

Geographical Sciences Departmental Retreat

Dec. 1 – 3, 2015

Action Items and Minutes:

Action: We need a discussion about what we are doing about urban systems in terms of research and teaching. Urban planning used to be part of the department. A discussion is needed in terms of where do we go in the future and what's our comparative advantage on Campus and in the Community? - Giovanni, Chengquan and Paul

Action: We need to revisit the MPS GIS modular class system to see about converting the MPS GIS into a semester based system so we can accept foreign nationals. Jack, Ron and Vivre

Action: For the emerging China GIS initiative. We need to determine the space and compute requirements and establish the relationship between current MPS and the China MPS with respect to staffing. The China MPS is projected to start at UMD Fall 2018. It was noted that as designed, the China GIS cannot scale up and we need to consider ways to make it scalable – Jack to report

Action: Propose that BSOS should create a 30 seat BSOS high performance computing lab to give additional resource/capacity. Wayne McIntosh feels BSOS Dean would be receptive as he wants to support CSS in BSOS - Chris

Action: Develop a database with list of graduate students who have applied for fellowships and those that are funded so that graduate students can review and talk with successful applicants. - Rachel

Action: Check the faculty teaching load calculations if department right sizing for PhD students goes down to 60 students – Ralph and Rachel

Action: Brainstorm ways to make it more predictable how TA funding will be for three years – Rachel, Laixiang, Ralph

Action: Make it a priority for advising to have the GIS women faculty advising women majors – Ron

Action: Can we come up with a skill set requirement for advanced GIS PhD TAs? What are the numbers we need and how to recruit them? – GIS Teaching Team

Action: Based on the success of the CGIS research grants, request that the CGIS retaining the Dean's share of Drif return continue after the initial three year agreement - Chris (but wait until Year 2).

Action: Use the GIS minor and the new Assistant Professor hire to request campus support for updated teaching labs and additional TAs – Chris and Vivre

Action: Complete assessment of computer resource needs for teaching lab upgrade/VM replacement and provide to Chris for campus support request – Compute Task Force, GIS faculty and tech staff

Action: Department provide an intranet web page with links to potential fellowships – Rachel

Action: Give department more campus exposure on GIS Day by moving our presentations to STAMP Student Union for higher exposure. When we have more GIS PhD students, they can manage this. - Kathleen and the GIS Grad Students

Teaching Teams Decisions/Action Items:

Human:

- Teach GEOG202 consistently once each year;
- Offer 200 seats of 300-level human courses each semester; team will determine which of the 5-6 300 level core courses will be used to satisfy this seat requirement, rather than specifically teaching each of the courses each year; (330 always taught)
- Offer a certain number of 400-level human courses (as determined by Ron) each semester; team will determine which of the 400 level core courses will be used to satisfy this seat requirement (431 always taught)

RS Physical:

- Revamp 201/301 sequence: 201/301 taught by Eric FY17, FY18
- Remaining courses include: 415/615; 442/642, 418 (every other year alternating with 4xt exciting topic course), grad wildcard every third year, 140, 441
- Physical Teaching Team to determine oversight of GEOG211 (online) Fall 2016; no instructor oversight as it stands now and to determine its future content and format.
- GEOG 201/211 and 140 has to be taught every semester
- RS grad courses rotate every year between GEOG671, GEOG672, GEOG67x (active lidar, etc.)

GIS:

- Core course additions: Advanced GIS (instead of current GEOG473), Advances in GIS (new course, new content)
- Team will seek new TA lines for GEOG170 to create a lab component and to increase enrollment in other courses; to get funds pork barrel new proposals or faculty hires; Chris needs a succinct summary of resource needs to make an ask
- Additional courses include: GEOG373, GEOG376, GEOG473, GEOG475, GEOG47x (new), GEOG474 (spatial dbs), GEOG476, GEOG57x (Geovis2), GEOG57x (Data structure algorithms)
- Don't cap 400 level courses at 25; increase enrollment as needed per course basis (scheduling implications; contact Kristen)
- 150 seats needed minimum at the 300 level, 125 minimum at 400 level per semester. This does not include 306 (100 seats a year).
- Teaching team will consider additional changes once new faculty member is hired.
- TT faculty rotate to teach lower level GIS courses
- Work with Ron to balance spring and fall offerings
- Admin will work with facilities to determine feasibility of removing wall between the two existing teaching labs.

Climate Change Initiative:

We need to engage in formulating the campus climate change initiative? Help develop BSOS role and that of the department. We need to insert ourselves in the decision making process.

Wayne suggested that the University provides funds to support new undergraduate programs – you have to submit a proposal to the Undergraduate Dean and ask them to support our program. A new minor in climate change and sustainability would be in context of the new climate initiative on campus and we could consider a new minor and demonstrate campus will benefit from the program and ask for resources, including TAs. If we are looking at social impacts of climate change, emphasis needs to be on the social science.

Action: Consider going after a NSF Science Technology Center and asking campus to provide the funds to develop the proposal – George

ENSP:

Action: How do we package our Global Concentration? Talk to ENSP and develop blurb for our website - George

Action: Conversation is needed between Ralph, Ron and Joe Sullivan about the future of ENSP and what is the long term plan. Remote Sensing track in ENSP: Track Spatial Technologies for Environmental Analysis? Track in Urban ecology and urban environmental track. We already do environmental sciences in urban area. Come back from meeting with Action Items for department.

Graduate Student Review:

Action: Only discuss the S* or U cases during the August Graduate Student Review.

Graduate Student Teaching Course:

Need to clearly delineate the learning outcomes and how this will help students who do not want to be academics.

Action: In principle the majority of faculty are in favor of this and we will aim for a Fall 2016 implementation. Tatiana and Klaus will work on refining the plan for a vote at the first Departmental Committee meeting of the spring semester.

Action: Get rid of the paper student review forms and set up form so faculty enter the information into the form and it is saved into the database with a digital signature. Rachel to discuss with web experts at Hartwick.

Action: Create Google doc listing all the applicants with area for faculty to flag those applicants that they have recruited and plan to provide funding as a Research Assistant (GRA). – Rachel

Action: Human Teaching Team look at the implementation of a five student Graduate Research Seminar and the impacts on the teaching program

Action: Look at the legal implications of a variable course buyout cost. – Vivre

Action: Develop proposal to increase graduate student stipends. Statement to made be at the next Dept Committee Meeting – Vivre and Chris