

UCGIS Research Committee Report, May 2017 – May 2018: @UCGIS Annual Symposium 2018

This report covers the activities of the Research Committee for the period of May 2017 (UCGIS Symposium in Arlington, VA) to the 2018 UCGIS Symposium in Madison, WI.

Recap of Recent Committee Activities

Shih-Lung Shaw, University of Tennessee - Knoxville, is completing his first year as chair of the UCGIS Research Committee. The current committee consists of: Jeremy Mennis of Temple University (Past Chair), Xinyue Ye of Kent State University (Vice Chair), Jochen Albrecht of Hunter College – The City University of New York, Wenwen Li of Arizona State University, Yongmei Lu of Texas State University – San Marcos, Wei Luo of UC Santa Barbara, Ross Meentemeyer of North Carolina State University, and Ming-Hsiang Tsou of San Diego State University.

Major activities of this reporting period included the following:

1. 2017 UCGIS Symposium

The 2017 UCGIS Symposium, which had a theme of *CyberGIS and Diverse Partnerships for Geospatial Workforce Development*, was held in Arlington, VA on May 22-25, 2017. An inaugural Summer School, hosted by the CyberGIS Center for Advanced Digital and Spatial Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, took place before the Symposium and the participants of this Summer School were invited to attend the 2017 UCGIS Symposium. Symposium activities organized by the Research Committee included a session of lightning talks and a group discussion session on “*New frontiers in research and data*”, along with a panel session on “*Is GIScience up to the challenges of a smart and connected world?*”.

2. 2018 UCGIS Research Award

The Research Award committee for 2018 was comprised of the 2017 awardee and the committee chair, Daniel Griffith (University of Texas at Dallas), and committee members Mei-Po Kwan (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Kathleen Stewart (University of Maryland), and Timothy Nyerges (University of Washington). The committee selected Helen Couclelis (University of California at Santa Barbara) for the 2018 UCGIS Research Award for her fundamental contributions to advancing the theory and philosophy of GIScience.

3. Response to Draft NIH Strategic Plan for Data Science

In March of 2018, the National Institute of Health (NIH) had an open request for input to a draft NIH Strategic Plan for Data Science. The UCGIS research committee solicited comments and suggestions from members who had experience of working on health-related projects. Jeremy Mennis (Temple University) then worked with Diana Sinton and submitted a list of specific suggestions to encourage the NIH to recognize the important of geographic data to health-related research.

4. Guidelines of Handling Unsolicited Requests for Letters of Support for Proposals

UCGIS Executive Director, Diana Sinton, sometimes receives requests for support letters from individuals whose proposals have listed UCGIS as one of the mediums that will be used for information dissemination and participant recruitment, leveraging the reach and network that UCGIS has. Upon a request from Diana Sinton, the research committee discussed and recommended guidelines of handling unsolicited requests for letters of support for proposals to the UCGIS Board for approval in April 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Shih-Lung Shaw
Chair, UCGIS Research Committee
May 15, 2018