ESS #MeetTheFaculty: Angela Rigen

Professor Rigden answers a few questions about her science and her new role as a member of the UCI faculty.

Thursday, October 13, 2022

Bryant Pahl
UCI Physical Sciences Communications



Part of Professor Rigden’s research involves studying how plants are responding to climate change in places like Madagascar.

Picture Credit:
Angela Rigden

Angela Rigden, Assistant Professor at the UCI Department of Earth System Science (ESS) studies the climate system from multiple vantage points: plant physiology, surface hydrology and climate science. Recently, the ESS science communication fellow, Bryant Pahl, caught up with Rigden to learn a bit about her and her work.

BP: Tell me a bit about your research – also what were you doing prior to coming to UC Irvine?

AR: I am a hydrologist who is interested in the relationships between water, plants, and people. Prior to moving to California, I was living in Boston, Massachusetts, where I did both my postdoctoral research at Harvard University and graduate school at Boston University. I am not native to the East Coast, though – I grew up in Missouri.

BP: What is your research currently focused on?

AR: Much of my current research focuses on understanding the implications of a changing water cycle on crops. I'm asking questions like: Is there a discernible climate change fingerprint in water availability over agricultural regions? How have changes in the water cycle affected crops, and what will crop production look like in the future? The most challenging aspect of this research involves piecing together observations, particularly in regions with sparse data, and working to reconcile noisy data and incomplete theory.

BP: What= has been your favorite thing about living in Southern Californiaso far?

AR: I live in San Clemente, which is a beach town south of Irvine. I have really enjoyed hanging out at the beach with my family and going surfing. My favorite part of working at UCI is the people – the faculty, staff and students have been so welcoming, and their work is inspiring! If we haven't met, I encourage you to stop by my office – Croul 3327 – so you can introduce yourself.

Learn more about Professor Rigen's work at here.

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