CREATE Summer School Survey Results
NSERC CREATE Training Program in Arctic Atmospheric Science
Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston, Ontario, Canada
July 23-27, 2012

Summer School attendees:
15 (40% of attendees) Undergraduate or college students
5 (13% of attendees) Master’s students
18 (47% of attendees) PhD students or PDFs

SUMMARY OF RESULTS:

Average organization satisfaction 4.74/5 (95%)
Average format satisfaction 4.56/5 (91.2%)
Average networking satisfaction 4.39/5 (87.8%)
Average career panel satisfaction 4.33/5 (86.6%)
Average content satisfaction 4.49/5 (89.8%)
Average speaker satisfaction 4.54/5 (90.8%)
Average topic satisfaction 4.20/5 (84.0%)

Overall average Summer School satisfaction: 4.46/5 (89.2%)

What part of the Summer School did you find most beneficial? (Ranked most beneficial to least beneficial)
1. Academic/scientific lectures
2. Informal discussions with other attendees and speakers
3. Networking opportunities
4. Poster session
5. Career panel
6. Non-academic lectures (e.g. Nunavut culture, outreach, science journalism)
7. Hands-on photochemical modelling tutorial

Would you recommend this Summer School to other students?
38 (100%) Yes
0 (0%) Maybe
0 (0%) No

Are you likely to apply to attend the 2012 NSERC CREATE Summer School, assuming a different set of speakers and lecture topics will be offered?
28 (74%) Yes
8 (21%) Maybe
3 (3%) No
DETAILS OF RESULTS:

Organization-Related Questions

How satisfied are you:

a) with the application process? 4.74/5
b) with notifications of deadlines and instructions for completing items (e.g. Jamboree slide, poster abstract, poster)? 4.89/5
c) with the transportation to and from the venue? 4.84/5
d) with the location (Alliston) of the Summer School? 4.55/5
e) with the date of the Summer School (mid-July)? 4.66/5

Average organization satisfaction 4.74/5 (95%)

Overall, students were pleased with the organization of the Summer School. They felt that the application process, accommodation, and travel all went smoothly. One student suggested an earlier announcement of the Summer School. Many people commented that the location of Nottawasaga Inn (i.e. in the middle of nowhere) was a big plus because it increased lecture attendance rate.

Format-Related Questions

How satisfied are you:

a) with the overall format of the Summer School? 4.47/5
b) with the Summer School’s emphasis on training new researchers? 4.47/5
c) with the amount of time dedicated to academic learning? 4.34/5
d) with the amount of scheduled free time? 4.32/5
e) with the duration of each lecture (45 minutes)? 4.54/5
f) with the duration of the Summer School (5 days)? 4.74/5
g) with the inclusion of a poster session? 4.76/5
h) with the inclusion of an education/outreach component? 4.63/5
i) with the inclusion of a career panel? 4.79/5

Average format satisfaction 4.56/5 (91.2%)

Students enjoyed the diversity of topics (i.e. modelling, glaciology, and atmospheric physics) offered. Non-academic talks were also very popular. One student suggested that lectures should be organized from easiest at the beginning of the week to most difficult near the end. Some students thought the coffee breaks were a bit longer than needed, but recognized that they provided buffer time for talks that went overtime. Students did not appreciate when speakers talked overtime. Some students felt that the days were very long, possibly as a result of too many lectures. Most students felt that one week was an ideal amount of time, while one international student thought the Summer School should be two weeks long. Students did not feel that the half hour break before dinner was very useful and would prefer to have it added to the afternoon free time. Students found the poster session and judges’ feedback very beneficial and would like the session to be longer than 1.5 hours. All students appreciated the inclusion of a career panel, but a
few students thought it focused too much on salaries and did not include enough contrasting viewpoints on subjective topics. Students enjoyed the hands-on modelling workshop and would appreciate more in future Summer Schools. One student suggested that the speakers be asked to bring in a textbook or two that students could read during the coffee breaks.

Networking-Related Questions

How satisfied are you:
- with the attendee introductory Jamboree? 4.29/5
- with the Welcoming “Icebreaker”? 4.46/5
- with the organized recreational activities? 4.53/5
- with the amount of time allotted for networking and sharing ideas with your peers? 4.24/5
- with the Summer School’s overall value in helping you improve your communication skills? 4.21/5
- that the Summer School was a motivational experience for you? 4.58/5

Average networking satisfaction 4.38/5 (87.6%)

Students valued their time with the speakers and appreciated their availability during coffee breaks and meals. Some students would like more time for sharing/comparing data with other students. One student would like to see round table discussions for students working in the same field. Students enjoyed the icebreaker activity and would like it to remain super silly; some thought it should be longer. Students were glad to have met a diversity of scientists and industry, government and media representatives and thought the Summer School was well structured for networking.

Career Panel-Related Questions

a) with the breadth of careers represented on the panel? 4.62/5
b) with the duration of the career panel (90 min.)? 3.95/5
c) with the chairing of the panel? 4.35/5
d) that you had ample opportunities to ask questions? 4.22/5
e) with the responses and advice from the career panelists? 4.57/5
f) with the career panel’s overall value in helping you identify potential career paths? 4.32/5

Average career panel satisfaction 4.34/5 (86.8%)

Overall students really enjoyed the career panel and thought that it should be longer than 1.5 hours. Many students suggested limiting individual response time to ensure that all panellists are able to respond to a wider variety of questions. Perhaps eliminate introductions, as all panelists have already introduced themselves during their first talk. Three students did not appreciate the extended discussion about salary. The range of experts/panelists was great; it was nice to get a glimpse into other career paths. One student would like to see a human resources person on the panel.
Content-Related Questions

How satisfied are you:

a) with the amount of useful knowledge you have gained from attending this Summer School? **4.32/5**
b) with the scope of topics presented? **4.45/5**
c) with the usefulness of the information? **4.37/5**
d) with the quality of student posters? **4.47/5**
e) that students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge? **4.61/5**
f) with the level of the lectures? **4.70/5**

**Average content satisfaction 4.49/5 (89.8%)**

Overall students really enjoyed the variety of topics and found most talks extremely interesting. The level of lectures was suitable for most students. One student commented that there was maybe a little too much on chemistry and aerosols. Many students highlighted the glaciology and Antarctica talks as particularly interesting and would like to see an oceanographer, volcanologist, geologist, or biologist at future Summer Schools. A researcher studying the mesosphere would also be appreciated. Students commented that the Summer School provided them with a more complete understanding of the breadth of science in the Arctic. Students would like to see more interactive sessions in the future.

Speaker-Related Questions

How satisfied are you:

a) with the quality of the speakers? **4.47/5**
b) with the variety of speaker expertise? **4.61/5**
c) with the speakers’ responses to student questions? **4.63/5**
d) that the speakers explained concepts clearly? **4.24/5**
e) with the opportunities to interact with speakers informally? **4.76/5**

**Average speaker satisfaction 4.54/5 (90.8%)**

Students enjoyed the informal conversations with the speakers most. Students thought the quality of the speakers was surprisingly good and the range of expertise was excellent. Poster judging took up many coffee breaks, and so took time away from informal discussions with speakers.

Topic-Related Questions

How relevant/useful/interesting did you find the following topics?

a) Aerosol and greenhouse gas forcing on the Arctic climate (J-P. Blanchet)
b) Polar clouds and moist process in climate change with implications for the mid-latitudes (J-P. Blanchet)
c) Monitoring aerosol, clouds and water in the polar atmosphere (J-P. Blanchet)
d) Next generation for atmospheric sensing technologies (F. Bouguin)
e) Understanding halogens in the Arctic (T. Canty)
f) Polar stratospheric ozone (T. Canty) 
g) Global climate and the Arctic (T. Canty) 
h) Middle atmosphere dynamics: The polar vortices, anticyclones, and the stratopause atmospheric dynamics (L. Harvey) 
i) Using meteorological, satellite, and ground-based data to study the Arctic (L. Harvey) 
j) Atmospheric effects of energetic particle precipitation (L. Harvey) 
k) Education and outreach (A. Kilgour) 
l) Nunavut: Tracks in the snow - an overview of the cultural dynamic, history, and institutions of Nunavut (B. Manning) 
m) Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit societal values (B. Manning) 
n) Education in Nunavut: A southern perspective (B. Manning) 
o) Radiative transfer modeling of the atmosphere (C. McLinden) 
p) Atmospheric photochemical modelling: introduction and hands-on exercise using a simple "two-box" model (C. McLinden) 
q) Satellite remote sensing of pollution with application to the Arctic (C. McLinden) 
r) Overview of space and climate within an operational context (S. Melo) 
s) Science journalism (M. Munro) 
t) Ice-climate interactions (M. Sharp) 
u) Glacier change in the Canadian Arctic (M. Sharp) 
v) Biogeochemical feedbacks between glaciers, the carbon cycle and the climate system (M. Sharp) 
w) Antarctic logistics: How do you get people and materials to the South Pole? (P. Sullivan) 
x) From installation to maintenance of science facilities on the Antarctic polar plateau (P. Sullivan) 
y) Ice-core studies of atmosphere-cryosphere interactions (C. Zdanowicz) 

Individual scores ranged from 3.53/5 (70.6%) to 4.63/5 (92.6%) 
Average topic satisfaction 4.20/5 (84.0%) 

The vast majority of comments were very positive and students were pleased with the topics covered throughout the week. Students liked the science journalism talk. Students thought the computer modelling tutorial was a great idea but more time was needed to complete the activity and discuss results fully. A few talks assumed too much prior knowledge and lost people. One student would like to learn about Inuit culture from an Inuk. 

Planning-Related Questions:

Where did you initially hear about this Summer School? (Some students chose more than one option) 
14 - Supervisor 
17 - 2011 CREATE Summer School in Arctic Atmospheric Science 
7 - CREATE trainee email announcement 
5 - Colleague or peer 
4 - CANDAC/CREATE Co-Investigator 
3 - Other (please specify) 
- Presentation by CREATE graduate students at my school
- Conversation with my physics professor (now my supervisor)
1 - CREATE website
1 - APECS website or email announcement
1 - ArcticNet training opportunities webpage

Do you recommend any other locations or email lists etc. for advertising next year?
- press release
- Nunavut - bring students down
- contact atmospheric/earth departments and have them circulate to their email lists
- email to physics departments
- new CREATE blog

What influenced you to attend our Summer School? (Please check all that apply)
29 - My supervisor encouraged me to attend
23 - Topics to be covered are relevant to my research
20 - On-site food and accommodation included
18 - My peers were also attending
14 - Location and/or venue of Summer School
11 - Confirmed speakers
8 - Career panel
5 - Hands-on photochemical modelling tutorial
5 - Other (please specify)
- Here to learn/broaden my research
- I love conferences
- Timing
- I went last year and loved it