



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Art**  
**Leigh-Ann Tower**

Will present her scientific paper

**Drones and Decisions in South Africa's Epicenter of Rhino Poaching**

**Abstract**

Perceptions knowledge allows us to gauge the social impact and scalability by gaining insight into preferences and priorities. A major hurdle of perceptions work is to deal with differing perceptions, because they are inherently, neither, good or bad. Confronting the heterogeneity of the conservation industry may not be easy, but it is necessary in combating the fragmentation of efforts that is prohibiting rhino conservation's effectiveness. Utilizing the rhino poaching crisis in South Africa and drone technologies as a case study for how those in leadership positions are making decisions will show the variability among perceptions and how that may be connected to the desired strategy of drones. This paper hopes to garner support from stakeholders by improving communication among those in and outside the industry by taking away some of the distance and distrust through:(1) exposing the perception of the poaching crisis from an on the ground decision makers point of view; (2) illuminating what information is being used when making decisions on an anti-poaching tool, such as drones. This will allow for the identification of opportunities and obstacles within rhino conservation design by showcasing what is desired and achievable.

Monday, April 10, 2017

1:30 PM

Wrigley Hall 401

Faculty, students, and the public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Michael Schoon, co-chair

Dr. Candice Carr Kelman, co-chair

Dr. Leah Gerber, member