

Changing Geography in Higher Education: Towards a Scholarship of Academic Practice

Sponsored by the U.K. Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES), the AAG Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education (EDGE) project, Taylor & Francis, and the Journal of Geography in Higher Education.

Objectives

The theme of the 2010 INLT workshop is Changing Geography in Higher Education: Towards a Scholarship of Academic Practice. Whereas previous INLT workshops focused primarily on classroom pedagogy and learning theory, the 2010 workshop will explore topics at the heart of securing geography's long-term growth and vitality in higher education systems worldwide. Although a continued focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning will remain important, scholarly consideration must also be given to issues of academic practice and organizational development. Participants in the 2010 INLT workshop will therefore explore international perspectives on issues such as improving the professional development of early career geographers, bringing about change in undergraduate and graduate curricula, strengthening the leadership capacity of departments, promoting synergistic activities with other disciplines, engaging geographers in public policymaking, and developing students for geographical careers in business, government, and non-profit organizations.

Achieving progress in these areas will require awareness of the disciplines institutional status in different international contexts. As documented in a special issue of the Journal of Geography in Higher Education (2007, Volume 31, Number 1), geography's institutional status varies internationally as a result of differences in research funding, educational policies, economic conditions, changing demographics, employment opportunities, and many other factors. In some countries, the discipline is witnessing unprecedented growth in student enrollments, broadening awareness of the relevance of geographic expertise for confronting societal challenges, rising demand for geographically skilled workers, and enhanced interest in research collaboration from other academic quarters. In other countries, however, geography seems to be marking time and is, in some cases, fragmenting. Even in places where geography is relatively strong, the discipline faces acute challenges in protecting its gains as institutions feel the effects of the current global economic crisis.

By sharing research and experiences with international colleagues, workshop participants will engage in forward-looking dialogue aimed at improving efforts by teachers, researchers, academic departments, and geographic organizations to advance geography's global status as an academic discipline.

Format and Topics

The format is similar to the 2006 INLT workshop in Brisbane, Australia. Prior to meeting in Washington, participants will communicate via email and online in international working groups of 4-6 members. Each working group will have a leader who will facilitate the preparation of a collaborative manuscript addressing one of the workshop topics. Participants will rank their preferences on the workshop registration form based on the following list of topics:

1. Designing curricula to develop student employability

2. Connecting students and departments to the work of community organizations
3. Engaging students and departments in the work of public policymaking
4. Embedding student research and inquiry into the curriculum
5. Enhancing the professional development of early career geographers
6. Building leadership capacity in departments
7. Promoting synergistic activities between geography and other disciplines
8. Fostering department environments that are collegial, inclusive, and supportive
9. Working effectively in interdisciplinary academic departments
10. Building collaborations among geographic organizations internationally
11. Planning and bringing about change in curricula
12. Developing and supporting doctoral and post-doctoral researchers

Draft papers will be posted in an online community forum approximately three months before the workshop. During the workshop in Washington, the working groups will consider the web feedback on their draft papers, debate their findings with other workshop participants, and begin to prepare their manuscript for submission to the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*.

All workshop proceedings and related communications will be conducted in English.

Workshop Schedule

Sunday, April 11: Participants arrive in Washington, D.C. There will be a welcoming reception and dinner at a local restaurant (TBD) beginning at 6:00 pm.

Monday, April 12: Full-day workshop at Marriott Wardman Park hotel. In the evening there will be an optional social excursion to a Washington Nationals baseball game (if the team is playing at home) or a cultural site in the city.

Tuesday, April 13: Full-day workshop at Marriott Wardman Park hotel. AAG Annual Meeting registration begins Tuesday evening.

Organizers

Michael Solem (AAG and INLT co-chair) is serving as the principal organizer for the 2010 INLT workshop with Mick Healey (University of Gloucestershire and INLT Co-Chair) and Eric Pawson (University of Canterbury and INLT Co-Chair) as co-organizers. The advisory committee consists of Sarah Bednarz (Texas A&M University), Iain Hay (Flinders University), Jan Monk (University of Arizona), Waverly Ray (Texas State University), and Carolyn Roberts (University of Gloucestershire).

Please direct any questions about the workshop to Michael Solem (msolem@aag.org).