

GSAG NEWSLETTER

Graduate Student Affinity Group
of the Association of American Geographers

WELCOME TO THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT AFFINITY GROUP OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOGRAPHERS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, [PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE.](#)

Highlights: AAG Meeting, March 29 - April 2

HILTON SAN FRANCISCO - UNION SQUARE
333 O'FARRELL ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

GSAG Welcome Session

TUESDAY, MARCH 29TH - 8:00 - 9:40 AM
YOSEMITE B, HILTON HOTEL, BALLROOM LEVEL

GSAG Business Meeting

All members encouraged to attend.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30TH - 7:10 - 8:10 PM
UNION SQUARE 22, HILTON HOTEL, 4TH FLOOR

All attendees are invited to a party immediately following the business meeting at the [Swig](#) from 8 - 11 PM. We will walk there together after the meeting adjourns.

GSAG Plenary Presentation

Dr. Linda Peake, Professor, York University:
"The new 'normal': states of mental being, graduate students and the Anglo-American academy"

THURSDAY, MARCH 31ST - 1:20 - 3 PM
CONTINENTAL 1, HILTON HOTEL, BALLROOM LEVEL

2015-2016 GSAG BOARD

Chair

Brian Williams
The University of Georgia

Vice Chair

Ana Sanchez-Rivera
University of Maryland

Secretary

Lauren Wustenberg
McGill University

Treasurer

Deborah Ayodele
Arizona State University

Community Builders

Amelia Duffy-Tumasz
Rutgers - New Brunswick
and

Nicole Callais

The University of Southern
Mississippi

Board Member

Young Rae Choi
Ohio State University

AAG Council

Representative

Sara Diamond
University of Texas, Austin

AAG ANNUAL MEETING

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
MARCH 29 - APRIL 2, 2016



FROM THE CHAIR - BRIAN WILLIAMS

It has been another great year for the Graduate Student Affinity Group. I'm happy to announce that we are one step closer to having a voting graduate student member on the AAG council, as a task force has been convened to determine how a student voting member would be added to the council. This is thanks in no small part to the efforts of our council representative Sara Diamond, who has worked on this with AAG president Sarah Bednarz and other members of the council. This will be an important step in ensuring that students play a major role in shaping the decisions of our professional organization. Students comprise approximately a third of AAG membership, and adding a student voting member is crucial in moving towards AAG governance which is more reflective of the central role of students in the association.

The AAG annual meeting is once again just around the corner. We will be kicking off the annual meeting with our "Welcome to the AAG" panel, which we organize along with the AAG. This panel is aimed at providing advice and insight for first time AAG attendees. This year, the panel will include Candace Luebbering and Mark Revel of the AAG, Matthew Connolly of the University of Central Arkansas, Sarah Goggin of Cypress College, Ron Hagelman from Texas State, and Sarah Battersby of Tableau Software. The Welcome to the AAG panel provides a nice introduction to a sprawling and hectic conference, and can also be an opportunity to meet and network with other first time attendees early in the week.

I am particularly excited about the GSAG Plenary this year. Linda Peake will give a talk on graduate students, mental health, and academic precarity. As a number of the responses to the GSAG survey indicate, the uncertainty of the academy is a major concern for many graduate students. I expect Dr. Peake's talk to be as insightful as it is timely, and I hope that many of you will be able attend.

I first became involved with GSAG four years ago, at my first time attending the AAG annual meeting. In subsequent years, GSAG has provided me with some of the most memorable and meaningful moments at the conference and throughout the year. It has been an honor to serve as the chair this year, and I have been fortunate to work with a wonderful group of officers. I am confident that under the leadership of Ana Sanchez-Rivera, the incoming chair, GSAG will be stronger than ever. If you are interested in taking on a leadership position in GSAG, we would be happy to hear from you. It is a testament to the commitment and service of graduate students that GSAG continues to flourish. Thanks for being a part of that, and I hope to see you in San Francisco.

- Brian Williams, GSAG Chair

GSAG ELECTIONS

BECOME A GSAG
MEMBER!

Elections for GSAG Officers will take place at the GSAG Business meeting on Wednesday, March 30, 2016, 7:10 - 8:10 PM. You need to be present to run for office. Nominations will not be accepted until then. To nominate someone, email their names, email, and a brief statement to Brian at brianwilliams@gmail.com. Nominees must be members of the AAG and GSAG. There are more details on our website at gsag.aag.org.

GSAG is an inclusive organization, and all who run for election (regardless of outcome) are invited to serve as board members. We welcome your input and encourage your participation.

Open Positions and Officer Responsibilities:

Vice-Chair: This is a one-year position. The Vice-Chair becomes the Chair after one year and a board member one year later.

Treasurer: Includes running the travel/paper award competition financial components and dues.

Secretary: Responsibilities include writing the newsletter and other inter-GSAG communication.

Community Builder: Includes social media and building a graduate student community through communication.

GSAG Business Meeting/ELECTIONS
Wednesday, March 30, 2016
7:10 - 8:10 PM

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE GSAG
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS!

Ningning Chen, Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

Leslie Gross Wyrzten, School of Geography, Clark University

Joshua Steckley, Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

Peter Thomas, Graduate School of the Environment, Centre for Alternative Technology

Mia Renaud, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Northeastern University

MISSION

To support the graduate students of the AAG by increasing participation of graduate students in the life of the profession and by better preparing graduate students for careers in geography.

DUES

Individual: \$3

President
Brian Williams
The University of Georgia
brianwilliams@gmail.com

Website
www.gsagaag.org

Apply Online
You must be logged in with your AAG username and password to use the online membership application

Once you have logged in: Begin the AAG online application for new or renewing members.

New AAG Member
Application PDF

GSAG COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The 2015-2016 GSAG committee wants to thank all the participants who took the time to answer our survey. With your help, we had a total of 142 participants! Your support with this initiative through your input and opinions was extremely valuable. Please, notice that this report does not include the results for all the questions surveyed. As mentioned in the instructions, the main purpose was to collect data for the committee's internal use. However, feel free to contact me if you are interested in knowing the results from other parts of the survey.

From the 142 participants, 71% were in a Ph.D. program while 29% were working on a Master's degree. Approximately 58% of the participants were female and our membership includes 85% domestic students and 15% international students. The average age was 30, although the range spanned from 22 to 56 years of age. In our pool, approximately 51% were Human Geographers, 28.9% Human/Environmental Geographers, 13.4% Physical Geographers, and 7% worked on topics more focused on GIS/Remote Sensing.

Geographically speaking, there was a good representation of all the AAG Regional Subdivisions! Figure 1 shows the geographic distribution of our participants! Special thanks to the 24% from the Pacific Coast and an honorable mention to the 7.7% of our graduate student population participating from outside of the USA!

A five-point-scale design was used to determine where our doctoral members are in the PhD process, where "1" was the "Pre-Candidacy," "3" was "Proposal Defense," and "5" was "Dissertation/Thesis Defense." Approximately 43% reported to be in the first stage of their degree and 13% are at the second stage (before defending their proposal). The answers also show that 5% of the students were currently defending their proposals, 26% working on their final product, and 12% had their defense scheduled or already defended. (Congratulations to that 12% you are a real inspiration!)

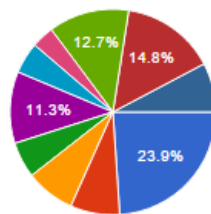
Figure 2 shows what participants believe should be GSAG's primary concern. The results seem fairly proportionate, so we will try to work on all the aspects. To begin with, for the next year we will work to improve our offerings for: a) "Professionalization advice and opportunities" (32% interested) and b) "Connecting with AAG specialty groups, resources and job searches" (27.5% interested). We have selected these topics because, across all participants, "Professionalization advice" was considered to be a "Highly important" (53%) or "Important" (37%) topic. This suggests that, as students, we are very concerned about our professional (and possibly economic) future. Our second goal will be trying to connect Graduate Students with other AAG specialty groups and relevant resources. This topic was considered to be "Highly important" or "Important" for 88.1% of participants. To work with this, we will try to provide tools and spaces for networking that can connect us with new colleagues and prepare us for entering the job market.

GSAG's role in building graduate student community will be approached as we move forward. According to 71.8% of the participants, it is a "Highly Important (34.5%) or Important (37.3%)" task,

although 22.5% were neutral about building community through GSAG. Lastly, 47.9% of the participants thought GSAG has an important responsibility to work as an activist group for the graduate community. As identified in one of the questions, 62% of the participants thought our advocacy should appeal to the precarious labor that we, as graduate students, have in academia. To achieve this goal, we invite all our members to join us, actively participate in our business meetings and on our website, and help us with suggestions to inform us as particular problems emerge. We are also working towards the creation of a Graduate Council Representative on the larger AAG Council, which will help us work directly to voice our needs in the academy.

Lastly, a section of the survey covered questions about our ideal jobs! Among our participants, the ideal job most selected was one at a higher education institution. The second and third most listed ideal jobs were with a nongovernmental organization and in government, respectively. Other careers considered, which were chosen as neither “the ideal” nor the “last options,” were jobs not listed in the survey, secondary or grade school education, activism, and work in the private sector. Finally, professions listed as “last options” were secondary or grade school education, other jobs (not listed), and a final tie between activism and work in the private sector. This shows a wide variety of career paths among our members, though an overall trend towards higher education. GSAG will work to provide resources suited to the diverse career interests of our membership.

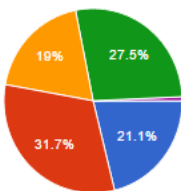
Figure 1 AAG Regional Subdivision of your affiliation



Pacific Coast	34	23.9%
Great Plains-Rocky Mountains	11	7.7%
West Lakes	11	7.7%
East Lakes	8	5.6%
Middle States	16	11.3%
Middle Atlantic	7	4.9%
New England-St. Lawrence Valley	5	3.5%
South West	18	12.7%
South East	21	14.8%
My Affiliation belongs to other country (not in USA)	11	7.7%

Figure 2

Which of the following do you believe should be the primary concern for GSAG?



Activism on behalf of graduate students, and graduate student activism within geography	30	21.1%
Professionalization advice and opportunities	45	31.7%
Building a community of graduate students	27	19%
Connecting with AAG specialty groups, resources (i.e. grants, competitions), and job searches	39	27.5%
Other	1	0.7%

Once again, we thank you for your participation and hope to see you at the Business Meeting to discuss the future of GSAG together. Even if you cannot make it, we encourage you to get in touch with us to share your ideas about how GSAG can better serve the needs of our members in the future.

OTHER SESSIONS SPONSORED BY GSAG

Tuesday, March 29, 2016

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Paper Session: Geography and Literature I: Identities and Subjectivities

Imperial B, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

12:40 AM - 2:20 PM

Paper Session: Geography and Literature II: Space and Place

Imperial B, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

2:40 - 4:20 PM

Paper Session: Geography and Literature III: Geographies and Literary Facts

Imperial B, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

4:40 - 6:20 PM

Panel Session: Geography and Literature IV: Geo Slam 16

Imperial B, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

8:00 - 9:40 AM

Paper Session: Linguistic Geography

Bellevue Room, Marker Hotel, Lobby Level

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Paper Session: Linguistic Geography 2

Bellevue Room, Marker Hotel, Lobby Level

1:20 PM - 3:00 PM

Paper Session: Linguistic Geography 3

Bellevue Room, Marker Hotel, Lobby Level

3:20 - 5:00 PM

Panel Session: Positionality, gender & fieldwork: considerations & advice from female graduate students

Mason B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

5:20 - 7:00 PM

Panel Session: Memorial Service for Susan Hardwick

Imperial A, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

5:20 - 7:00 PM

Panel Session: The Maps & Geographies of Comic Books, Graphic Novels, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Literature

Bay View Room, Hotel Nikko, 25th Floor

Thursday, March 31, 2016

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Paper Session: Continuing Conversations: Strategies for the Promotion of Positive Mental Health in the Academy

Yosemite A, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

1:20 - 3:00 PM (Simultaneous with other GSAG-sponsored events)

Panel Session: Batteries, boots & blunders: Field work considerations & advice for graduate students

Union Square 10, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor

1:20 - 3:00 PM (Simultaneous with other GSAG-sponsored events)

Panel Session: It's called a life: Moving beyond work-life balance to achieve more care-full universities

Yosemite A, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

1:20 - 3:00 PM (Simultaneous with other GSAG-sponsored events)

Interactive Short Paper Session: New Voices in Water Resources Geography

Athens North, Marker Hotel, Lower Level

Friday, April 1, 2016

8:00 - 9:40 AM

Paper Session: Disability Geography 1: GIS & Spatial Analysis

Taylor Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Paper Session: Disability Geography 2: The Social Production of Disability

Taylor Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Panel Session: Interdisciplinarity in Graduate Training in New Institutional Landscapes

Imperial B, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level

1:20 PM - 3:00 PM

Paper Session: Global Art Worlds and a World of Cities 1

Taylor Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

1:20 PM - 3:00 PM

Panel Session: The Art of Grant Proposal Writing: Supporting Women in Geography Across the Sub-disciplines, 4th Annual Panel

Bellevue Room, Marker Hotel, Lobby Level

3:20 - 5:00 PM

Paper Session: Global Art Worlds and a World of Cities 2

Taylor Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

5:20 - 7:00 PM

Paper Session: Global Art Worlds and a World of Cities 3

Taylor Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

Saturday, April 2, 2016

10:00 - 11:40 AM

Panel Session: Graduate Student Associations: Leadership, Purpose & Improvement

Golden Gate 1, Hilton Hotel, Lobby Level

4:00 - 5:40 PM

Panel Discussion: "If I knew then what I know now..." An Open Discussion on Funding for Research "There," "Here," and Navigating "The Field."

Plaza A, Hilton Hotel, Lobby Level

GSAG OFFICERS - JOIN US!

Chair - Brian Williams

Brian is a PhD candidate in human geography at the University of Georgia. His research traces the development of industrial agriculture in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta, using pesticides as a lens into the shifting racial politics of agriculture and the environment in the US South. His work examines the ways in which a history of plantation agriculture shapes chemical-intensive production in the present day, and combines both historical and contemporary qualitative methodologies.

Vice Chair - Ana Sanchez-Rivera

Ana received her BA in Psychology and Geography from the University of Puerto Rico - Rio Piedras, her MA in Multicultural Geography from SUNY Binghamton, and is currently in her third year as a PhD candidate in Student Human Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research seeks to understand how places created by the government and the sense of place that the population has regarding these places influence the creation of collective and individual identity, specifically racial identification in Puerto Rico. Previous work has been based on how the denial of Blackness and/or Whitening's patterns change by places and locations in the San Juan Metropolitan Area and how these biases are key when identifying xenophobic attitudes against Dominicans, the largest immigrant group living on the Island.

Treasurer - Deborah Ayodele

Deborah is a PhD Candidate at the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning, Arizona State University. Her area of specialization within Human-environment Geography is Water Resources Governance. Her current research investigates integration in water governance, and the role of power in sustainability transitions.

Secretary - Lauren Wustenberg

Lauren R. Wustenberg is a first year Master's student in Geography with a focus on development studies at McGill University. She received her B.A. in Environmental Science with a minor in Environmental Policy & Culture from Northwestern University. Her Master's thesis research assesses the long-term adaptation of livelihoods and agricultural systems to a changed river environment in the Peruvian Amazon, with special interest in assessing how physical changes in the environment affect economic development and lead to social change in rural communities as they adapt over time to altered local ecosystems.

Community Builder - Amelia Duffy-Tumasz

Amelia is PhD Candidate in Geography and Program Assistant for the Minor in International and Global Studies at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. She studies the everyday gendered politics of access to natural resources in Senegalese fisheries, incorporating an intersectionality approach to contribute to long-standing and ongoing debates in political ecology and on rural livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa.

Community Builder - Nicole Callais

Nicole E. Callais is a geography Master's student at The University of Southern Mississippi. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Geography with a concentration in Geographic Research Methods and minor in International Security and Conflict Resolution from San Diego State University. Her ongoing thesis research titled, "Invisible People of the Invisible Coast: The Resilience of People Experiencing Homelessness to

Disasters on the Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Gulf Coast,” analyzes the social and physical vulnerability of the homeless to disasters through their social and physical capital and networks. Her research interests include: ‘natural’ and anthropogenic hazards and disasters, vulnerability, resilience, violence and space, terrorism, international and homeland security, political and cultural ecology, international aid and development, resource management, qualitative research methods, quantitative research methods, GIS, modeling, spatial analysis, and statistics.

Board Member - Young Rae Choi

Ph.D. from Ohio State University - Geography, 2015. I am interested in looking at the new ways socioecological transformations of coasts and oceans take place under the increasing influence of the sustainability paradigm. I analyze these issues through critical geographic lenses that include political ecology and production of space.