

# ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Name Daniel Block Program / Department MA in Geography 2015-2016

## PART 1: ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Directions: All items should be addressed in a clear and concise narrative (one paragraph or more each) and uploaded into *LiveText* [www.livetext.com].**

1. For clarity, please rename your document as: Assessment Report [Program, Level, Spring 20xx]  
**For example: Assessment Report Chemistry UG Spring 2017**
2. Upload your document into your departmental/program/unit *LiveText* account. Please name the document shell.  
**For example: Assessment Report Chemistry UG Spring 2017**
3. Share your document with the CSU Assessment Committee <csuac\_admin> as an Editor.  
**Steps 8 and 9 in the Assessment Coordinators Live Text Resource Document.**
5. Submit your document for Review to one of the following:  
csuac\_02 [Academic Undergraduate]  
csuac\_03 [Academic Graduate]  
csuac\_04 [Academic General Education]  
**Steps 10 and 11 in the Assessment Coordinators Live Text Resource Document.**  
Deadline for ALL reports is June 1.

### **1. Evidence to Support Achievement of Student Learning**

#### MA in Geography options

This is an assessment report on three MA options in Geography in the Department of Geography, Sociology, History, African American Studies, and Anthropology: **MA in Geography without thesis**, **MA in Geography with thesis**, and **MA in Geography with GIS Concentration**. The MA without thesis is currently not available to students who matriculated in fall 2012 or later. This report should be based on one indirect assessment of learning, namely, *student self-assessment instrument* consisting of open-ended and closed-ended Likert-style student survey questions, and two direct assessment of learning. The student self-assessment instrument surveys student opinions about how much and what specific things students have learned in the past year.

The instruments for direct assessment of learning for the MA in Geography without thesis option include two *referred seminar/master's papers* and a *comprehensive exam*; successful completion of both the master's papers and the comprehensive exam are required for graduation. The instruments for direct assessment of learning for the MA in Geography with thesis option include writing a draft Master's thesis proposal embedded in *Geog 5860, Geographic Inquiry*, and a *thesis*.

Upon completion of the MA in Geography, students should be able to :

1. Analyze the changing geography of the physical and human environments at local, regional, national, and global scales;
2. Evaluate urban spatial patterns and processes;
3. Demonstrate proficiency in the geography of a major region; a region of the student's choice;
4. Apply geographic information systems (GIS) and quantitative techniques for spatial analysis and modeling;
5. Write a master's paper/thesis to address a significant geographic research question(s);
6. Organize information into coherent written and oral presentations.

The instruments for direct assessment of learning for the MA in Geography with GIS Concentration

include *pretest/post-test* and a *thesis*. The *pretest/post-test* consists of open-ended questions on basic GIS concepts and skills that students are expected to bring to an advanced level course. The pretest/post-test assesses students' ability to:

1. Explain the geographic coordinate system in general and the concepts of latitude, parallel of latitude, longitude, meridian, and graticule in particular.
2. Explain map projection and distortions on map projections.
3. Explain the general classes of map projections with specific examples for each class of map projection.
4. Explain horizontal and vertical datum planes used for mapping in North America.
5. Explain the concept of map scale, calculate map scale, and convert between types of map scales.
6. Convert degrees, minutes, and seconds into decimal degrees, and vice versa.

Upon completion of the thesis and the MA in Geography with GIS concentration students should be able to:

1. Explain earth-map relationship and distortions on map projections;
2. Process analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to prepare imagery for analysis;
3. Analyze analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to extract/create new information;
4. Create spatial databases consisting of raster and/or vector data models for GIS analysis and modeling;
5. Use analytical capabilities of ArcGIS, ArcGIS Extensions, and ERDAS IMAGINE in spatial analysis and modeling;
6. Customize ArcGIS and ArcGIS extensions to add specialized functionalities and automate operations;
7. Design a Web map that allows viewers to display and query the layers on the map;
8. Write a master's thesis that integrates remote sensing and GIS to address significant human and/or environmental issues;
9. Organize information into a coherent written and oral presentations.

### Methods of Assessment

The *student self-assessment* instrument is distributed to students and students are asked to complete and return them to their instructors. Although some of the questions in this test instrument are open-ended, a judgment is made by the assessment coordinator whether responses by a particular student would indicate *satisfaction* or *dissatisfaction*. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *satisfaction*, the program gets a *satisfactory* grade. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *dissatisfaction*, the program gets *unsatisfactory* grade.

The *student self-assessment* instrument is distributed to students and students are asked to complete and return them to their instructors. Although some of the questions in this test instrument are open-ended, a judgment is made by the assessment coordinator whether responses by a particular student would indicate *satisfaction* or *dissatisfaction*. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *satisfaction*, the program gets a *satisfactory* grade. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *dissatisfaction*, the program gets *unsatisfactory* grade.

For the **MA in Geography without thesis option**, the two referred/master's papers and the comprehensive examination are evaluated by the graduate committee and a grade of **“satisfactory”** or **“not satisfactory”**

is assigned by each faculty member to each of the student's work. If there is no consensus among the committee members about the quality of the papers and the results of the comprehensive exam, the committee holds a meeting to reach a consensus; a consensus to assign a grade of "**Pass**" or to require the student to make improvements.

For the **MA in Geography with thesis option**, a student has to achieve a grade of "B" or better for the assessment instrument embedded in Geog 5860 and the thesis must be accepted as a **pass** by a unanimous decision of the thesis committee members.

For the **MA in Geography with GIS concentration**, the pretest is administered in the first week of an advanced level course and the post test is administered in the last two weeks of the course. An average score of 80% or better is considered a **pass** in both the pretest and the post-test. The **thesis** must be accepted as a **pass** by a unanimous decision of the thesis committee members.

During the 2015-2016 school year, a report for the MA programs was not completed on time, due to a lack of data collection and the subsequent retiring of the faculty member in charge of assessment. Since the self-assessment was not given during the period 2015-2016, and Geog 5860 was not taught (it is taught every other year), this report is based on the results of the capstone projects, as well as a short alumni survey.

### Assessment Findings

During the 2015-2016 academic year, nine students graduated with an MA in Geography. Of these, five graduated with an MA in Geography with GIS Concentration (which requires a thesis), two graduated with an MA in Geography (thesis option), and two graduated with an MA in Geography (non-thesis option).

The two students graduated from the MA in Geography (non-thesis option). The first student completed work judged as well above Satisfactory by his committee, for both the required two seminar papers and the comprehensive exam. The second student also completed satisfactory work, but needed to retake a portion of the exam as well as complete numerous drafts of each paper.

Since Geography 5860 was not taught, for the two students who graduated from the MA in Geography (thesis option) the assessment is based on their MA theses. Both of the MA (thesis options) students had excellent theses. One student, who had a community development focus, completed a development plan for the reuse and development of an old auto dealership building in Milwaukee. This student is currently running a non-profit promoting African-American entrepreneurship in Milwaukee. The second student completed a study of urban agriculture and sustainable development on Chicago's South Side and is now a Ph.D. student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

For the MA in Geography with GIS Concentration, the assessment is based partially on the pre/post-test given in Geography 5830. The post-test shows a significant rise in the grades for the students over the pre-test.

**GEOG 4830/5840 Results – fall 2015**

	Grade		Pretest	Post-test
<b>A</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>90 - 100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>75 - 89</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>60 - 74</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45 - 59</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>&lt; 40</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

The five graduates of the MA in Geography with GIS concentration also produced, in general, very high quality theses. Two students produced theses that led to publications in refereed journals. All theses passed their committees unanimously.

Four alumni of the nine who graduated during the 2015-2016 academic year completed the alumni survey. Of these two were MA/GIS concentration students and two were MA students. Three of these students were working in a career related to their degree and one was in the Ph.D. program. Three students said they would strongly recommend the program, while one stated they would strongly not recommend the program. All four students either strongly agreed or agreed that the program helped them advance in their career and that they used what they learned in their job. In a qualitative section the student who would not recommend the program stated that they felt that the GIS instruction was not directed enough and that they were left to teach themselves.

**Analysis and Program Change**

Based upon the evidence, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the program in terms of accomplishing student learning? What specific actions have been identified for discussion to make needed improvements? What change/s will be implemented to make improvements?

In the absence of 100% fulfillment of all criteria, all programs must identify concrete improvements and implement within an assessment cycle.

The MA program is strong, but the department is considering some changes based on our observations as well as the feedback of students. Firstly, while the MA thesis adds what is learned by our students, it also adds a large amount of time to the MA program. Many MA in Geography programs have a thesis and a non-thesis option. Currently, all new CSU Geography students must complete a thesis. We are considering whether to offer another option. Secondly, based on the negative feedback from the one student in our alumni survey, as well as our own observations and discussions with students, we are proceeding to request a GIS laboratory coordinator position, which is a position that the department has, but was lost due to budget cuts.

**Assessment as a Departmental Priority**

Identify and explain accomplishments for this assessment cycle by stating how your department evaluates the assessment process in order to continuously improve assessment and student learning.

Assessment and program development are frequent discussions within the Geography program, particularly in

Geography program meetings, as well as in e-mail correspondence. An example of an e-mail discussion in the period 2015-2016 is included in the appendix.

### **Publicizing Student Learning**

What are the current mechanisms for publicizing assessment? **Note:** all programs must provide assessment information on their department/program webpage. In addition, all programs must identify at least one other systematic publication venue.

**Include the hyperlink to your program assessment page here to allow quick access for review.**

Link to Geography assessment page: <http://www.csu.edu/gshaa/geography/assessment.htm>

Geography graduate program students have presented posters and papers at the Association of American Geographers (AAG) conference as well as other conferences, and have published papers. During the period 2015-2016, one student in the Geography MA program orally presented a paper one presented an illustrated paper, and two students presented posters at the 2016 AAG conference in San Francisco. Their abstracts are included in the appendix.

Two geography graduate students who graduated during the period 2015-2016 published articles in peer reviewed publications, co-written with Geography faculty members.

These publications were:

Alfrahhat, R., Mulugeta, G., & Gala, T. S. (2016). Ecological Evaluation of Urban Heat Island in Chicago City, USA. *Journal of Atmospheric Pollution*, 4(1), 23-29.

Friehat, T., G. Mulugeta, G., and Gala, T.S., (2015). Modeling Changes and Predictions of Urban Land Expansion in the Northeastern Illinois, *Journal of Geosciences and Geomatics*, 3 (5): 133-141. doi: 10.12691/jgg-3-5-4

## **PART 2: ASSESSMENT PLAN**

### **Department/Program Mission Statement**

Each program in CSU's Department of Geography, Sociology, History, African American Studies, and Anthropology serves the State of Illinois and metropolitan Chicago through accessible, quality instruction employing pertinent scholarly and technological methods; and through scholarship and practice in the interacting arenas of the environment, the economy, and the community. The primary objective of the program is to prepare its majors for the job market and for graduate studies through quality teaching and mentoring. The Department serves other programs in the University through quality teaching and through provision of GIS facilities and regional information. The Department serves the community through the Fredrick Blum Neighborhood Assistance Center and its Calumet Environmental Resource Center. The Department strives to be a national leader in the training of minority and women scholars in each of its constituent disciplines.

### **Program Objectives**

1. Prepare students for professional careers and graduate and further graduate studies.
2. Provide quality general education instruction in Geography/Geographic Information Science, Sociology, History, African American Studies, and Anthropology.
3. Support other programs in the University through program minors in Geography, Sociology, African American Studies, Anthropology, and Environmental Studies.
4. Provide state-of-the-art technology and service in the CSU Geographic Information Systems laboratory.
5. Provide exemplary community outreach through the Fredrick Blum Neighborhood Assistance Center and the Calumet Environmental Resource Center.
6. Continue to position the Department as a nationally recognized center for providing training in Geography, Geographic Information Science, Sociology, History, African American Studies, and Anthropology, especially for women and minorities.
7. Provide a firm, collegial and supportive base in which faculty can continue their excellent teaching, research, and practice.

### **Student Outcomes**

Upon completion of the Geography MA program, students should be able to:

1. Analyze the changing geography of the physical and human environments at local, regional, national, and global scales;
2. Evaluate urban spatial patterns and processes;
3. Demonstrate proficiency in the geography of a major region; a region of the student's choice;
4. Apply geographic information systems (GIS) and quantitative techniques for spatial analysis and modeling;
5. Write a master's paper/thesis to address a significant geographic research question(s);
6. Organize information into coherent written and oral presentations.

Upon completion of the thesis and the MA in Geography with GIS concentration students should be able to:

1. Explain earth-map relationship and distortions on map projections;
2. Process analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to prepare imagery for analysis;
3. Analyze analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to extract/create new information;

4. Create spatial databases consisting of raster and/or vector data models for GIS analysis and modeling;
5. Use analytical capabilities of ArcGIS, ArcGIS Extensions, and ERDAS IMAGINE in spatial analysis and modeling;
6. Customize ArcGIS and ArcGIS extensions to add specialized functionalities and automate operations;
7. Design a Web map that allows viewers to display and query the layers on the map;
8. Write a master's thesis that integrates remote sensing and GIS to address significant human and/or environmental issues;
9. Organize information into a coherent written and oral presentations.

### Curriculum Map

\*Cells should be populated with K (Knowledge), A (Analyze), or S (Synthesize) to indicate the level of learning that will be achieved in the course.

**Chicago State University  
MA in Geography Curriculum Map  
May 2012**

<b>Program Level Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Geog 5010/5219/5220</b>	<b>Geog 5250/5270</b>	<b>Geog 5280/5290</b>	<b>Geog 5300/5330</b>	<b>Geog 5310/5320/5340</b>	<b>Geog 5420/5430/5460</b>	<b>Geog 5500/5510</b>	<b>Geog 5520/5580/5590</b>	<b>Geog 5860/5880/5890</b>	<b>Geog 5900/5905</b>	<b>Geog 5991/5992</b>
Analyze the changing geography of the physical and human environments at local, regional, national, and global scales	A	A		A		A		S	S	S	S
Evaluate urban spatial patterns and processes			K		A	A		S	S	S	S
Demonstrate proficiency in the geography of a major region; a region of the student's choice			A		A			S	S		S
Apply geographic information systems (GIS) and quantitative techniques for spatial analysis and modeling	K	K	K	A	A	S		S		S	S
Write a master's thesis to address a significant geographic research question(s)		K		K			A	A			S
Organize information into a coherent written and oral presentation	A	A		A	A			S		S	S

**Chicago State University**  
**M.A. in Geography with GIS Concentration Curriculum Map**  
**May 2012**

<b>Program Level Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Geog 5800</b>	<b>Geog 5810</b>	<b>Geog 5820</b>	<b>Geog 5830</b>	<b>Geog 5840</b>	<b>Geog 5841</b>	<b>Geog 5842</b>	<b>Geog 5850</b>	<b>Geog 5860</b>	<b>Geog 5880</b>	<b>Geog 5991/5992</b>
<b>Explain earth-map relationship and distortions on map projections</b>	K	A		A		A		S		S	S
<b>Process analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to prepare imagery for analysis</b>			K		A			S			S
<b>Analyze analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to extract/create new information</b>			K		A			S			S
<b>Create spatial databases consisting of raster and/or vector data models for GIS analysis and modeling</b>	K	K	K	A	A	S		S			S
<b>Use analytical capabilities of ArcGIS, ArcGIS Extensions, and ERDAS IMAGINE in spatial analysis and modeling</b>	K	A	A	A	A			S		S	S
<b>Customize ArcGIS and ArcGIS extensions to add specialized functionalities and automate operations</b>	K	K	K	A			S				S
<b>Design a Web map that allows viewers to display and query the layers on the map</b>		K		K			A	A			S
<b>Write a master's thesis that integrates remote sensing and GIS to address significant human and/or environmental issues</b>				K	K				A	S	S
<b>Organize information into a coherent written and oral presentation</b>	K	A		A	A			S			S

## Assessment Plan Detail

- \* Program objectives related to learning must be assessed. Link program objectives to appropriate outcomes and assessments.
- \*\* Attach definitions of specific criteria for satisfactory performance. Assessment cannot be based on course grades. Consider the distinction between student performance criteria and program effectiveness criteria.

### Assessment of MA in Geography Student Learning Outcomes:

PEOs	SLOs	Assessment Instruments	Criteria*
1. 1 & 6	a. a through d	a. Geog 5860, Geographic Inquiry	a. $\geq$ B
2. 1 & 6	b. a through f	b. Two Master's Papers or a Thesis	b. Pass
3. 1 & 6	c. a through f	c. Comprehensive Exam	c. Pass
4. 1 & 6	d. a through f	d. Student Self-Assessment	d. Satisfactory
5. 1 & 6	e. a through f	e. Alumni Survey	e. Satisfactory
6. 1 & 6	f. a through f	f. Employer Survey	f. Satisfactory

\*See the following pages for description of assessment instruments and criteria/grading rubrics.

### MA in Geography with GIS Concentration Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Upon completion of the MA in Geography with GIS concentration students should be able to:

- a. Explain earth-map relationship and distortions on map projections;
- b. Process analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to prepare imagery for analysis;
- c. Analyze analog and digital remote-sensing imagery to extract/create new information;
- d. Create spatial databases consisting of raster and/or vector data models for GIS analysis and modeling;
- e. Use analytical capabilities of ArcGIS, ArcGIS Extensions, and ERDAS IMAGINE in spatial analysis and modeling;
- f. Customize ArcGIS and ArcGIS extensions to add specialized functionalities and automate operations;
- g. Design a Web map that allows viewers to display and query the layers on the map;
- h. Write a master's thesis that integrates remote sensing and GIS to address significant human and/or environmental issues;
- i. Organize information into a coherent written and oral presentation.

### Assessment for MA in Geography with GIS Concentration Student Learning Outcomes:

PEOs	SLOs	Assessment Instruments	Criteria*
1. 1 & 6	a. a	a. Pretest/Post-test	a. $\geq$ 80%
2. 1 & 6	b. h & i	b. Geog 5860, Geographic Inquiry	b. $\geq$ B
3. 1 & 6	c. a through i	c. Thesis	c. Pass
4. 1 & 6	d. a through i	d. Student Self-Assessment	d. Satisfactory
5. 1 & 6	e. a through i	e. Intern-Employer Survey	e. Satisfactory
6. 1 & 6	f. a through i	f. Alumni Survey	f. Satisfactory
7. 1 & 6	g. a through i	g. Employer Survey	g. Satisfactory

\*See following pages for description of assessment instruments and Criteria/grading rubrics.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS AND  
GRADING RUBRICS  
FOR  
MA in GEOGRAPHY AND MA IN GEOGRAPHY WITH GIS CONCENTRATION**

**1. Student Self-Assessment Instrument:**

The student self-assessment instrument, an instrument for indirect assessment of learning, is the same for both options. The instrument is administered annually to students who are in the program for at least one year. The instrument consists of open-ended questions and closed-ended Likert-style student survey questions adapted from *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: Shifting the Focus from Teaching to Learning*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002. In the open-ended questions, students are asked to state what they have learned in the last one year and their opinion about their program and the progress they are making toward the completion of their program. In the closed-ended Likert-style questions, students are asked to evaluate their level of agreement about their educational experience at Chicago State University on a three ordered response levels (**Some, Much, Most**). Although some of the questions in this test instrument are open-ended, a judgment is made by the assessment coordinator whether responses by a particular student would indicate *satisfaction* or *dissatisfaction*. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *satisfaction*, the program gets a *satisfactory* grade. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *dissatisfaction*, the program gets *unsatisfactory* grade. (See below for the **Student Learning Audit/Self-Assessment Instrument**.)

**2. Instruments for Direct Assessment of Learning for the MA in Geography:**

Students in the MA in Geography have the non-thesis or the thesis option of completing the MA. The non-thesis option requires successful completion of two referred seminar papers (now renamed master's papers) in two required seminar courses and a comprehensive examination. The referred seminar papers and the comprehensive are used for direct assessment of learning. The comprehensive exam questions are written by the student's a graduate committee consisting of three professors. The papers and the comprehensive examination are evaluated by the graduate committee and a grade of "**Satisfactory**" or "**Not Satisfactory**" is assigned by each faculty member to each of the student's work. If there is no consensus among the committee members about the quality of the papers and the result of the comprehensive exam, the committee holds a meeting to reach a consensus; a consensus to assign a grade of "**Pass**" or to require the student to make improvements.

Students in the thesis option have to complete **Geog 5860, Geographic Inquiry**, with a grade of "B" or better and the MA thesis (see the last two pages of this assessment plan for assessment criteria for the MA thesis). Geog 5860 and the thesis are the two instruments for direct assessment of learning for students of MA in Geography with thesis option.

**3. Instruments for Direct Assessment of Learning for the MA in Geography with GIS Concentration:**

**Pretest/post-test for MA in Geography with GIS concentration** is one of the instruments for direct assessment of learning. Geog 5800 (Introduction to GIS) or an equivalent course or background is a prerequisite for admission into the GIS Certificate program and for Geog 5830, Advanced GIS. The **pretest/post-test** is administered annually to students taking Geog 5830. Students are given a pretest in the first week of the course to assess some basic GIS concepts and skills and their preparedness for the advanced level course. The same test is administered as a post-test toward the end of the semester to assess mastery of the same basic concepts and skills by students as a result of revisiting the concepts and skills in the advanced level course. An average score of 80% or better (i.e. B or better) in the post-test is considered a satisfactory performance, and the average score in the post-test is expected to be significantly higher than the average for the pretest. The second instrument for direct assessment of learning for students in the MA in Geography with GIS concentration is the MA thesis (see the last two pages of this

assessment plan for the assessment criteria for the MA thesis).

#### **4. Intern-Employer Survey, Alumni Survey, and Alumni-Employer Survey for all three MA options:**

One or more of these surveys are conducted occasionally. Intern supervisors, alumni, and alumni-employers are asked a series of questions to rate performance of interns, the CSU geography/GIS program, and performance of alumni respectively on a scale of 5 to 1 (5 = Excellent, 3 = Satisfactory, and 1 = Unsatisfactory). An average score of 3 or better on each survey is considered **Satisfactory**. Question-by-question analysis of survey responses are used to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to improve curriculum.

### **PART 3: APPENDIX**

The primary purpose of this section is to streamline the main report with summary information and have a place where valuable evidence and raw data can be archived for viewing. Use this section for your evidence of departmental involvement, raw data used to create summaries, completed surveys, and anything relevant to your assessment activities that you do not want to store locally in your department. This way evidence is still accessible, but does not hamper the reading and evaluation of the report.

#### **Examples of e-mails regarding assessment**

8/19/15

Janet Halpin <jhalpin@csu.edu>

to Tekleab, me, Gebeyehu

Geb, Tek, Danny

We should have a meeting fairly soon. I used the General Education assessment for GEOG 1000 in the summer, and would like to explore ways to improve it and make it more suitable for online course delivery. Also, I dropped the ball on a few things last year regarding assessment instruments that were connected to particular courses. I'd like to prepare a time-line for myself to make sure I have a conversation with instructors in plenty of time to prepare assessment materials and update as needed.

This week is fairly fraught. Early next week?

Janet

On Wed, Aug 19, 2015 at 4:36 PM, Tekleab Gala <[tgala@csu.edu](mailto:tgala@csu.edu)> wrote:  
Dear Dr. Mulugeta,

Can you please send me a pretest you were using for advanced and intro-GIS? Dr. Halpin asked me to fill GIS-certificate assessment form, where I had to fill information about students' performance on pretest. I didn't know about it then and I would like to use it in the future.

Thanks,

**Tekleab S. Gala (Ph.D.)**

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**Student AAG Abstracts, 2016 San Francisco AAG Conference**

**Abstract Title:**

*Social Geographical Considerations of Urban Agriculture*

**is part of the Paper Session:**

[Social and Environmental Impacts of Urban and Historical Agriculture](#)

**scheduled on Friday, 4/1/2016 at 13:20 PM.**

**Author(s):**

David Snowdy\* - Student, Chicago State University

**Abstract:**

In the decades that followed the WWII era-Victory Gardens, the industrial "efficiency" mantra failed, manufacturing collapsed, and urban expansion more than doubled. As Harvey explicates cities are "living organisms", communities are exhibiting the wounds of industrialization, with "zombie" properties, drug addiction, unemployment and crime among the visible destruction.

As community arises through culture, "community gardening" demonstrated the capacity to increase access to fresh food while building social networks. While urban agriculture promotes the time and space of encounters, this study is a qualitative analysis of urban agriculture exploring the presence of social value within the emergence of a consumer-based industry.

By integrating content analysis, secondary analysis and participatory-based constructive learning, this study includes active interviews with administrative personnel and case studies of volunteers, interns, farmhands and "gardeners" to compile information relevant to the increased accessibility and availability of fresh foods, the aesthetics in community-based urban agriculture, inclusion, career paths and economic opportunities available to three fractured demographics within urban environments: age, race and income.

Where social value outweighs economics in "community gardening", I expect to identify the viability for urban agriculture to prove "solutionary" in alleviating social issues averting the revitalization of disenfranchised communities. Looking forward, this study will empower neighbors, activists, city planners, and politicians with a broad understanding of the ground up, "solutionary" impact of urban agriculture and endorse urban agriculture as an alternative, non-traditional strategy for land use in urban development.

**Keywords:**

[urban agriculture, sustainability](#)

**Abstract Title:**

*Accessing Food and Equality for Chicago's Minority Communities*

**is part of the Illustrated Paper Session:**

## [Geographies of Food and Agriculture: Illustrated Papers](#)

scheduled on Thursday, 3/31/2016 at 13:20 PM.

**Author(s):**

Michelle Johnson\* - Chicago State University  
Michelle Johnson -

**Abstract:**

The food justice movement is slowly gaining momentum in Chicago's minority communities. The movement resembles national movements that focus on providing solutions to food insecurity as issues of access and individual consumption. This approach resolves to make healthy and nutritious food available to neighborhoods that have been historically marginalized by decades of structural racism. Food justice activities encourage residents to change their eating habits and become active in community activities. Chicago has implemented strategies to increase the access to healthy foods in underserved areas by adding more grocery stores selling fresh fruits and vegetables, and changing city ordinances that allow for startup urban farms and gardens. University-community partnerships, especially those located in marginalized areas, have an obligation to study the impacts of the food movement and the ability to report if the movement can effectively address food security and increase "community building." Using PAR, this research investigates how UA initiatives located on the south side of Chicago, such as the Aquaponics Center at Chicago State University, and other south side urban farms and gardens, genuinely address food inequality and contribute to existing strategies.

**Keywords:**

[urban agriculture](#), [urban geography](#)

**Abstract Title:**

*Poster #049: Gender in Urban Agriculture*

**is part of the Poster Session:**

[Human Geography Poster Session I](#)

scheduled on Wednesday, 3/30/2016 at 15:20 PM.

**Author(s):**

Courtney Dunn\* - Chicago State University  
Courtney Dunn - Chicago State University

**Abstract:**

Gender roles in urban agriculture has been a controversial topic. Male and female roles differ in how they contribute to the agribusiness from an economic standpoint to food security. Looking further other issues influencing the gap include credit approval, obtaining land, trainings and lack of production resources.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization closing the gap will circulate many significant changes including equal access to production resources that can increase yields on farms by nearly 20-30 percent. Other issues such as community hunger and food deprivation can also decrease. Based off previous research this topic has been more of a qualitative analysis research forming several hypothesis of what can and will happen shall the gap be closed.

A secondary analysis will be combined with my own case study of male/female farmers in the Chicago area through survey's and interviews noting the gender disparities they encounter in a local setting. The results will be compiled in a quantitative format through maps and charts depicting such disparities/relationships that will demonstrate how the gap has stayed the same or has begun to close and rather such results yield a beneficial production for the community.

Based off the roles male and females play in urban agriculture, specific disparities effect agricultural production that both effects the individual growing the agriculture as well as communities that depends on the production. If differences in roles are reversed then communities will greatly benefit by an increase of production that will lead to food stability.

**Keywords:**

[Gender, Urban Agricultur](#)

**Abstract Title:**

*Poster #002: "Imprisonment vs. Empowerment" Urban Human Imprisonment versus Higher Education Empowerment  
The 2016 Budget Impasse of Illinois Republican Governor Bruce Rauner*

**is part of the Poster Session:**

[Human Geography Poster Session I](#)

**scheduled on Wednesday, 3/30/2016 at 15:20 PM.**

**Author(s):**

Rhonda Williams\* - Chicago State University

**Abstract:**

Forty-seven percent of young black males in Chicago area either unemployed or not enrolled in school. 5,500 young black males per year are arrested on Chicago Public School campuses per year. As an Urban/Human Geographer, I dialogue the issue of preservation. It is my desire to dispel the myths that follow young black men. One of the myths is the pipeline from the cradle to casket within 15 to 20 years, or cradle to cast iron bars of a prison. C.S.U. is the solution to the recidivism rate of the incarceration of young black males in Chicago.

Chicago State University is nestled on Chicago's Far South Side between the ninth (9th) and sixth (6th) wards in Chicago, Illinois, and is a "Safe Haven" for its students. This is a one hundred fifty year academic institution that has educated generations, to generations, from World War II veterans, baby boomers, generation X'ers and now millennial's. The Department of Student Affairs desires to fulfill the expectations of black male students at Chicago State University, which is a Predominantly Black Institution. This university is in need of \$5 million dollars a month in order to operate an effective budget. Optimistically, CSU was budgeted to receive \$39 million, but never got it.

**Keywords:**

[Budget Impasse](#), [Low Income](#), [African-American Males](#), [Predominately Black Institutions](#), [Human Geography](#)