

| Field School Mutations Summary of Findings and data

| For attendees

Dear colleagues,

Attached you will find the materials from the Field Mutations Hackathon, including photos of the brainstorming we did during the Worst Field School Possible icebreaker, the World Café, and the feedback forms. You will also find an Excel spreadsheet with the data from the World Café event, and a transcription of the Journey Maps, both of which Samantha was kind enough to transcribe.

A quick summary of themes done with AI is included below (so usual caveats, but maybe useful for seeing if you want to dig deeper). Both the World Café brainstorming and Journey Maps reflect many shared visions for what a field school could look like, along with numerous unique and innovative ideas.

While there are no immediate plans to take further steps with this data, you are welcome to use this data as you plan your future field school courses.

I would like to thank you all again for attending the Field Mutations Hackathon and for being so game to try something new. I really appreciated you taking the time, and all the effort and creativity you brought to the table. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Cheers,
Frank

| World Cafe Summary

| Bear - Movement and Rest

- Physical Activities (hiking, yoga, outdoor activities)
- Rest and Rejuvenation (scheduled downtime, meditation, quiet reflection)
- Accessibility and Options (accommodating different abilities, providing choices)
- Balance and Scheduling (alternating active and restorative periods)
- Nature Connection (sunrise hikes, earthing practices)

| Goose - Eating and Sharing

- Communal meals and shared cooking responsibilities
- Cultural food sharing and learning
- Connecting food to local environment and traditions
- Incorporating food into learning about broader topics (e.g., climate change, social justice)
- Food Systems Learning (foraging, agriculture, environmental impacts)
- Using food as a medium for storytelling and personal expression
- Exploring traditional and innovative food preparation methods

| Wolf - Learning & Making Meaning

- Experiential and Hands-On (land-based skills, novel activities)
- Interdisciplinary and multi-modal learning
- Indigenous Ways of Knowing (knowledge keepers, cultural practices)
- Connection with nature and non-human entities
- Reflective practices and journaling
- Student-led and co-created learning experiences
- Project-based learning and mini-research projects
- Creative expression and arts integration
- Cultural exposure and language learning

| Beaver - Reflect and Create

- Structured time for personal reflection and journaling
- Diverse creative activities (art, poetry, music, etc.)
- Unstructured Creativity (maker spaces, open-ended activities)
- Incorporating multiple perspectives, including non-human
- Personal Meaning-Making (self-discovery, connection to place)
- Balance between structured and unstructured creative time
- Physical and meditative practices
- Student-led teaching and sharing of creative skills
- Creating lasting artifacts of the experience

| Journey Maps Convergence and Divergence

| Cheryl

| Convergence

- Connection to place, activities, cultural, sensory, grounding people where they are
- Practices of reflection
- Could be structured, could be making, giving, writing
- Co-creative activity, making things together with more or less structure
- Generally a broad connected theme for the day

| Differences

- Grounded in the theme for the day
- Distinct schools of thought

| Twyla

| Convergence

- Largely in agreement
- Morning walk and hike
- Integrated learning
- Followed by quiet time or learning new skills
- Ending day with activity

| Differences

- Desire to provide opportunity to express themselves in some form other than journaling
- Thinking about teachers as learners, and learners as teachers, how instructors are like humans

| Sam

| Convergence

- Literal on-the-land learning, outside of built environments
- Team-based learning, from and with others
- Breaking down rigid student schedules. Field time is not the same as class time
- Themed days, steps that build on each other

| Divergence

- Everyone has a different topic

| Common Themes Across Journey Maps:

1. **Connection to Nature:** Every journey map emphasizes direct interaction with the natural environment, whether through silent walking meditation, guided hikes, geology lessons, or bird walks. The intention is to foster a sense of belonging and responsibility toward the Earth.
2. **Reflection and Mindfulness:** Many maps incorporate reflective practices such as journaling, meditation, or quiet contemplation. These activities help students process their experiences, connect more deeply with their surroundings, and internalize the lessons learned.
3. **Interdisciplinary Learning:** The maps reflect a desire to blend different disciplines, such as combining ecological studies with creative arts or geology with cultural studies. This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also helps students see the interconnectedness of various fields.
4. **Student Autonomy and Co-Creation:** Several maps highlight the importance of student-led activities and co-created projects. This empowers students to take ownership of their learning and fosters a collaborative environment where everyone can contribute.
5. **Emotional Journey:** The maps track emotional states throughout the day, acknowledging feelings such as excitement, curiosity, nervousness, and gratitude. Understanding these emotional dynamics is crucial for designing supportive and effective learning experiences.

| Archive - old or sent to envirocollab leads or something

| Introduction and Caveats

- This analysis was done with AI for the purpose of getting a gist of what ideas were generated and to help us decide if it is worth conducting a more complete analysis and if there is enough here to use for any future purpose.

- Also note that the data from the journey maps was handwritten and transcribed using machine learning, so there are definitely errors. Since the purpose was to get the gist of the ideas a whole, this should be fine for our purposes. But there is likely a lot of diamonds in the journey maps and they deserve more careful human review if we are going to move forward with anything.
- The section at the end contains some ideas for how the themes and activities could be integrated into a call for proposals, and again, this was done very quickly and would need to be re-done following a proper analysis of the data.

| World Cafe - Generating Ideas

| Bear - Movement and Rest

- Physical Activities (hiking, yoga, outdoor activities)
- Rest and Rejuvenation (scheduled downtime, meditation, quiet reflection)
- Accessibility and Options (accommodating different abilities, providing choices)
- Balance and Scheduling (alternating active and restorative periods)
- Nature Connection (sunrise hikes, earthing practices)

Narrative: Start the day with a balance of energizing activities and restful moments. Include rational choices like structured hikes and meditation sessions, delightful ideas such as surprise morning yoga, and long shots like overnight camping under the stars.

| Goose - Eating and Sharing

- Communal Cooking and Food Preparation (group cooking, cultural meals)
- Food as Connection (shared meals, potlatches, storytelling)
- Cultural Exposure (indigenous foods, local cuisines)
- Student-Led Sharing (teaching skills, sharing traditions)
- Food Systems Learning (foraging, agriculture, environmental impacts)

Narrative: Share meals and conversations that foster community. Rational choices could be scheduled group meals, delightful ideas might be potluck picnics with local ingredients, and long shots could involve collaborative cooking classes with local chefs.

| Wolf - Learning & Making Meaning

- Experiential and Hands-On (land-based skills, novel activities)
- Personal Reflection and Growth (journaling, self-assessment)
- Creative Expression (arts, storytelling, multimodal assignments)
- Collaborative Activities (group projects, co-creation)
- Student Choice and Autonomy (choosing focus areas, sharing methods)
- Indigenous Ways of Knowing (knowledge keepers, cultural practices)

Narrative: Engage in hands-on learning experiences. Rational choices include mini research projects, reflection, and diverse instructors including students and guests. Delightful ideas feature student instruction, and cultural exchange. Long shots involve different ways of knowing and hands-on experiences like holding a bird

| Beaver - Reflect and Create

- Reflective Practices (journaling, time mapping, contemplation)
- Artistic Expression (visual art, poetry, music)
- Unstructured Creativity (maker spaces, open-ended activities)
- Personal Meaning-Making (self-discovery, connection to place)
- Pushing Boundaries (leaving comfort zones, embracing imperfection)
- Documentation (field guides, course review books)

Narrative: Reflect and create based on the day's experiences. Rational choices might involve scheduled time to explore, meditate and journal, having students as teachers. Delightful ideas could be collaborative art projects, and long shots might be different species perspectives.

| Some crosscutting sub-themes:

- Nature Immersion and Connection
- Balance of Structure and Freedom
- Cultural Diversity and Sharing
- Community Building
- Multimodal and Multidisciplinary Approaches

| Journey Maps

| Common Themes Across Maps:

1. **Reflection and Meditation:** Several maps emphasize starting activities with reflection or meditation to set the tone for the day.
2. **Group Activities and Sharing:** Common in the maps is the focus on group activities that foster collaboration and end-of-day sharing sessions to reflect on learnings.
3. **Creative and Experiential Learning:** Activities such as eco-art projects and hands-on techniques like sampling are highlighted, showing a preference for learning through doing and creating.

Emotional Journeys:

- Participants are envisioned to experience a range of emotions from curiosity and inspiration to anxiety and gratitude, suggesting a deeply engaging and sometimes challenging experience.

Connections:

- Emphasis on connecting with the earth, community building, and integrating learning with personal growth and reflection.

Unique Outliers:

- Specific activities like "Sunrise birdwalk" and "Evening campfire" suggest unique approaches to connecting with nature and fostering community.
- Unique emotional notes such as feeling "safe" and "supported," indicating a nurturing environment.

Here's a summary of these unique activities:

- **Silent Walking Meditation**
- **Eco-art Creation**
- **Sunrise Bird Walk**
- **Learning New Techniques**
- **Evening Campfire**
- **Geology Lesson**
- **Geology Walk/Ride**
- **Water Testing**
- **Human Geography Lesson**
- **Cultural Meal with Poetry**
- **Field Activities**
- **Reflection and Community Engagement**
- **Gather and Reflect**
- **Primary Field Activity**
- **Communal Meal**
- **Evening Reflection**
- **Orientation and Journaling**
- **Exploration of Ecosystems**
- **Project Design and Data Collection**
- **Data Analysis and Presentation**

Ideas for curricular integration

1. Thematic Alignment

Require that each proposal explicitly aligns with one or more identified themes such as Community Building, Experiential Learning, Environmental Awareness, or Emotional Journeys.

- **Example Call:** "Proposals should identify at least one primary theme from the provided list (Community Building, Experiential Learning, etc.) and describe how the course will actively engage students with this theme through specific activities or course structures."

2. Activity-Based Learning

Ask proposers to incorporate specific types of activities that resonate with the brainstorming outcomes, such as reflection sessions, hands-on environmental work, or culturally immersive experiences.

- **Example Call:** "We encourage you to include activities that foster hands-on learning and real-world application, such as eco-art projects or water testing. Please describe how these activities will be integrated into the course curriculum and how they contribute to the learning objectives."

3. Emotional Journey Mapping

Instruct proposers to outline potential emotional journeys students might experience and how the course design will support these emotional aspects.

- **Example Call:** "Proposals should include an emotional journey map that anticipates student reactions and feelings throughout the course. Describe planned activities or support systems that will help students navigate these emotional landscapes."

4. Cross-Disciplinary and Inclusive Approaches

Encourage courses that utilize cross-disciplinary approaches or are inclusive of various student backgrounds and disciplines.

- **Example Call:** "We seek proposals that demonstrate cross-disciplinary teaching methods or inclusivity in content and delivery. Describe how your course will bridge disciplines or cater to a diverse student body."

5. Innovative Assessment Methods

Request that proposers detail innovative assessment methods that reflect the experiential and community-oriented nature of the field school.

- **Example Call:** "Include in your proposal alternative assessment methods that align with experiential learning goals, such as peer assessments, reflective journals, or project-based evaluations. Explain how these methods provide meaningful feedback and learning insights to students."

6. Sustainability and Environmental Integration

Proposals should demonstrate how sustainability is integrated into the course, reflecting the environmental themes prominent in the brainstorming sessions.

- **Example Call:** "Detail how your course will address sustainability, whether through the use of materials, field activities that emphasize environmental conservation, or discussions on ecological impacts. Describe the intended student outcomes related to sustainability."

Given the diverse and complex environment of the field schools, with their emphasis on environmental studies in wilderness settings and the inclusion of intergenerational and intercultural groups, several potential issues may arise. Addressing these effectively will require a comprehensive support system and well-thought-out processes. Here are potential issues and recommended supports and additional processes to ensure a positive and enriching experience for all participants:

Potential Issues and Recommended Supports

1. Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity

- **Issue:** Potential cultural misunderstandings or insensitivities, especially with international and indigenous participants.
- **Support:** Provide cultural sensitivity training for all faculty, staff, and students. Include sessions on local indigenous cultures and histories as part of the orientation. Designate cultural liaisons among the instructors who are versed in the cultures represented in the student body.

2. Language Barriers

- **Issue:** Communication difficulties due to language barriers, particularly with international students.
- **Support:** Offer language support services, such as translated materials and multilingual staff. Incorporate visual aids and hands-on learning activities that transcend language barriers.

3. Accessibility in Wilderness Settings

- **Issue:** Physical accessibility challenges in remote or rugged locations for participants with mobility issues.
- **Support:** Conduct thorough accessibility assessments of all field sites and provide necessary modifications or alternatives. Ensure that all activities are inclusive, with adaptive equipment and support where needed.

4. Emotional and Psychological Well-being

- **Issue:** Emotional stress or mental health challenges due to the intensive nature of field schools and potential isolation in wilderness settings.
- **Support:** Include a counselor in the team to provide mental health support. Establish a buddy system to ensure no participant feels isolated. Regularly scheduled check-ins should be mandated, where participants can discuss their feelings and experiences in a supportive environment.

5. Physical Safety

- **Issue:** Risk of physical injury in wilderness environments and during hands-on activities.
- **Support:** Provide comprehensive safety training for all participants before any field activities. Ensure that medical professionals are available or on call, and that first aid kits are accessible at all sites.

6. Intergenerational Dynamics

- **Issue:** Differences in physical abilities, learning styles, and expectations across age groups.
- **Support:** Design activities that are adaptable to different energy levels and learning speeds. Facilitators should be trained to recognize and encourage contributions from all age groups, ensuring that everyone feels valued.

Additional Processes and Steps

- **Pre-Field School Orientation:** Run orientation sessions that cover safety, cultural awareness, expected conduct, and an overview of the environmental and educational goals of the field school.
- **Continuous Feedback Loop:** Establish a system for participants to provide ongoing feedback about their experiences, which instructors and staff can use to make real-time adjustments to the program.
- **Conflict Resolution Protocols:** Develop clear protocols for addressing conflicts, including a mediation process handled by the facilitator or a designated neutral party.