

Faculty Spotlight



Terrie Klinger

Associate Professor, School of Marine and Environmental Affairs
Stan and Alta Barer Endowed Professor of Sustainability Science

Growing up, Terrie Klinger spent summers at the beach, sailing, diving, and generally spending lots of time in and on the water. Unknowingly, she was laying a foundation for a life dedicated to better understanding the ocean and the communities connected to them—both marine and human.

During her high school years, Klinger observed changes to local environments and began to think about carving out a life aimed at better understanding ocean ecosystems. “I saw the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act—and I thought that I could contribute to efforts to improve the condition of the environment.”

Klinger is now a faculty member in the UW College of the Environment’s School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, where she oversees a diverse research portfolio that focuses on how marine plants and animals respond to a changing ocean. She is increasingly interested in the biological effects of ocean acidification, an emerging field that has implications for the health of shell-bearing animals, coral reefs, and other marine organisms. Recently, Klinger and colleagues successfully secured a prestigious National Science Foundation award to focus on the globe’s

changing oceans—from warming waters to invasive species to ocean acidification—and the consequences to the human societies connected to them. A critically important part of the award will support training the next generation of ocean scientists to be leaders in the study of ocean change.

Working with students and participating in arenas where science and scientists can inform how to better manage ocean resources are what Klinger finds most rewarding about her work. “I love mentoring graduate students and then seeing them go off to do great things,” remarks Klinger. As a governor’s appointee to the Northwest Straits Commission, a science advisor to the Pacific Fishery Management Council, and a member of a new Washington State Blue Ribbon Task Force on Ocean Acidification, she dedicates a significant amount of time in service to improving the condition of ocean ecosystems. In addition, she spent over 10 years serving on the Olympic National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, including as its chair.

Klinger’s high quality of service and track record as a leading scientist have earned her several awards, including the UW Outstanding Public Service Award and the Naturalist of the Year Award from the Western Society of Naturalists.

Photos: above: Courtesy of Terrie Klinger; below, left to right: John Meyer, Terrie Klinger, Terrie Klinger

