

**Northern Ecosystem Research for Undergraduates (NERU)**  
**(IRB #5103)**  
**Focus Group #2 Outline**

**Overview:** This set of second focus group interviews is to be conducted as the students have returned from Abisko Sweden, and are just over a week from completion of the program. This is a follow-up to pre-trip focus group interviews conducted just prior to the participants' departure for Sweden.

**Conducting groups and reporting results:** The group of nine will again be divided into two sub-groups—those working with PI Varner, and a combined group of those working with Co-I's Bryce and Hobbie. All short-term data reporting will be aggregated for the entire group, as to protect participant identities (due to low *n* value). Medium-term summative data may be disaggregated by group, and reported to project PI, if the evaluator feels that individually identifiable statements can be avoided. The goal of this disaggregation would be to evaluate project design in relation to the differing time commitments of the PI and the Co-I's.

**Goals of the focus group(s):**

- Formative data: feedback that will inform programmatic design for ensuing years.
- Summative data: collect feedback that will inform project results that are reported upon completion.

Overarching question: Were you adequately prepared to conduct the research that you had proposed?

Probing questions:

- Were your pre-trip expectations aligned with the reality of your research?
- Were the appropriate pre-trip logistical arrangements in place to allow you to conduct your research?
- Were you adequately prepared in terms of the lab or field techniques required to conduct your research?

Overarching question/statement: Describe the support that your research mentor has provided.

Probing questions:

- Was your mentor available to assist you with your research while in Sweden?
- Were you part of, or aided by, other (non-UNH) research groups at Abisko?
- Was there a specific technician or graduate student who has assumed a secondary mentoring role in Sweden?

Overarching question: What sort of programmatic changes could be made (or what should be left the same)?

Probing questions:

- Has your perspective on the balance of activities in the program changed?
- What are some thoughts on the process of choosing a research project and mentor?