



GEOSCIENCE
INFORMATION
SOCIETY

newsletter

Number 237, June 2009

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President's Column

by Rusty Kimball

Concerning this year's GSIS Committees, Appointees, and Representatives, I want to express my thanks to everyone for your generosity in serving!! I had so many people sign up to serve at the Business Meeting, and during the rest of the conference in Houston last October, that I did not need to make any calls for volunteers whatsoever. Thanks to those of you who agreed to chair, and to those of you who agreed to extend your service another year on your committees. Many thanks to our new Webmaster, Janet Dombrowski, for reflecting these on the website!!

Not many subject areas in the sciences have an organization that parallels GSIS. GSIS is well established, having celebrated its 40th

anniversary in 2006. I personally have gained a wealth of experience that I could have not gotten otherwise. It is the ability to gain experience that I want to emphasize. If you are new to librarianship, opportunities abound in GSIS –no experience required!! Whether you are a tenure track librarian or not, or if you are working in a realm other than libraries, it doesn't matter. GSIS positions offer a large degree of creative freedom to make the role your own!! So, be thinking ahead if you would be interested in serving in 2010 or even 2011.

On another note, the arrangements for our 2009 GSIS annual meeting in October in Portland are proceeding nicely. Many thanks to Jan Heagy and Jody Foote in planning what is sure to be a memorable meeting!! I hope to see you there. Onward!!

GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION SOCIETY 2008 Officers

President

Rusty Kimball
Texas A&M University
5000 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-5000
phone: 979-862-1909
fax: 979-458-0112
e-mail: rkimball@lib-gw.tamu.edu

Vice President (President Elect)

Jan Heagy
ExxonMobil Upstream Research
Information Center
P.O. Box 2189
Houston, TX 77252-2189
phone: 713-431-4466
fax: 713-431-4157
jan.b.Heagy@exxonmobil.com

Immediate Past President

Suzanne T. Larsen
Earth Sciences and Map Library
UCB 184
University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80309
phone: 303-492-4611
fax: 303-735-4879
e-mail: suzanne.larsen@colorado.edu

Secretary

Elaine B. Adams
Science & Engineering Library
UCLA
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1598
voice: 310-825-2649
email: ebadams@library.ucla.edu

Treasurer

Renee Davis
Simpson Library
University of Mary Washington
1801 College Ave.
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
Phone: 540-654-1758
e-mail: rdavis@umw.edu

Homepage: <http://www.geoinfo.org>

Webmaster: Janet Dombrowski
Brinkerhoff Geology Library
University of Wyoming, Dept. 3334
1000 E. University Ave.
Laramie, Wyoming 82071
307.766.6538
e-mail: jdombrow@uwyo.edu

Listserv:

<https://lists.purdue.edu/mailman/listinfo/gonet>
Moderator: Carolyn J. Laffoon
Purdue University Libraries, EAS
504 West State Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2058
phone: 765-494-0201
fax: 765-496-1210
e-mail: carolyn@purdue.edu

Newsletter Editor

Adonna Fleming
10 Bessey Hall
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Lincoln, NE 68588 0344
phone: 402-472-3920
e-mail: afleming@unlnotes.unl.edu

Publications Manager

Ellie Clement
Cabot Science Library
Harvard University
One Oxford Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
phone: 617-496-8442
fax: 617-495-5324
e-mail: clement@fas.harvard.edu

Publicity Officer

Shaun J. Hardy
Carnegie Inst. of Washington
DTM-Geophysical Laboratory Library
5241 Broad Branch Road, N.W.
Washington, DC 20015
phone: 202-478-7960
fax: 202-478-8821
e-mail: hardy@dtm.ciw.edu

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GSIS members are encouraged to contribute materials for publication. Material for the August, 2009 issue should be received no later than August 7, 2009. Please send materials by e-mail to afleming@unlnotes.unl.edu, or Janet Dombrowski, jdombrow@uwyo.edu

Vice President's Column

By Jan Heagy

Conference plans continue to evolve. This year GSA has a new planning system. Firm dates and locations for our events and technical sessions will be communicated to me in August. These are the preferred dates and times I requested for our sessions:

Saturday, Oct. 17 – 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM:
GSIS Executive Board Meeting

Sunday, Oct. 18 – 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM:
GSIS Business Meeting

Monday, Oct. 19 – 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM:
Information Resources Forum

Tuesday, Oct. 20 – 12 Noon to 1:30 PM:
GSIS Luncheon
Tuesday, Oct. 20 – 6 PM to 9 PM GSIS
Reception

I will post the actual dates and times for our space assignments and the technical sessions as soon as I have the confirmations in August.

If you have ideas for field trip destinations or activities, please be sure to contact me. (Jan.b.heagy@exxonmobil.com)

Hope to see you in Portland this October!

Conference Update

Send Your Abstracts Now for the GSIS/GSA Annual Meeting in Portland in October. GSIS will sponsor two

technical sessions at the October 18-21 annual meeting:

**Oral presentations—
“Navigating the Geoscience
Information Landscape: Pathways to
Success” (Topical Session #118)**

**Poster sessions—“Geoscience
Information Landscape: Pathways to
Success” (Topical Session #117)**

Please share your recent research project or your library's latest innovation with your GSIS colleagues. You can submit your abstract now on the electronic submission form on the GSA website: <http://gsa.confex.com/gsa/2009AM/index.epl>

The deadline for submitting abstracts is midnight (Eastern time) on **August 11**.

This year GSIS will reimburse all presenters (oral presentations and poster sessions) who are GSIS members for the cost of submitting their abstracts (\$20 for students and \$30 for non-students). When you submit your abstract on the GSA website, you will need to pay the fee by credit card in order to submit it. Following the conference, a reimbursement check will be sent to all presenters who are GSIS members.

Please contact Jody Foote, Technical Sessions Chair (jbfoote@ou.edu 405-325-6451) if you have questions.

See you in Portland!

Mid-Year Reports

Archives Committee

One box of archive material was received from Patricia Yocum and one box of previously accumulated material has been organized. I will be making a request for a cost estimate to submit this material to the University Archives, as our account has been spent. I will also be looking at ways to reorganize the material already in the Archives so that similar documents reside in the same box. Cost estimates for this reorganization and submission of new material will be submitted to the Board for their approval. Currently, the Geoscience Information Society has 17 boxes occupying 13.6 cubic feet of space, in the University of Illinois Archives. The GSIS archives holdings can be viewed at <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/archives/> (search on “geoscience”).

A request was made to the membership via the Geonet listserv for flyers or brochures that have been published which document their library’s history for inclusion in the Archive. In the changing climate of libraries, these histories are valuable resources on the creation and operation of geoscience libraries. Photographs from GSIS meetings and field trips should also be submitted for archiving. Members were also requested to submit biographies or vitae for inclusion in the Member Biography folder of the Archive. This information is especially useful for award nominations and presentations.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne M. Huber, Chair

Best Website Award

The award this year goes to two websites as we had a tie. The winners are: **Discovering Antarctica** <http://www.discoveringantarctica.org.uk/index.php>, and **On the Cutting Edge** <http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/index.html>.

Thanks to all the committee members for all their hard work: John Kawala, Robert Tolliver, and Connie Manson.

Geonet Listserv

Nothing new to report at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn J. Laffoon, Chair

Distinguished Service Award Committee

The Mary B. Ansari Distinguished Service Award Committee of GSIS is pleased to announce that Sharon Tahirkheli has been selected as the 2009 recipient.

The Ansari Award will be presented at the GSIS/GSA conference in Portland, OR, in October. Information regarding date, time and place will follow as soon as it is known. For more information about the Mary B. Ansari Distinguished Service Award please see <http://www.geoinfo.org/distinguished.html>.

The 2009 selection committee consisted of Marie Dvorzak, Michael Noga, and Patricia Yocum (Chair).

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Yocum, Chair

Information Resources Committee

The Committee has begun preliminary planning for the Information Resources Forum at the Annual Meeting in Portland, OR, October 18-21, 2009. If you would like to talk about your information resources project/program or hear about resources from a particular publisher, please contact one of the members of the Information Resources Committee: Cynthia Prosser, Chair (cprosser@uga.edu), Patty Gaspari-Bridges (pattygb@Princeton.edu), John Hunter (hunter@sparta.rice.edu), Angelique Jenks-Brown (ajbrown@binghamton.edu), or Michael Noga (mnoga@mit.edu).

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Prosser, Chair

GSIS Membership Committee

Serving on the Membership Committee for 2009 are Shaun Hardy, Sarah Hodkinson (Chair), John Hunter, and Miriam Kennard. This year we would like to recruit more members from academic libraries, and encourage all our members to renew, especially if they are still subscribers of our Geonet list-serve. We also plan to encourage student membership and participation in this year's "Geoscience Librarianship 101" in Portland by promoting GSIS to Library and Information Science students.

Each of the committee members

is responsible for recruiting members in certain geographical regions or populations. Shaun is working on pacific and mountain states; Sarah is working on atlantic states, state survey librarians, and library school students; John will do south central states, and Miriam will take central states, non-renewals and Geonet participants.

All members of GSIS are ambassadors to help recruit new members. We welcome you to make personal contacts to encourage membership, and to contact a membership committee member if you have ideas about recruiting potential new members, especially in special libraries and abroad.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Z. Hodkinson, Chair

Literature Reviews

Carol J. La Russa



Jeremy R. Garritano, Jake R. Carlson. A Subject Librarian's Guide to Collaborating on e-Science Projects. *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship*, Spring 2009. <http://www.istl.org/09-spring/refereed2.html>

This paper discusses the role of librarians in E-science projects at Purdue University. Librarians at Purdue have faculty status and are expected produce

original research. Their participation in E-science projects is an extension of this activity. The authors of this article are respectively a chemistry librarian and a data research scientist also employed by the library. They both have worked with the Center for Authentic Science Practice in Education which provides research opportunities for undergraduate students. This research produces data which needs to be managed. Reference-type interviews were conducted to determine the type of data created, whom should have access, who owns the data, if restrictions should be placed on the data, and how the data can be used. The librarian's expertise in the subject area was extremely useful in this process. In working on this project the authors needed to create partnerships with other campus departments and also with external agencies such as the company that creates the software used for data management. The Library contributed to the grant proposal that led to the funding for the project. Grantsmanship requires new skills of librarians and the project requires a multi-year commitment for planning and completion.

William Y. Arms, Manuel Calimlim, Lucia Walle. EScience in Practice: Lessons from the Cornell Web Lab. *D-Lib Magazine*, v. 15, no. 5/6, 2009. <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/may09/arms/05arms.html>

The authors describe what they have learned working on an E-science project called the Cornell Web Lab at Cornell University. The project enables researchers to statistically study materials in the Internet Archive, (These

materials can be accessed by individual pages using the Way Back Machine). Lessons learned: (1) Build a flexible laboratory, then consider a library. (2) In order to keep the center running, keep the staffing small and use lots of students to hold down costs. (3) Create manageable subsets of the data to be studied (only U.S. government websites for example). (4) Look beyond academia for the software needed to analyze large collections. (5) Don't expect researchers to be experts in computing. (6) There are generalities for data workflows but don't expect that the same workflow procedures will work for all types of data. (7) Keeping operations local increases flexibility and expertise.

Cope, William, Kalantzis, Mary. "Signs of Epistemic Disruption: Transformations in the Knowledge System of the Academic Journal" *First Monday* [Online], Volume 14 Number 4 (17 March 2009) <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2309/2163>

Cope and Kazantzis take a detailed look at the current and future roles of the academic journal. They see several forces that are disrupting the current process of knowledge representation. One is technology that has mainly been used to distribute PDFs and not to provide new ways of describing knowledge. The economics of knowledge distribution have changed with the availability of free internet content. More knowledge is being produced in distributed ways such as through the social Web. The current system strongly favors knowledge

produced in English speaking countries over that produced in non-English speaking countries but this is changing, at least for China. The increase in interdisciplinary research is at odds with conventional single discipline journals. The authors describe the increasing costs of journal subscriptions. Online availability has not significantly decreased subscription costs even though publisher costs are presumed to have gone down. Next they describe the various models for open access publishing. They discuss the problem of how to compensate knowledge workers if the products of their labor are given away. Costs of knowledge production have been lowered but not eliminated. The authors believe that a model based on low fees might be enough to fund the necessary infrastructure. Another section describes the well known flaws of the pre-publication peer review system. The following section describes problems associated with post-publication ranking using citation analysis and flaws in article usage data. The authors' agenda for the future includes: sustainable scholarly publishing; guardianship of intellectual property, criterion-referenced review, greater reflexivity and recursiveness in the peer review process; a fluid process of incremental knowledge refinement; more integrative, collaborative and inclusive knowledge cultures; more widely distributed sites of knowledge production; globalizing knowledge production; new types of scholarly text; reliable use metrics; and reliable use measures.

A. Ben Wagner. Percentile-Based

Journal Impact Factors: A Neglected Collection Development Metric. Issues in *Science and Technology Librarianship*, Spring 2009. <http://www.istl.org/09-spring/refereed1.html>.

Wagner suggests that Journal Citation Report impact factors for subject groupings can be converted into a more usable form by normalizing them into percentages, using the following process: A subject-based list of journals is sorted by journal impact factor (JIF). The journal with the highest impact factor gets 100% and the one with the lowest gets 0%. Values for the journals with JIF scores between 0 and 100% can be computed using the Excel's PERCENTRANK function. The advantage of the transformation to percentile scores is that cross disciplinary comparisons can be made. The authors argue that it is unfair to compare the citations counts of journals of highly populated disciplines with those of smaller disciplines. Also the differing impacts of journals that are classed in more than one subject area can be seen. For example the journal *Ocean Engineering* has the following percentages: 54% for *Civil Engineering*, 23% for *Geoscience*, and 19% for *Environment*.

José H. Canós Cerdá, Eduardo Mena Nieto, Manuel Llavador Campos. What's Wrong with Citation Counts? *D-Lib Magazine*, v. 15, no. 3/4, 2009. <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march09/canos/03canos.html>

The authors argue that system for citation counting needs to be totally restructured. Citation databases contain many incorrect and incomplete citations, and analyses can only be as good as the underlying data. To correct this and to give control back to the research community they suggest that academics create their own database starting with bibliographic information using citation software when the paper is created. They suggest the following procedure: 1) Bibliography manager software retrieves metadata for a cited paper from a reference retrieval service. 2) Author adds metadata to explain why the paper was cited (criticism, related work, main source). 3) Bibliography manager software makes sure every reference is actually cited in the paper. 4) Bibliography manager software generates a citation in the format needed for the Global Citation Register GCR database. The paper would then be reviewed. The publisher would then send the citation data to the GCR database. Citation analyses could then be done using the accurate GCR database.

Vincent Larivière, Yves Gingras, Éric Archambault. The Decline in the Concentration of Citations, 1900-2007. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, v. 60, no. 4, p. 858-862, 2009.

Larivière, Gingras, and Archambault disagree with the conclusions of the Evans (2008) article (reviewed in the April 2009 issue of the Newsletter). They do not believe that fewer articles are being cited as

journals have gone online. As evidence they cite a study of publications from the years 1900 to 2007. They looked at the percentage of papers published in a given year that received at least one citation using two windows: 2 years out and 5 years out. The percentage has been rising fairly steadily for the medical sciences, natural sciences and engineering, and the social sciences. Also the percentage of papers needed to obtain 20%, 50%, and 80% of the citations received has also been rising consistently. They don't see any macro effect from the creation of online journals. They suggest that Evans's results are an artifact of his method of analysis.

Dimitrios Katsaros, Leonidas Akritidis, Panayiotis Bozaris. The f Index: Quantifying the Impact of Coterminal Citation on Scientists' Ranking. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, v. 60, no. 5, p. 1051-1056, 2009.

This article describes another method for citation ranking of scientists. The idea of this method is to try to compute how many individual authors cite a particular article. Coterminal citations are when one author has authored (or coauthored) multiple papers citing another author. More influential scholars should have more individual authors citing their work and not just many citations by a small group authors. The methods for computing the f Index controls for this.