



Geography

INSIDE:

Welcome.....	1
Departmental News.....	2
New Faculty.....	3
New Graduate Students.....	5
Faculty Field Work.....	6
Faculty Travel.....	7
Alumni News.....	8



Geography Newsletter

September 2018

Welcome!

We are two weeks into the semester and it is all downhill from here! September will be pretty quiet but with three open positions anticipated for hiring, there will be an upsurge in interview and colloquium activity later this fall. Meanwhile...

September events:

Monday, September 3 – Labor Day Holiday: no classes, university closed.

Looking ahead, we are again taking a van-full of geographers to attend a regional conference. However, due to distances and the quest for variety, the trip will be to Manhattan, KS for the [Great Plains-Rocky Mountain AAG](#) meetings on October 5-6. The van will leave around 9 AM on the 5th and return the afternoon of the 7th. There are still spaces so contact Jon Comer for details. FYI, abstract submission deadline is **Friday, September 7**. Registration is \$135 for faculty and \$50 for students.

Our region meeting ([SWAAG](#)) is also taking place that week, October 4-6, in Baton Rouge and several geographers are going that-away too. Abstract submission deadline is **Monday, September 10 at 5 PM CDT**. Currently, conference is in the “Normal” registration period (\$150 faculty, \$35 students) until September 22 when rates go up to \$175 and \$65.

News from Around the Department

The A&S Fall Convocation took place Tuesday, August 28 at the Wes Watkins Center. Jon Comer received the A&S Award for Excellence in Assessment (for graduate programs) from Interim Dean Jeanette Mendez. Associate Dean Tom Wikle (right) announced the award.



Dr. Adam Mathews and PhD student **Colton Flynn** recently published in *The Geography Teacher*. The article (seen below) focused on the utilization of experiential learning employing GPS, GPS satellite mapping, and vegetation mapping. While the learning activity is new to *The Geography Teacher* and its readers, it has been implemented on the OSU campus for some time, within the 'Cool Tools' course. In the course, the students have been asked to conduct portions of the activity within the lab while other portions took place near Theta Pond (duck pond) where students obtained a taste of 'field work' GPS mapping.

Supporting Experiential Learning With No-Cost Digital Tools: A Comprehensive GPS Lesson

Adam J. Mathews & K. Colton Flynn

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New Faculty

Sara Alian (L) received her Ph.D. from Michigan Technological University, in 2017. Her interests include applications of geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing, spatial modeling in natural resources management, Geospatial science and technology education. She is a Teaching Assistant Professor in both Geography and Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering.



Michael Acheampong (R) completed his PhD in Geography and Environmental Science & Policy at the University of South Florida in 2018. He is an interdisciplinary researcher whose primary research interest is political ecology of natural resources in developing countries, and spatio-temporal dynamics of human-environment interactions. He focuses on studying the power dynamics and economic factors that underpin environmental changes in resource-rich areas in Africa and the connection between resource abundance and conflicts, using a different development theories. Michael is also interested in researching the impacts of climate change on water and agricultural resources. In other areas of interest, Michael focuses on global renewable energy development and policies, especially bioenergy production. He is also interested in studies with global and public health implications, such as population health (in)equities. Being an interdisciplinary researcher, Michael utilizes a mix of qualitative and quantitative research techniques and skillset to execute his research agenda. He is a Visiting Assistant Professor.

New Faculty (cont.)

Ranjeet John was previously a Research Associate (2014-2018) in the Landscape Ecology and Ecosystem Science (LEES) lab in the Center for Global Change and Earth Observation, CGCEO. His research uses remote sensing and GIS applications to study carbon, water and energy fluxes, ecosystem/human system interactions, and global environmental change at ecosystem and regional levels. He is the Co-PI of an NSF-funded project entitled "Ecosystems and Societies of Outer and Inner Mongolia: Divergent Trajectories and Coevolution". He seeks to find out how changing trends in human-induced land cover/use change will modify land surface processes across these vast, water-limited and fragile grasslands with similar biogeography, but with contrasting political systems and land use policy regimes (Mongolia and Inner Mongolia, China). His research utilizes the Coupled Human and Natural systems framework to study the effects of extreme climate events and natural hazards (e.g. drought and severe winters) in conjunction with grazing pressure on grassland degradation and on vulnerable pastoral communities across precipitation and elevation gradients. He is also the Co-I of an NASA LCLUC-USDA project titled, "Socioecological carbon production in managed agricultural-forest landscapes." his role is to develop remote sensing products and conduct geospatial analysis in this ongoing study of biophysical regulations, resource limitations and land management (till/no till, marginal lands) of dominant land over types including biofuel crops (switchgrass, mixed prairie corn) with different land use histories, at the Great Lakes Bio-energy Center (GLBRC), Kellogg's Biological Center LTER, Battle creek, MI and across the Kalamazoo River Watershed. He obtained his Ph.D. in Biology (Ecology) at the University of Toledo (under Dr. Jiquan Chen). He was a Post-doc and later, a Research Assistant Professor in the University of Toledo (2011-2014). His is a Visiting Assistant Professor.



New Faculty (cont.)

Siewe Siewe Siewe received his MS (2007) and PhD (2015) in Geography, and an MSE (Entrepreneurship) in 2017, all from OSU. He is a Visiting Assistant Professor.



New Graduate Students

Jesse Andrews completed his MA in Geography at Appalachian State University and is now in the PhD program.



Austin Boardman is an MS student and bio-geographer interested in mountains, frogs, and bicycles. For his thesis, he uses UAS to examine how environmental and land use factors influence woody plant encroachment in the Southern Great Plains.

Kellen Bullock completed his BS in Geology at Centenary College (LA) in 2015. Now in the MS program, his interests are GIS programming, spatial statistics, and human geography.



Nicole Pauley completed her BS in Wildlife Biology at the University of Nebraska -Kearney and is now pursuing an MS. Her research interests lie in GIS and remote sensing applications in natural resource management and conservation.

Thornton Raskevitz completed his BS in Zoology at OSU and is now in the MS program.



Monica Velez Grau Stevens is currently in the Civil Engineering PhD program at OSU but is transitioning to the Geography program..

Faculty Field Work

Carlos Cordova is doing research with fellow archaeologists and geographers as part of a geoarchaeological expedition in the Trans-Volga-Trans-Kama region of Russia. He will be also teaching lectures in geoarchaeology in a summer archaeological school at the Bolgar Site. Below left, he can be seen studying Late Pleistocene layers of loess, soils, and cryogenic features at a section on the banks of the Kuybishev Reservoir. Notice on one of the layers two burned surfaces (hearth), which are important evidence of early human occupation north of the 50th parallel north. Below right mapping floodplain features with the help of a UAV.



Карлос on the Tatarstan evening news August 20.

Faculty Travel

Barb and Steve Stadler spent some summer time river cruising 1,500 km along the lower Danube all the way from the Black Sea to Budapest. There were fascinating landscapes and cultures and not a great surplus of tourists. The transition from Communism to capitalism in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary is absolutely interesting. Land ownership is still being contested and, in beautiful agricultural landscapes, there are few farmhouses because the Communists had gathered everyone in larger villages to be more efficient. The Danube delta on the Black Sea is the least populated area of Europe and much of it is now a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The scenic highlight of the trip was the river passage through the Iron Gate separating the Romanian Carpathians Mountains from the Serbia Balkan Mountains.

The front of Bucharest's monumental Palace of the Parliament – the second largest building in the world



The Iron Gate of the Danube

Alumni News

Shireen Hyrapiet (Ph.D., 2012) traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia this summer, and provided the following photos. She has accepted a Full-Time Faculty position, beginning Fall 2018, at Houston Community College, where former PhD student Ramin Zamanian also works.



B-52 bomb crater at the Ch Chi Tunnels (entrance at right)



Ha Long Bay, Vietnam (above); floating village on the Tonle Sap, Cambodia (below)



Alumni News (cont.)



Bayon Temple, Siem Reap



Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum



Tam Coc (where King Kong was filmed)



Ta Phrom (film site for Tomb Raider)



Ruins of Beng Maelea, recently open to public



The Killing Fields of Cambodia



Permaculture – ducks control weeds and pests on rice fields