

Minutes of the Political Geography Specialty Group Business Meeting

Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA, Thursday April 14th, 11:50-12:30pm

PGSG President Jason Dittmer called the meeting to order at 11:50am.

Jonathon Leib moved to approve the minutes from last year's business meeting in Washington DC. Approved by acclamation.

Dittmer reported on the PGSG pre-conference. Pre-conference was held on the University of Washington-Tacoma campus in conjunction with the Sexuality and Space Studies Group, and was hosted by Larry Knopp and Mark Pendras. Dittmer notes large attendance and thanks Knopp and Pendras for organizing the event.

Student Awards: Dittmer announced the winners of the PhD and MA student paper competitions. PhD: Nancy Hiemstra. MA/MS Award: Michael Husebo. Dittmer notes that there were no applications for the generous PGSG dissertation enhancement award for 2011. Dittmer encourages PGSG members to put forth their best graduate students for this competition, which in the past has been very competitive.

Dittmer announces new editors for the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*: Bruce Braun (Nature and Society) and Richard Wright (People, Place and Region).

Dittmer notes that the AAG has 10 794 members this year. Twenty-five percent of AAG members are international. There are 7300 conference attendees in Seattle, and 1300 sessions.

Dittmer notes the cost of membership and conference attendance is a major issue given the economic environment and the general decrease in faculty and especially graduate student resources at the departmental level. The PGSG should take a leading role on this issue given that we are a large body with significant graduate student membership.

Dittmer announces new social networking site through the AAG Knowledge Communities initiative. Dittmer stresses success of PGSG blog.

Dittmer proposes a PGSG resolution to support Professor William Cronon (University of Wisconsin-Madison) who faces open records requests from the Wisconsin Republican Party for his emails related to his "Scholar as Citizen" blog. PGSG membership unanimously supports the resolution, which will be sent to the AAG in support of its "Association of American Geographers Resolution in Support of Professor William Cronon" at <http://www.aag.org/cs/resolutions/cronon>

Non-student Awards: Dittmer announced the winners of this year's non-student awards. Julian Minghi Outstanding Research Award: Matt Hannah, Aberystwyth University. Stanley D. Brunn Young Scholar Award: Carl Dahlman, Miami University of Ohio. Coleman announces Richard Morrill Public Outreach Award: Jason Dittmer, University College London.

Treasurer's Report: Coleman delivered the treasurer's report. Condition of PGSG finances is good. Total balance was as low as \$4500 in August 2010 and was at \$6200 by March 2011. Consistent financial status of the PGSG reflects our large membership and sound fiscal management. Coleman suggests that we spend much more money on graduate student support, given Dittmer's opening claims about decreased fiscal resources and large cost of AAG meeting and membership. Coleman notes that there is no reason that we should have \$4500 on hand at all time. We need to spend down our balance.

Elections: Dittmer reported that two faculty members of the PGSG Governing Board are rotating off : Reece Jones (University of Hawai'i – Manoa) and Corey Johnson (University of North Carolina – Greensboro) . Dittmer thanks both for their hard work on the Governing Board. Dittmer reports that new Secretary-Treasurer must be elected. Dittmer thanks Coleman for his work. Dittmer reports that our student representative is also rotating off the PGSG Governing Board: Necati Anaz (Ohio University). Dittmer thanks Necati for his very thoughtful essays for the PGSG newsletter. Nominations for two faculty positions are: Matthew Mitchelson (Kennesaw State University) and Matthew Derrick (Humboldt State University). The nominations are approved by acclamation. The nomination for Secretary-Treasurer is Jones. The nomination is approved by acclamation. The nomination for the PGSG student representative is: Nancy Hiemstra (Syracuse University). The nomination is approved by acclamation.

Dittmer also reports that we need to elect a President for 2011-2013. Dittmer nominates Coleman. There are no other nominees. The nomination is approved by acclamation.

Dittmer reports that there is no business left from the prior business meeting.

Dittmer reports the PGSG roundtable has been difficult due to strict limitations placed on members' participation in the annual AAG meeting. Alex Murphy (University of Oregon) argues that the roundtable is a good idea and should not be abolished. Murphy suggests that we approach the AAG about flexibility with respect to this specific issue.

Dittmer notes poor showing for dissertation improvement grants. Dittmer notes that PGSG Governing Board needs to reach out to PGSG faculty (and beyond) to ensure that the most competitive graduate students are applying for our awards and competitions. A glossy paper mailing to departments might be a good idea.

Dittmer notes need to spend more money so that awards and competitions are more attractive. Johnson proposes increasing the dissertation enhancement to \$1500 from \$800. Dittmer proposes that due to short duration of the meeting and complexity of the topic that the issues are considered and acted upon by incoming President and Governing Board.

Dittmer notes limited utility of the PGSG newsletter. Traffic at the blog is increasing and that should take the place of the newsletter, which is old media.

Dittmer closes with a brief commemoration of Professor Rex Honey (University of Iowa), who unexpectedly passed away October 23 2010. Rex was an outstanding teacher, mentor, and researcher. Rex was passionate about human rights issues, and founded

UI's Center for Human Rights in 1999. Rex was a regular attendee at the PGSG preconference and will be missed sorely by the PGSG community.

Dittmer thanked the members and adjourned the meeting at 12:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mat Coleman, outgoing Secretary-Treasurer