

## Abstract

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*Crosstown assessment: Experiential learning in class focused on human-wildlife interactions*

The “Crosstown Walk” was developed by Middendorf and Nilon (2005, ESA.org) as a pedagogical method to determine neighborhood-level differences in the environment and quality of life along a socioeconomic gradient. During the Fall 2024 semester, ABS 494/598 Urban Wildlife Ecology, aggregated data from 8 CAP LTER neighborhoods that are part of the Phoenix Area Social Survey. This student-directed inquiry allowed students to build a shared dataset that included variables on wildlife observations, vegetation cover, road density, income, education, and residents’ perceptions from open-source databases such as iNaturalist, iTree, and CAP LTER data. Students’ final products highlighted a particular aspect about Phoenix-area neighborhoods. For example, projects included topics exploring road density and bird diversity, number of iNaturalist users and income, and desert bird species richness and impervious surfaces. Students choose modalities such as videos, podcasts, and social media reels to target a general audience. Poster will include QR codes to individual student projects. Key principles learned by students included a critical understanding that urban ecosystems are the interaction between humans and their environment and that humans can drive ecological processes that result in variation among neighborhoods.

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