

# UCGIS Education Committee Report

## UCGIS Annual Symposium 2015

This report covers the activities of the Education Committee for the period of August 2014 through May 2015 leading up to the 2015 UCGIS Symposium in Alexandria, VA.

### Recap of Recent Committee Activities

Ola Ahlqvist, The Ohio State University, is completing his first year as chair of the committee after taking over from Diana Sinton on August 26, 2014. Ahlqvist's term will run through the end of the 2017 UCGIS Symposium. Individuals currently interested in serving on the committee may include David DiBiase (Esri); Doug Flewelling (Univ. of Redlands); Sven Fuhrmann (George Mason University); Xingong Li (Univ of Kansas); Steve Moore (University of Redlands); Jennifer Swift (Univ Southern California); and Laura Tateosian (North Carolina State University).

Major activities during the last year included the following:

1. **2014 Symposium.** At the 2014 Symposium, educational activities included the day-long focus on the GIS&T Body of Knowledge, and a session focused on Open Geospatial Education, with talks by Helena Mitsova (NC State) and Anthony Robinson (Penn State).

2. **BoK 2.0**

While not primarily led by the education committee, the work to further a revised and re-envisioned BoK has continued to be an active item on the committee chair's radar. Under John Wilson's leadership, significant discussion of BoK 2.0 happened in conjunction with the Annual Symposium in Pasadena 2014 and these are described in detail in the report "Geographic Information Science & Technology Body of Knowledge 2.0 Project". It effectively summarizes the results of the discussions during the symposium, as well as two web-based Qualtrics surveys that were distributed around the same time. Furthermore, a "Requirements Assessment for the GIS&T Body of Knowledge 2.0 Curation Effort" was put out to solicit proposals for how to curate and manage the new BoK.

UCGIS leadership has since reached several decisions about how to direct activities in relation to the BoK. A UCGIS-branded Mediawiki platform will be used as entry point for content management and curation. A Moodle (Learning Management System) installation will also be connected to the wiki to facilitate the development of educational modules and other material directly linked to the BoK content. Designing and producing these educational materials (and enabling others to do the same) has been one of the long-term motivations for this entire enterprise, and is seen as an important step to add tangible value to the overall value proposition of UCGIS.

Three main factors were considered in reaching these specific decisions: affordability, branding, and openness. Affordability is critical in order to spend limited funds in a wise and responsible manner. Branding is equally important to clarify that the future BoK is, truly, a community-owned product with UCGIS as both a host and a steward for the

effort. Finally, philosophically, UCGIS feels that committing to open access and open source principles will be the most flexible and accommodating for the future enhancements and developments that we expect will eventually happen. The management strategy involving Mediawiki and Moodle, as proposed, scores high in each of these ideals.

Most recently, the UCGIS Chair invited a small group of people considered to be core stakeholders with a vested interest in the future of the BoK to a conversation on the future of the UCGIS GIS&T BoK. This conversation, held during the AAG meeting in Chicago in April 2015, engaged several matters including the value and role of the BoK to the GIScience community (and beyond), relationships of the UCGIS GIS&T BoK to the corresponding AGILE effort, and the current approach (described above).

The intent by the Executive Committee is to have a preliminary MediaWiki interface online by August 1, 2015. John Wilson continues to organize a steering committee of individuals who may serve as lead content organizers and editorial staff.

### **3. 2015 UCGIS Education Award**

A call for nominations for the 2015 Education Award was distributed in early December 2014, and three nominations were received, including one “carry-over” from last year’s process that never resulted in an award. An Education Awards committee was established composed of William Huxhold, Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2013 awardee (committee chair); Amy Lobben, Associate Professor, University of Oregon; Steven Moore, Director of Spatial Studies, University of Redlands; Xingong Li, Associate Professor, University of Kansas; Helena Mitatsova, Professor, North Carolina State University. After deliberation the committee selected Shashi Shekhar for the 2015 UCGIS Education Award.

### **2015 Symposium Agenda Items**

For the 2015 annual symposium, Ola Ahlqvist organized a lunch presentation by Chris Hoadley, program manager for NSF’s Cyberlearning program. Additionally, the education committee is scheduled to meet for breakfast on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. Agenda items include the following:

- How should the committee
  - o facilitate ongoing conversation - regular meetings or ad hoc? (UCGIS has a set of good and working electronic collaboration tools that are used for board business)
  - o handle standing commitments - currently only the education award process, more?
  - o Current action areas - how to solicit, prioritize, operationalize?
  - o Identify and leverage partnership (eg. With AAG, NCGE)?

The Education portion of the Saturday morning committees’ session will focus on a report from John Wilson on the BoK 2.0 activities and a presentation of ongoing work on GeoProgressions led by AAG and the National Center for Research in Geographic Education.

Respectfully submitted,

Ola Ahlqvist

Chair, UCGIS Education Committee