I love teaching economics-related courses in general because incentives and motivations are essential elements explaining how we behave and make decisions. Specifically, I am delighted



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to teach ENVS 842: Economic community analysis and renewable energy, which is scheduled in Winter 2022.

**What book (of any genre) would you recommend to a new student starting a program at SENS?**

I have the following recommendations:

On the notion of development that I think is relevant for sustainability: *Development as Freedom* by Amartya Sen, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* by David Landes, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* by Niall Ferguson, *Energy and Civilization: A History* by Vaclav Smil.

On the evolution of markets: *The Company of Strangers: A Natural History of Economic Life* by Paul Seabright, *Reinventing the Bazaar: A Natural History of Markets* by John McMillan.

On the evolution of society: *The Secret of Our Success* and *The Weirdest People in the World* by Joseph Henrich.

On sustainability-related topics: *Guns, Germs and Steel*, *Collapse* and *The World Until Yesterday: What Can We Learn from Traditional Societies* by Jared Diamond.