

Geography and Environment Chair's *Not Quite* Monthly Newsletter January 2023

NEW YEAR'S RAMBLINGS

A weekend or two ago, I returned my daughter to school in Toronto. On the way home I stopped in the Dundas Valley for a run. It is a beautiful, peaceful, glacial valley characterized by lovely karst features and Carolinian Forest. As I ran, my mind wandered, and I thought about the place I was in and the year that had passed. I thought about how happy I was to be where I was and I promised myself to increase my efforts to protect special places, like the Dundas Valley. I also thought about how fortunate I am to live in London and work with people who supported me and offered kind words when things were challenging this fall. Many thanks to all of you, and especially to the front office, for your immense help in my first term as chair. Wishing everyone all the best for 2023!



WOMEN DOING COOL THINGS IN GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT!

Prof. Chantelle Richmond

The Royal Canadian Geographic Society of Canada was founded in 1929. The society's vision "is to help Canadians chart a successful future by fostering a greater understanding of Canada's geography — its diverse human and physical landscapes — as well as the changes affecting its people and the environment." Fellows of the Society are voting members who are "expected to contribute to making Canada better known to Canadians and the World". We are proud and excited that one of the 2022 Fellows is Professor Chantelle Richmond.



Photo Credit: Chantelle Richmond

Chantelle has made crucial changes to Western and Canada, educating her colleagues on Indigenous methodologies and helping settler scholars to better understand the importance of good relationships and Indigenous perspectives for finding solutions to global problems. This is exceptionally hard and important work that is transforming Western to create space for Indigenous scholars and their research, knowledge and teachings. Chantelle is presently sharing her expertise in Geography and Canada on a Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Social Sciences at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa until July. Chantelle – congratulations and we wish you and your family all the best on your Hawaiian adventures!

Prof. Carol Hunsberger

This Fall was the first time that the capstone course, *Geo 4450: Climate Change and Collective Action*, for our new major, *Climate Change and Society*, was offered. Dr. Carol Hunsberger developed and taught the course. The course aims to foster collective climate change action and Dr. Hunsberger asked her students to think of a project that they could do to contribute to reducing carbon emissions. They decided to take on the City of London's public transit problems. The City of London declared a climate emergency in 2019 and critical to reducing their carbon emissions is changing how we move around the city. The students' efforts included a protest outside city hall with a large cardboard bus that was featured on [CBC](#) and in the [London Free Press](#). The students are congratulated on their efforts to bring attention to one of many changes that needs to occur if London is to successfully address climate change. I am looking forward to what the class of 2023 does! If you are interested in London's Climate Action Plan and what you can do, you can find out more [here](#).



Photo Credit: Karen Vankerkoerle

GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM WORK: CONTRIBUTED BY DR. BETH HUNDEY

Geography and Environment is undergoing a curriculum development process with the purposes of:

- evolving our curriculum to attract and benefit students who want to be a part of addressing important and current challenges
- aligning our curriculum with our current expertise (and identify specific areas where we can benefit from additional expertise)
- exploring the possibility of offering a one-year master's program.

To do so in a meaningful way requires brainstorming broadly (our current phase), prioritizing our curriculum goals, and planning attainable and concrete steps to achieve curriculum goals.

Geography and Environment carried out extensive self-studies for both the graduate and undergraduate programs in 2018 and since that time has continued to work on strategic visioning in curriculum. At recent council meetings, we have focused on uncovering common research and teaching areas, including food security, human impacts on natural landscapes, transportation mobility, impacts of place on humans, climate change, and environmental change/ spatial analysis. This list is a beginning and we welcome (and will continue to work on) growing this list. We also have a shared values about students as agents of change and about the importance of experiential learning. A large share of G&E courses (78% of courses at level 2200 and above) include at least one experiential learning component.

On April 14, 9 am - 12 pm, we will participate in a retreat to prioritize our near- and medium-term curriculum goals. Until that time, our short sessions at Faculty Council will continue to focus on brainstorming about possible directions that benefit students and align with faculty interests. Reach out to Beth Hundey (bhundey@uwo.ca) with ideas or questions about curriculum any time between meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Dr. Roza Tchoukaleyska and Awasis Golkar-Dakin started in the department this month. Welcome to you both! We are so excited you have both decided to join us!!
- 2) Congratulations to Peter Ashmore, Lewis Williams, Mike Buzzelli and Jed Long who will be on sabbatical starting July 1, 2023.
- 3) Lelanya and I have sent emails with the information we have so far on NSERC USRAs and USRIs. Now is the time to look for students. As we get more information, we will share it with you. **The department NSERC USRA deadline is Feb. 8.** Submit applications to Kylie.
- 4) ChatGBT – more information will be available soon, but right now we are being recommended to tell students that using ChatGBT for assignments is an academic offense.
- 5) Many grant applications have passed my desk the last couple of months – wishing everyone success on those applications!

TO DO LIST

I have a few things I need your help with:

- 1) Please ensure you have an ORCID ID and an up-to-date Google Scholar page. It is also important to ensure your ORCID ID shows an affiliation to Western. This helps with university metrics and our reputation.
- 2) If you have positions for graduate students or are seeking graduate students for projects, please provide Dr. Godwin Arku (grad chair) a description and information so that we can post them on our web site. Karen is making a front-page banner to highlight these opportunities. This is a quick and easy step to try to increase our enrolments.
- 3) Please provide Angelica (alucaci@uwo.ca) names of 3-5 people we can invite to the Undergraduate Careers Day March 24 2-5pm to share stories of their career paths. We

prefer undergraduate alumni over grad alumni for this event and would like your names no later than Feb. 10.

- 4) If you are submitting a grant application, please do a ROLA form. When you submit the ROLA please send me an email letting me know. I do not want to miss or hold up your application, and I don't always get a ROLA email telling me there is something waiting for me. When you do the ROLA, please provide an abstract (click the Lay Person Description/Abstract button on the General Info page to add this information) and details of the budget. If you need time release or matching funds you must discuss it with me well ahead of your submission. If you have any questions about ROLA let me know.

IMPORTANT DATES

January 28, 2023 - Speaker Series w/Dr. Grace Adeniyi-Ogunyankin (Queens University)

February 3, 2023 - Undergraduate Awards Ceremony and Luncheon

February 8, 2023 - USRA application deadline

February 10, 2023 - Speaker Series w/Dr. Tammara Soma (Simon Fraser University)

February 10, 2023 - Council Meeting

February 18-26, 2023 - Reading Week

February 20, 2023 - Family Day (Western Closed)

March 3, 2023 - Speaker Series: PhD Department Presentations

March 10, 2023 - Speaker Series: Careers Outside Academia panel

March 17, 2023 - Speaker Series: Field Work Safety Workshop (Erika Hill)

March 23-27, 2023 - AAG in Denver, CO

March 24, 2023 - Council Meeting and Careers Day

March 30, 2023 - Geography 4900 Thesis Presentations

April 14, 2023 - Council Retreat

Please feel free to send me announcements and news that you wish to appear in my monthly newsletter. Thanks!