

American Center for Mongolian Studies Summer 2025 Field School Webinar

www.mongoliacenter.org

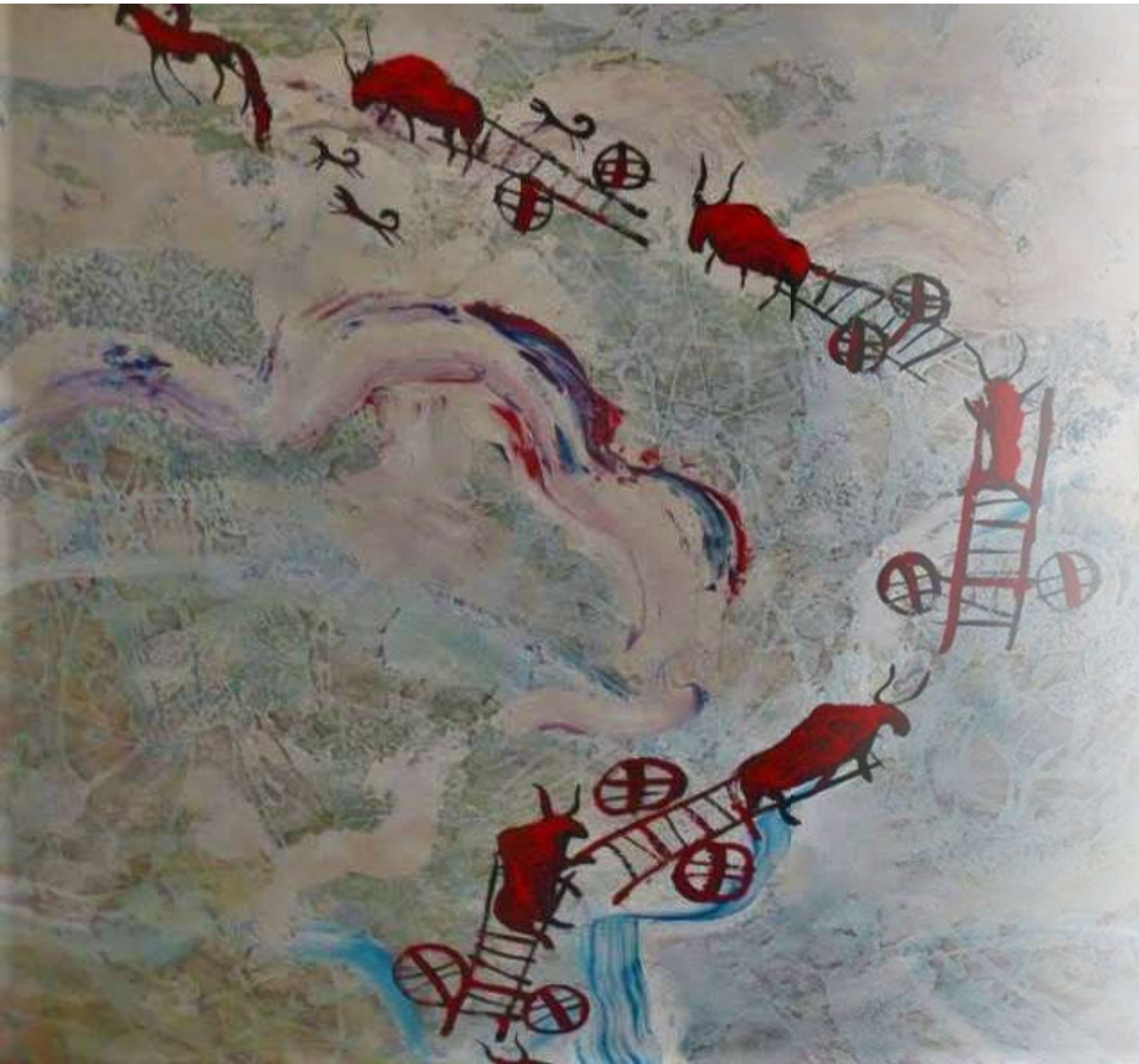
About ACMS



American Center
for
Mongolian Studies

Bridging Cultures, Supporting Scholars





- **Mission:** The American Center for Mongolian Studies (ACMS) is a private non-profit educational organization that supports the development of Mongolian Studies and academic exchanges with Inner Asia. The activities of the ACMS include the development of academic resources, student and scholar research support and the fostering of academic partnerships in all fields of study related to Mongolia.
 - This includes a consortium of international universities and institutional partners as well as individual members. We aim to support *all* scholars and Mongolian Studies enthusiasts, not just “Americans” or those who hold doctoral degrees.
- Founded in 2002, Ulaanbaatar (UB) Office and Research Library opened in 2004.
- 4 Full-time staff in Ulaanbaatar who will arrange and support your visit to Mongolia. These hard-working staff help create an “Academic Embassy” in UB—a home away from home where you can engage with local scholars, do research, build resources, learn Mongolian language, and develop your personal and professional networks.
- Maggie Lindrooth, U.S. Director
- Subscribe to our newsletter and follow us on social media:



ACMS Programs

- Research Fellowships
- Year-round Mongolian language classes and the Intensive Summer Mongolian Language Program (fellowships available)
- Multilingual research library and Library Fellowships
- Regular Speaker Series events in-person and online
- Overseas Faculty Development Seminar
- Custom programs for universities and educational groups.
- Summer Field School
- Visit our website to learn more about all of our program offerings:
www.mongliacenter.org.



ACMS Mongolia Field School





About the Field Schools

- Interdisciplinary, experiential short-courses focused on different topics and themes related to Mongolia.
- First offered in 2019, moved online in 2021, and restarted in-person offerings in Mongolia in the summer of 2022.
- 2024 was our most successful Field School season yet, with full enrollment in both sessions.
- Courses change from year-to-year, so we encourage you to apply if you see a course you're interested in!
- **Field School courses are open to all applicants over the age of 18 from any country.** We welcome applications from undergraduate and graduate students, recent graduates, teachers and faculty members at all levels and institutions, professionals in any field, retirees, and other lifelong learners at any age and any stage.

2025 Field School Courses

Hustai National Park: Managing Biodiversity in the Home of Mongolia's Native Horses

- June 9-22, 2025

Mongolia's Ancient Cities: Archaeological Excavation with the Uyghur Cultural Heritage Project

- June 14-29, 2025 (Session I)
- June 28-July 12, 2025 (Session II)
- June 14-July 12, 2025 (Both Sessions I & II)

The Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity in Hustai National Park

- July 21-August 3, 2025



General Information

- Course I (Hustai National Park) and Course III (The Impacts of Climate Change) have a maximum enrollment of approximately 20 participants each.
- Course II (Mongolia's Ancient Cities) has a maximum enrollment of approximately 10-12 participants per session, and interested participants are encouraged to apply for both sessions.
- The language of instruction in all courses is English.
- Previous experience in Mongolia is not required.
- Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to and from Mongolia. Most participants arrive via air, but rail travel from China is possible.
 - Mongolia has flights from multiple international locations, with most travelers arriving through Seoul or Istanbul (Turkish Airways).
- All courses will begin and end in Ulaanbaatar. ACMS can help participants make accommodations before and/or after the program.
- During the program, ACMS will make all transportation, accommodation, and meal arrangements for the group unless otherwise noted. All participants will travel together as a class. Barring extenuating circumstances such as illness or emergency, participation in all scheduled program activities and travel is required.

Tuition and Fellowships



Tuition Breakdown:

- Course I and Course III:
 - \$3,500 (US/International Participants); 1,200,000 MNT (Mongolian Citizens).
- Course II:
 - One Session: \$3,500 (US/International); 1,200,000 MNT (Mongolian Citizens)
 - Both Sessions: \$6,750 (US/International); 2,000,000 MNT (Mongolian Citizens)

Tuition covers all program costs in Mongolia, including meals (unless otherwise noted), housing, transportation, instruction, site visits, and course materials.

Fellowships and Funding:

Thanks to the generous support of the Henry Luce Foundation and several private donors, partial fellowships ranging from \$500-\$2,000 are available.

- Apply by **February 15, 2025** for priority fellowship consideration
- Apply by **March 14, 2025** for fellowship waitlist consideration

Applicants are encouraged to apply for funding from other sources including their host institutions, if applicable.

Application Overview



Please review the detailed application information on the program website. All applications must be submitted through our online system. We do not accept printed and mailed applications or supporting materials.



All applicants must include the following:

Personal details including full name, address, citizenship, email, and educational background/affiliation

Statement of Interest

Explanation of Previous Experience in Remote Areas

CV

Optional letter of recommendation (emailed to mfs@mongoliacenter.org)



Fellowship applicants must include:

Additional statement outlining factors you would like the selection committee to consider when awarding fellowships to eligible program participants.

May include financial need, diversity, barriers to participation, importance of participation to your studies, career aspirations, or personal interests, or other factors not listed here.

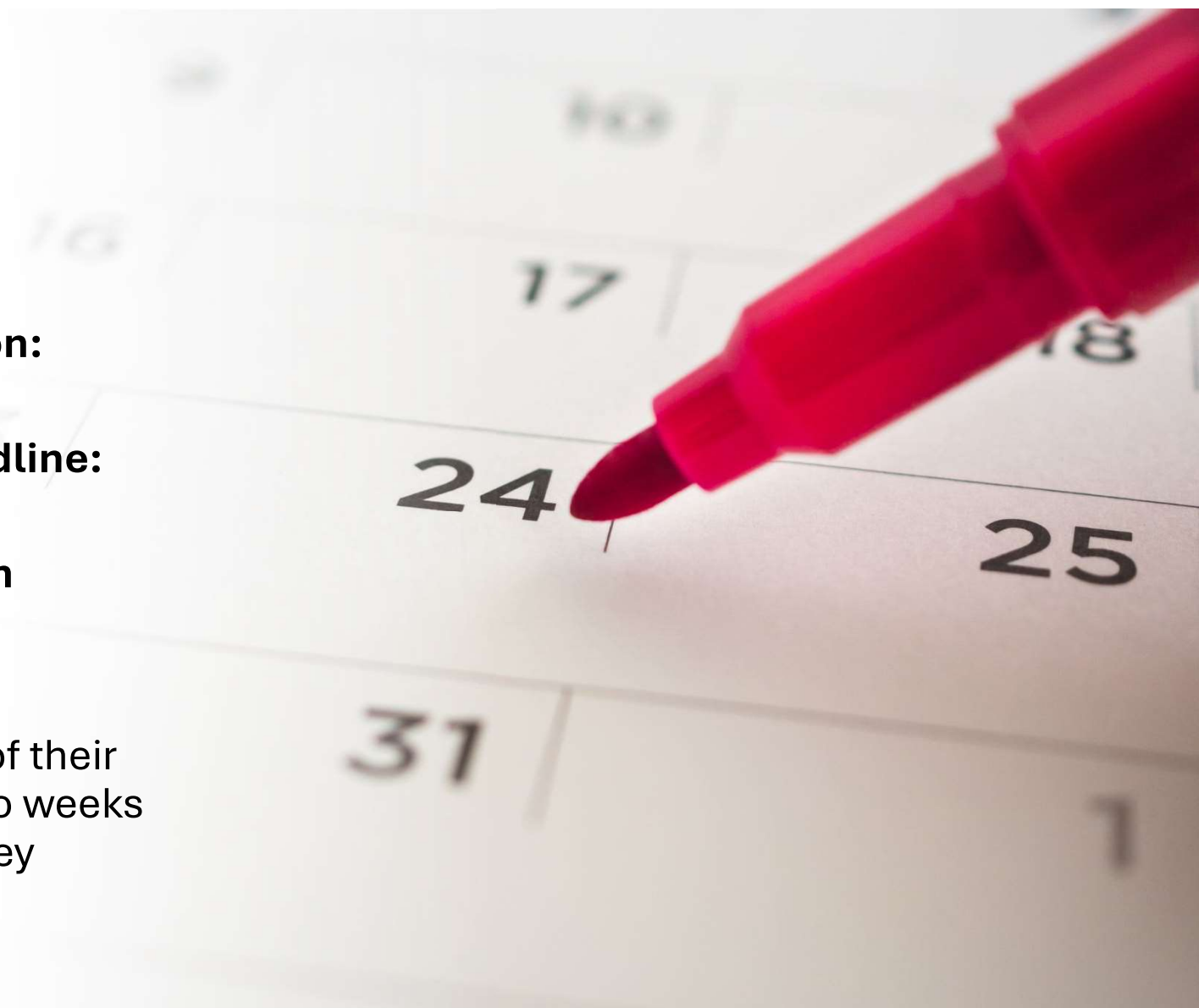


Scan the QR code or [visit our website](#) to start your application today!

Deadlines

- **Priority Deadline for Fellowship Consideration:**
February 15, 2025
- **Fellowship Waitlist Deadline:**
March 14, 2025
- **Final Program Admission Deadline:** April 25, 2025

Applicants will be notified of their admission status within two weeks of the deadline by which they apply.



Academic Credits



ACMS can't directly offer academic credits, but all courses are designed to be equivalent to a 3 to 6-credit university course (5-10 ECTS).



Those who want to receive academic credits for participation should first talk with their home institutions about their requirements for recognizing academic credits for field school courses (e.g., credit may be available as supervised independent study).



We will arrange appropriate assessment and marking for course exercises and will work with individual applicants to provide the information and resources necessary to help you get academic credit for participation.



Safety and Health in Mongolia



General Considerations

- Mongolia has a high COVID-19 vaccination rate and many people are boosted. There are no travel restrictions currently for Mongolia, and no disruptions to summer 2025 travel are anticipated.
 - Deposits are refundable if the program is canceled or with some restrictions if you can not attend.
- All travelers should familiarize themselves with the travel restrictions and vaccination requirements in place at the time of travel for all countries visited.
- ACMS has developed a safety, health and risk management plan for the program. We can discuss special concerns or specific situations with participants.
- ACMS will support participants to find and access appropriate medical care in Mongolia, but the costs of care are the responsibility of participants. Please be aware that certain types of treatment or particular supplies (e.g., distilled water for CPAP), are more difficult to find in Mongolia.
- All international participants are required to have a travel insurance plan to participate.
- Participants who take specific medications should plan to bring enough for the entire duration of the program. Many medications common in the United States, including both prescriptions and some over-the-counter drugs such as Lactaid, are not widely available in Mongolia.
- Participants should keep in mind that certain substances, such as those containing THC, that are now legal in much of the United States for medical and/or recreational use, are highly illegal in Mongolia. Under no circumstances are participants allowed to bring such substances into Mongolia or use them while in the country, as such possession and use can carry severe penalties including imprisonment.



Field Travel in the Countryside

- Participants should keep in mind that medical facilities outside of Ulaanbaatar are generally less-resourced than those in the city, and may be farther away from the course site(s).
- Participants should plan to bring enough medication in their carry-on bag for the entire duration of their travel in Mongolia. This includes vitamins, allergy medications, travelers' medicines (anti-gas and anti-diarrheal), pain relievers, lactose pills, and sunscreen, as well as any prescriptions.
 - Participants are encouraged to bring extras of all medications if possible. Pharmacies in the countryside may not have the variety of medications and other medical supplies available in the city.



Accessibility

- ACMS will do our best to accommodate participants with a variety of disabilities. However, participants with severe mobility limitations or other physical disabilities should keep in mind that much of Mongolia lacks proper accessibility infrastructure including wheelchair-accessible ramps, bathrooms, seating, and other aids, as well as accommodations and aids for those with vision or hearing impairments. Some Field School sites or scheduled activities may be partially or entirely inaccessible.
- Similarly, while vegetarian and vegan dining and grocery options have become much more widely available in Ulaanbaatar, milk products, meat, and wheat remain staple parts of the Mongolian diet. Participants with related dietary restrictions should keep this in mind, although participants with such restrictions, including allergies, have successfully participated in Field School programs in the past.
- Participants are encouraged to communicate any needed disability accommodations or dietary restrictions to Field School staff and instructors as soon as possible so we can try to make necessary accommodations.



Safety

- Participant safety on Mongolia Field Schools is of the utmost importance to ACMS.
- All participants, staff, and instructors are required to sign a Code of Conduct before participating in a Field School course.
- Harassment or discrimination of any kind are strictly prohibited. If a participant feels they have experienced harassment or discrimination from a fellow participant, instructor, staff member, or community member, they are encouraged to report the incident to ACMS so we can conduct a proper investigation and/or provide other support as required or desired. Confidentiality is strictly observed.



Field School Course Details

Hustai National Park: Managing Biodiversity in the Home of Mongolia's Native Horses

14 days
6 instructors + 1 coordinator/translator
June 9 - June 22, 2025



Dr. Tsermaa Nyamdavaa
National University of
Mongolia



Dr. Usukhjargal Dorj
National University of
Mongolia



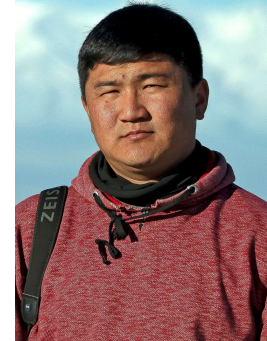
Dr. Tserendulam
Tseren-Ochir
Hustai National Park



Uuganbayar Ganbold
Hustai National Park



Byambadorj Purevdoo
Mon Green One LLC &
Mon Pre Me International
LLC



Batzaya Tsogt
Hustai National Park



Amgalan Batsuuri
University of Alaska,
Fairbanks

Hustai National Park, Mongolia

- ❖ The reintroduction of the Przewalski's horses – 1992
- ❖ The Przewalski's horse is a rare and endangered species of horse
- ❖ The last surviving species of wild horse in the world
- ❖ The world's largest number of the Przewalski's horses exist in HNP
- ❖ The total population of the Przewalski's horses in HNP – 310 in 2024
- ❖ Other important wildlife: red deer, Mongolian gazelles, argali sheep, wolves, and marmots



I. Biodiversity conservation at Hustai National Park

Journey deep into the heart of Hustai National Park, a thriving ecosystem boasting remarkable biodiversity and groundbreaking conservation initiatives. Unveil the park's unique features, unravel its intricate management strategies, and delve into innovative wildlife conservation methodologies.

Through hands-on fieldwork, engage in the observation and study of Przewalski's horses, along with other awe-inspiring species such as Mongolian elk, gazelles, Argali sheep, marmots, and gray wolves. Participate in crucial activities like vegetation biomass assessments, refining your skill in ecological research techniques to effectively collect and analyze crucial data supporting conservation endeavors



II. Community-based conservation

Digging deeper, we will explore the concept of community-based conservation, examining its profound implications within both the park and its adjoining buffer zone. Witness firsthand the positive outcomes of sustainable resource management on local livelihoods by visiting local enterprises, including eco-tourism enterprises, community-scale cheese factories, or artisan craft cooperatives. These activities will serve to demonstrate and reinforce the importance of implementing community-based, ecologically informed rangeland management for safeguarding biodiversity and sustainability.



III. Traditional culture

This expedition will also transcend scientific exploration, offering a rich cultural immersion experience. Engage in a plethora of cultural immersion experiences, from participating in traditional festivals (Local Horse Festival) to exploring the Mongolian Natural History Museum. Immerse yourself in the daily lives of herder families, partake in cultural activities such as horse and camel riding, traditional food preparation, and indulge in traditional games, unraveling the essence of Mongolia's ancient traditions and heritage. Witness innovative solutions in action through a visit to the Mongolian Bankhar Dog Breeding Project, showcasing a traditional approach to combat desertification and conserve vital grasslands.





Mongolia's Ancient Cities: Archaeological Excavation with the Uyghur Cultural Heritage Project

Dr. Richard Ciolek-Torello, Lead Instructor

**Uyghur Cultural Heritage
Project
at
Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas**

Dr. Richard Ciolek-Torello, Lead Instructor

June 14-29, 2025

June 28-July 12, 2025

Course Overview

- Today's Mongolians are the descendants of nomads who built some the greatest empires of the Old World that had a tremendous impact on the cultures of Central and Eastern Asia.
- Despite their importance, little is known about how these empires arose from mobile pastoral populations living in marginal environments—features we commonly associate with egalitarian societies.
- How and why empires emerged in this situation is one of the foremost research questions in the archaeology of Mongolia and Central Asia.
- Central to this question is the role of cities and urban centers in this nomadic landscape. Although many cities are known, few have been studied.
- To address this deficiency, the Uyghur Cultural Heritage Project (UCHP) was launched in 2024.

The Uyghur Empire

- Whereas earlier empires in Mongolia built forts and temples, the Uyghurs were the first to build cities and towns.
- The Uyghur Empire, which flourished from the middle of the 8th Century CE to the 9th Century, was one of several Mongolian empires that preceded the famous 12th Century Mongol Empire of Chinggis (Genghis) Khan.
- Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas, the subject of our study, was one such urban center that was established by the Uyghur Empire in a tributary of the Orkhon Valley of central Mongolia sometime between the 7th and 8th Centuries CE.
- The Orkhon Valley, often considered the sacred heartland of Mongolia and now a UNESCO World Heritage site, was the home of the Uyghur capitol at Khar Balgas and later Kharkhorin (Karakoram), the capitol of the Mongol Empire.

Research Goals

- We seek information concerning the role Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas played in the Uyghur society—specifically:
- Who built the town, who resided there, and what activities took place there.
- Was it a center for political, religious, or commercial activities?
- Chronology is crucial to this study. Some scholars believe that Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas was the first Uyghur urban center, built in the 7th Century before the establishment of the Uyghur empire. Other scholars argue that the Uyghurs could not have built an urban center before they had established their empire.
- One of our initial goals is to establish the dates of construction and occupation of the site.
- To this end, we will conduct excavations and pedestrian surface surveys to collect datable material such as wood, bone, ceramics, roof tiles, and coins.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will gain an understanding of Medieval archaeology In Mongolia, from the time of the Turkic empires to Chinggis Khan.
- They will have hands-on experience in basic archaeological methods of pedestrian survey, hand-excavation, screening, artifact processing and recording, and digital mapping and photography.
-
- They will use conventional and drone photography in combination with state-of-the-art computer software to document our investigations and to create 3-models of the site and its environs.

Broader Objectives

- To place their archaeological learning in a broader context, students will also visit museums in Ulaanbataar and the World Heritage sites of the Orkhon Valley:
 - Khar Balgas, the capital of the Uyghur Empire;
 - Kharkhorin, the capital of the Mongol Empire;
 - The great monastery of Erdene Zuu; and other nearby sites.
- Students will come away from this experience with a broad understanding of Mongolian archaeology from the Paleolithic Age to the historical period while helping preserve important and endangered cultural heritage.

**Tsagaan
Sumiin
Balgas and
camp,
drone
photo**





**Tsagaan Sumiin
Balgas and
surroundings, view
southeast**



Bronze Age Deer Stone and Burial Cairn



Tsagaan Sumiin East Wall SE Corner: Wall F1



Excavation Unit at Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas

Dendrochronology and Dendroclimatology



Roof Tiles and Ceramics



Schedule

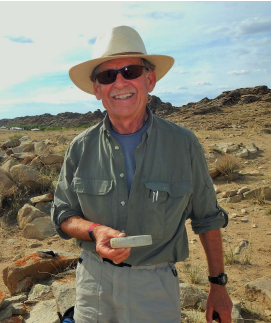
June 14-29

- Day 1 Arrival and Introductions
- Day 2 Ulaanbaatar Museum Tours and Course Orientation
- Day 3 Travel to Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas and Introduction to Mongolian Archaeology
- Days 4-7 Field and laboratory work
- Day 8 Tour of World Heritage sites in the neighboring Orkhon Valley
- Day 9 Half-day field and laboratory work, half-day free
- Days 10-14 Field and laboratory work
- Day 15 Return to Ulaanbaatar and course completion

June 28-July 12

- Day 1 Arrival and Introductions
- Day 2 Ulaanbaatar Museum Tours and Course Orientation
- Day 3 Travel to Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas and Introduction to Mongolian Archaeology
- Days 4-7 Field and laboratory work
- Day 8 Tour of World Heritage sites in the neighboring Orkhon Valley
- Day 9 Half-day field and laboratory work, half-day free
- Days 10-14 Field and laboratory work
- Day 15 Return to Ulaanbaatar and course completion

Your Team Leaders



- Dr. Richard Ciolek-Torello, senior archaeologist at Statistical Research, Inc. and designated campus colleague at the University of Arizona, Tucson, has over 50 years of experience directing archaeological projects and field schools in the U.S. Southwest and southern California. He began studying Mongolian archaeology in 2012 and participated in his first excavation there in 2015. In 2017 he teamed up with Dr. Amgalantugs to investigate Baibalyk, a large Uyghur town in northern Mongolia. The UCHP was initiated in 2024 when Dr. Ciolek-Torello teamed with Drs. Amgalantugs and Batbayar to explore Tsagaan Sumiin Balgas, Baibalyk, and other Uyghur towns.



- Dr. Tsend Amgalantugs, of the Institute of Archaeology, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, has over 20 years of experience directing archaeological projects in Mongolia. He recently completed his dissertation on Bronze Age archaeology and is an expert on Bronze Age mortuary (khirigsuurs) and burial sites.



- Dr. Tumor-Ochir Batbayar, also of the Institute of Archaeology, is a recognized expert on Medieval Age archaeology in Mongolia. He has many years of experience working at ancient Mongolian cities. Between 2004 and 2017, he participated in the Mongolian-German team excavating the Mongol Empire capital of Kharkhorin (Karakorum) and completed his dissertation on the Nestorian monuments at that site in 2021. Since 2017, he has continued to work with the Mongolian-German team on excavations at the Uyghur Empire capital of Khar Balgas.



The Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity in Hustai National Park

14 days
6 instructors + 1 coordinator/translator
June 21 – August 3, 2025



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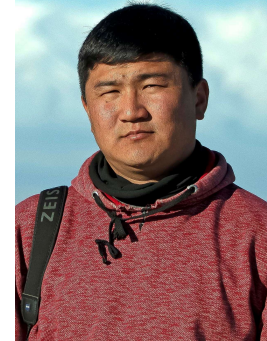
Dr. Tserendulam
Tseren-Ochir
Hustai National Park



Uuganbayar Ganbold
Hustai National Park



Byambadorj Purevdoo
Mon Green One LLC &
Mon Pre Me International
LLC



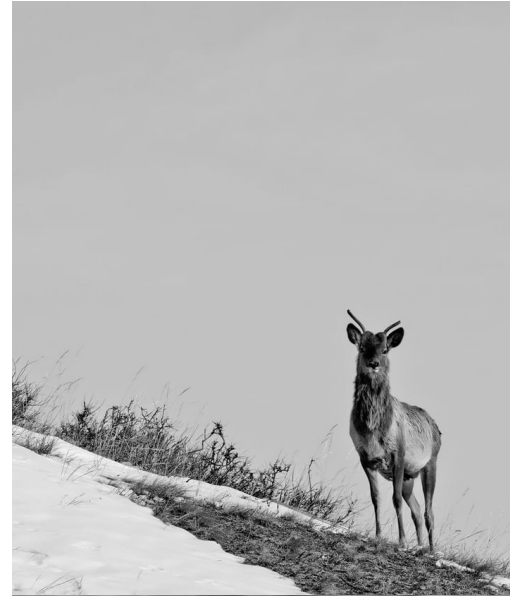
Batzaya Tsogt
Hustai National Park



Amgalan Batsuuri
University of Alaska,
Fairbanks

I. Biodiversity conservation in a Changing Climate

- ❖ Embark on an immersive journey into the heart of Hustai National Park, a vibrant ecosystem renowned for its exceptional biodiversity and pioneering conservation efforts.
- ❖ Discover the park's unique landscape, intricate management strategies, and innovative wildlife conservation approaches.
- ❖ Through hands-on fieldwork, participants will observe and track the iconic Przewalski's horses, along with other fascinating species such as Mongolian elk, gazelles, Argali sheep, marmots, and gray wolves.



I. Biodiversity conservation in a Changing Climate

- ❖ Engage in essential ecological research activities, including vegetation biomass assessments, GIS-based habitat analyses, and long-term wildlife monitoring.
- ❖ Develop practical skills in data collection and analysis, contributing directly to the park's conservation initiatives while gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges and solutions surrounding climate change, habitat preservation, and species protection in one of Mongolia's most important protected areas.



II. Community-Based Conservation in a Changing Climate

This course will delve into the concept of community-based conservation, examining its significant role within Hustai National Park and its surrounding buffer zone.

- ❖ Participants will explore how climate change influences local conservation efforts, particularly in relation to rangeland management.
- ❖ We will investigate how climate change exacerbates existing conflicts between herders and crop farmers over land and resource use in the buffer zone.



III. Traditional culture

This expedition goes beyond scientific exploration, providing a deep cultural immersion experience.

- ❖ Participants will engage in a variety of cultural activities, from attending traditional festivals to visiting the Mongolian Natural History Museum.
- ❖ Participants will have the opportunity to experience the daily lives of herder families, participate in activities such as horse and camel riding, try their hand at traditional food preparation, and enjoy local games, offering a unique insight into Mongolia's rich cultural heritage and ancient traditions.





Questions?

Thank You!

For additional questions, contact mfs@mongoliacenter.org.

Visit our website at www.mongoliacenter.org to learn more about our programs, become a member of ACMS, and apply for the Summer 2025 Mongolia Field School!

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