

Department of

Geography

and Regional Studies

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
COLLEGE of
ARTS & SCIENCES



Geo-jottings and perspectives

Spring 2010 Newsletter — Volume 3

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**UM was ranked
No. 50 in *U.S. News &
World Report's* 2010
edition of "America's
Best Colleges"**

Notes from the Chair: A Half Billion Neo-Geographers

"Data, data everywhere and not a thought to think" has become a common lament of geographers everywhere who are increasingly trying to grapple with the terabytes of information involved in mapping the earth's surface. Thankfully, computing power has improved to the point where we can use overhead imagery on our desktop computers to resolve nearly everything on the planet, from individual trees to small houses, cars and even humans. Huge databases derived from the US Census data can now be handled with relative ease compared to a few years ago. The wealth of geographic information and the global computing infrastructure that supports it have become fertile ground for geographers of all persuasions. For example, geographic visualization tools now permit virtual walkthroughs of streets and buildings of cultural significance. As many of us

know, Google Earth, the leading provider of on-line maps and images, has become a smash hit. What many of us don't realize is that Google Earth software is installed on more than 500 million computers worldwide. This provides a testament to the growing power of geographic information and technology to create global transparency and shape our collective vision of the earth's surface. Google refers to this growing cadre of imagery and map enthusiasts as an army of "neo-geographers."

In recognition of this trend and the growing importance of geographic information for decision making, disaster assessment and response, navigation, environmental planning, etc., I am pleased to announce that Geography and Regional Studies (GRS) at UM is

(Continued on page 2)



launching a new Certificate Program in Geospatial Technology for the fall of 2010. This new program will be oriented primarily toward our existing undergraduate and graduate students, who have expressed increasing need for training in geographic technologies as a way to prepare themselves for the emerging technical challenges of the 21st century. Courses as part of this certificate program (see story on page 4 and our website for more details) will be held in our GIS lab in the Merrick Building on the Coral Gables campus and will involve faculty from various schools and colleges. In this way, GRS expects to remain a central node at UM and in Miami

generally in the geographic sciences and we hope to attract many new students from disciplines as diverse as biology, sociology, public health, criminology, international studies, business and computer science, to name but a few.

Finally, in the year since our last Newsletter, our Department and the University generally have faced many challenges related to the economy and various budget cuts. Despite these challenges, our Department is thriving and our faculty continue to be among the most productive scholars in the College of Arts and Sciences. Our funding base from external grants continues to increase (see page 7) and the number of competitive proposals we submit continues to rise. Notwithstanding this good news, we rely greatly on unrestricted support from our alumni and friends, who have generously donated over the past year to our modest pool of discretionary resources. This funding allows us to continue supporting student attendance at conferences, field work for Geography graduate students, and to provide student stipends in times of need. I wish to extend my sincere thanks to those who made a donation to Geography this past year during a time when many people were struggling just to make ends meet. Please keep up your support in the future. Our students count on it.

-D.O. Fuller

Fulbright Scholar Award for UM Geography Professor

Dr. Fuller, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct research on climate dynamics and dengue fever in Brazil for the upcoming (2010-2011) academic year. During his stay as a Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Fuller will be based at the Federal University of Amazonas in Manaus where he will work with locally based geographers and other environmental scientists on different aspects of modeling this vector-borne disease using satellite and climate data. Over the past several years, the disease has claimed hundreds of thousands of victims in the Amazon region and elsewhere in Brazil and the research is

expected to support the future development of a regional early-warning system for dengue fever outbreaks. See www.as.miami.edu/news for more details.



Two New Major Grants for UM Geography Faculty

Dr. Fuller is co-investigator on a new grant (\$2.37 million) from the National Institutes of Health titled “Environmental Changes and Mosquito-borne Diseases in Arid Environments.” This project investigates how land use and the large-scale transformation of desert environments for irrigated agriculture in Upper Egypt affect the risk and transmission dynamics of important mosquito-borne diseases including West Nile virus, Rift Valley fever virus, and malaria. By identifying high-risk areas and underlying ecological mechanisms affecting interactions between the environment and populations of vectors, pathogens, animal reservoirs, and human hosts, this project contributes to the public health goal of establishing effective vector-borne disease surveillance and control programs in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. Dr. Fuller is taking the lead on the



remote sensing component of this project, which is managed overall by Dr. John Beier at UM's Miller School of Medicine and involves faculty from UM Departments of Mathematics and Biology as well as co-investigators in Egypt.

Dr. Nijman is the recipient of a new award from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. It is in the category of Major Collective Research Initiatives (MCRI) and it will run for five years in total. The title of the project is “Global Suburbanism.” The project deals with the manner in which city regions are literally “shaping up” around the world: that is, in a polycentric fashion and with most growth NOT in what we used to consider real city centers. The project is coordinated at the City

Institute of York University, Toronto, with Roger Keil as project manager. Dr. Nijman serves as co-investigator and “Team Lead” for the North American Research Cluster which includes about 15 people overall. The total amount of the award is approximately \$2.5 million.



Scott Drinkall Presents His Research at Hawaii Conference

On February 11, 2010, first-year Geography graduate student **Scott Drinkall** presented “Tourism Geography in Lijiang, China: Touristification and Socio-Spatial Transformation of a World Heritage Site” at The 9th Annual International Graduate Student Conference at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. Scott analyzed how spatial connections through tourist consumption of shopping, photography, music, and dance have molded Lijiang's heritage landscapes into iconic images that now serve as reference points for potential consumers.



Fall 2010: Department to Launch New Certificate Program in Geospatial Technology

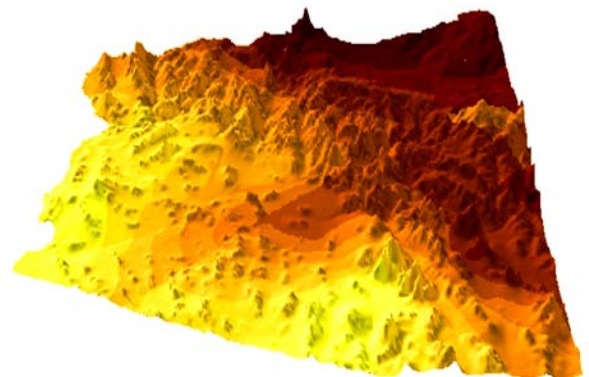


After several years of planning, we are pleased to announce that the Department is launching a new Certificate Program in Geospatial Technology to begin Fall, 2010. This Certificate Program is designed to benefit students who seek to enhance their skills in geospatial technologies, especially Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite remote sensing. Students will gain extensive exposure to standard software tools used in the industry including ArcGIS, ERDAS IMAGINE, and Idrisi, as well as image data from a range of optical and microwave orbiting satellites. A full suite of geospatial software is available in the Department of Geography and Regional Studies (GRS) GIS lab, where much of the instruction will occur.

Students who earn the Certificate will enhance their employment prospects and/or advance their careers in geospatial technology, particularly in job settings that stress the use of

satellite remote sensing and vector-based GIS. The Certificate is designed for our existing graduate and undergraduate students and may be appropriate for professionals who seek a new credential to advance their careers. GRS faculty members **Fuller, Kanai, Sen Roy and Sheskin** are teaming up with faculty at the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and the Miller School of Medicine to offer a coordinated series of classes ranging from Introductory GIS (GEG 199) to Advanced Radar Remote Sensing (GEG 500) and GIS in Public Health (EPH 681). The Certificate entails three core courses in GIS and remote sensing as well as a suite of electives including statistics and more advanced courses in spatial analysis. Altogether, the Certificate involves 15 credit hours, although prior coursework at UM or elsewhere may be counted for credit.

We envision that the Certificate will provide new opportunities to connect with other users of the technology in the US Federal Government, local governments, the private sector, and international institutions such as the United Nations. Because the technology is used in developing countries to optimize scarce resources for problem solving and environmental management, we expect that individuals working for private voluntary and non-governmental organizations that deal with humanitarian and environmental issues will also benefit from this initiative. For more information, please see the Certificate Brochure, posted on our website at <http://www.as.miami.edu/geography/pdf/GIS%20Certificate%20brochure.pdf>.



Update from Dr. Laurence Kalkstein, Research Professor


Dr. Kalkstein continues to pursue his research on climate and human health issues. He is presently working with the National Weather Service to develop heat/health systems around the world, concentrating now on Korea and the U.S. He has also been funded by the Weather Service to develop cold/health warning systems, and a new cattle system for the upper Midwest, which warns ranchers when conditions are hostile for calving in the winter. Dr. Kalkstein and his colleagues have now developed 25 heat health systems in the U.S., 7 in Korea, 9 in Italy, 3 in Canada, and 1 in China. The cattle cold system has been expanded to seven National Weather Service Forecast Offices in Montana and North and South Dakota.

This past year, **Dr. Kalkstein** completed a detailed investigation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on the possible increases in heat-related mortality assuming a major climate change. The study determined that the number of deaths would increase, but an effective use of heat warning systems could save thousands of lives if implemented nationwide. The National Weather Service is thus funding a

nationalization of Kalkstein's systems at over 100 Forecast Offices in the country.

Dr. Kalkstein and Dr. Sen Roy have applied for a NOAA contract to develop the first state-of-the-art heat/health system for India. If funded, they will travel to New Delhi to implement the system and discuss ways to improve public response to extreme heat in this very oppressive city.

This year, Dr. Kalkstein was invited to give two presentations on campus related to his weather/health work. The first was delivered at the Audrey Finkelstein Experience for Lifelong Learning, where he presented on homecoming weekend to a number of alumni. The second was delivered at a Miller School of Medicine "Grand Rounds Seminar," where he spoke on "Climate and Human Health: Present Realities and Future Uncertainties."



Laurence S. Kalkstein, Ph.D.
Research Professor, Department
of Geography and Regional
Studies, University of Miami
Director, Synoptic Climatology
Laboratory

Past president of the International
Society of Biometeorology, the
(world's largest Biometeorological
organization).

Wednesday, March 17, 2010
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Clinical Research Building
Room 989
1120 N.W. 14th Street

**Department of Epidemiology
and Public Health
Grand Rounds**

**Climate and Human Health:
Present Realities and Future
Uncertainties**

FACT: Extreme heat stands as the leading cause of death as compared with all other weather disasters.

- Global warming—an uncertain threat. Do we know how to deal with its potential ramifications?
- Considerable research on lessening the negative impact of heat exists, but few studies have uncovered how our bodies will respond.

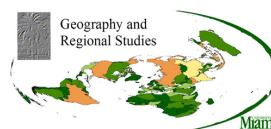
EXPLORE: How should we respond to a potential environmental calamity when we are uncertain of the impacts? Should we develop stringent policies when an environmental threat is uncertain?

Dr. Kalkstein is Principal Investigator on a number of federally and privately funded contracts dealing with the assessment, development and implementation of heat/health watch-warning systems for major cities worldwide. He has published over 120 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters in leading climatological, geographical, and medical journals and has served as editor of two major climatological journals.

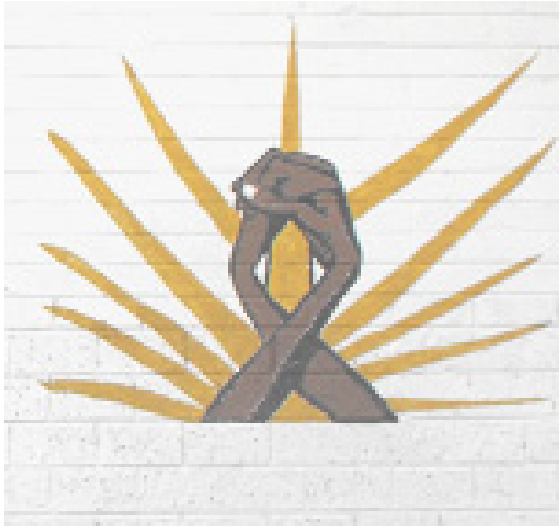
For more information, contact Katie Lewitt at 305-243-6398 or kiewitt@med.miami.edu

Judaic Studies and the UGalilee Program

Dr. Sheskin continues his work in the University's Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies. He just returned from two weeks in Karmiel, Israel where he taught in UM's UGalilee Program at ORT Braude College. This program hosts UM students studying abroad. Students participate in an archaeological dig and visit historic sites throughout the country. He is also a Fellow at the Miller Center and is the Director of its Jewish Demography Project (JDP). JDP has produced reports on the American Jewish community which have been cited in numerous press reports for years, including four recent articles in the *New York Times*. He also serves as the Undergraduate Advisor for UM's George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies.



SPACES OF HOPE



Dr. Grant's "Spaces of Hope" study abroad course returned to South Africa in 2009 and the course will visit again one month prior to the FIFA 2010 World Cup. Word is that most of the students are staying on this year to catch a game or two!

A highlight of the course is the students engaging in two-weeks of service learning with the world-renowned, Amy Biehl Foundation. The Foundation works with children from schools located in some of the poorest parts of Cape Town, known as the "Cape Flats." Our UM students will participate in community projects; work with community leaders; and develop leadership and group skills in working as a team member in service-learning assignments.



In 2009, UM students engaged in a literacy program, mentored in an HIV/peer group, facilitated in sports programs (e.g., soccer), in arts and crafts afterschool programs, and in a greening and a classroom refurbishment project.

UM students and the Amy Biehl Foundation are deepening their ties with each other. One student from the 2009 course is interning with the Foundation at their head office in Cape Town for the summer of 2010. So when the



2010 course arrives in Cape Town on May 25th they may be greeted by a UM student! Such is the global world that our students are now weaving. Geography knows no boundaries for our current students.



Peter Self, GEG major, leading a group discussion in a township school in Gugulethu, Cape Town



Recent Faculty Publications

- Boswell, Thomas**, and **Sheskin, Ira** (2009). "Deconstructing the Black Population of New York City and Miami-Dade County," in Frazier, J.W., Darden, J.T. and Henry, N.F, *The African Diaspora in the US and Canada at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (Binghamton: Global Academic Press), pp. 35-97.
- Fuller, Douglas**, Troyo, A., Calderon-Arguedas, O., Solano, M.E, and Beier, J.C. (2009). "Urban structure and dengue fever in Puntarenas, Costa Rica." *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 30: 265-282.
- Grant, Richard** (2009). "International Trade" in Thrift, N., Yeung, H., *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* (London: Elsevier), pp. 206-23.
- Kalkstein, Laurence**, Sheridan, S., and Kalkstein, A.J. (2009). "Heat Health Warning Systems: Development, Implementation, and Intervention Activities." *Biometeorology for Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change: Research Frontiers and Perspectives* (Heidelberg, Germany: Springer-Verlag), pp. 33-48.
- Kanai, Miguel** and Ortega-Alcazar, I. (2009). "The Prospects for Progressive Culture-Led Urban Regeneration in Latin America: Cases from Mexico City and Buenos Aires." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, pp. 483-501, doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00865.x.
- Labban, Mazen** (2010). "Oil in parallax: Scarcity, markets, and the financialization of accumulation." *Geoforum*, doi: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.12.002.
- Muller, Peter** and **de Blij, H.J.** (2010). *Geography, Realms, Regions and Concepts*. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley), 14th revised edition, 619 pages.
- Nijman, Jan** (2010). "A study of space in Mumbai's slums." *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* vol. 101(1), pp. 3-17.
- Sen Roy, Shouraseni** (2009). "Spatial variations in the diurnal patterns of winter precipitation in India." *Theoretical and Applied Climatology*: Vol. 96. pp. 347-356, doi: 10.1007/s00704-008-0045-1.
- Sheskin, Ira** (2009). "Local Jewish Community Studies As Planning Tools for the American Jewish Community," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, vol. 21 (1 and 2), Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Jerusalem, Israel. pp. 107-135. www.jcpa.org, www.jewishdatabank.org, and www.bjpa.org.

New and Continuing Research Awards

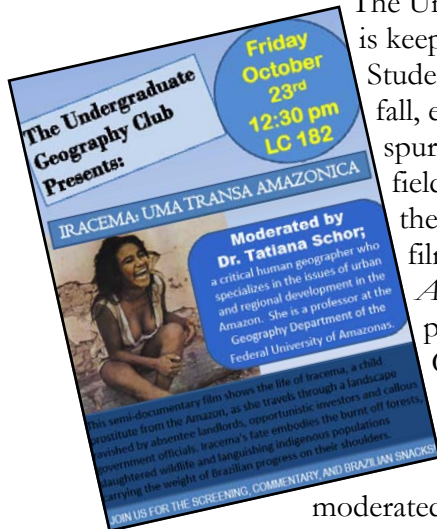
- Fuller, D.O.**, 2008-2013. NASA. *WaterSCAPES: Science of Coupled Aquatic Ecosystems from Space*. \$750,000 (with S. Wdowinski and L. Sternberg).
- Fuller, D.O.**, 2009-2010. Miller School of Medicine, Interdisciplinary Research Development Initiative (IRDI). *Dengue in the Americas*. \$100,000 (with J. Beier and S. Ruan).
- Fuller, D.O.**, 2010-2015. National Institutes of Health. *Environmental Changes and Mosquito-Borne Diseases in Arid Environments*. \$2.37 million. (with J. Beier, D. DeAngelis, C. Cosner, and S. Cantrell).
- Grant, R.**, 2008-2010. National Science Foundation. REU Supplements for *Neglected Spatiality: The Economic Geography of Slums in Global Cities of the Less Developed World*. \$15,000 (with **J. Nijman**).
- Grant, R.**, 2007-2009. National Science Foundation. *Neglected Spatiality: The Economic Geography of Slums in Global Cities of the Less Developed World*. \$137,190 (with **J. Nijman**).
- Kalkstein, L.**, 2007-2010. California Air Resources Board. *A Spatial Synoptic Classification Approach to Projected Heat Vulnerability in California under Future Climate Change Scenarios*. \$37,811.
- Kalkstein, L.**, 2008-2010. U.S. Forest Service. *Meteorological Influences on the Dispersal of the Gypsy Moth*. \$50,000.
- Kalkstein, L.**, 2009-2010. Department of Health and Human Services. *Use of the HSI for the Division of Energy Assistance*. \$33,204.
- Nijman, J.**, 2010-2015. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. *Global Suburbanism*. \$2.5 million (with R. Keil et al.).



News from the Undergraduate Geography Club

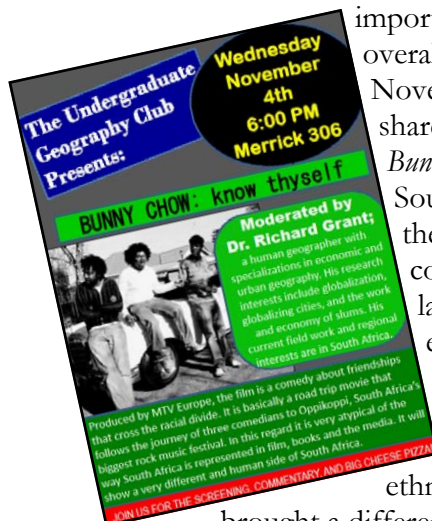


The Undergraduate Geography Club visiting Shark Valley

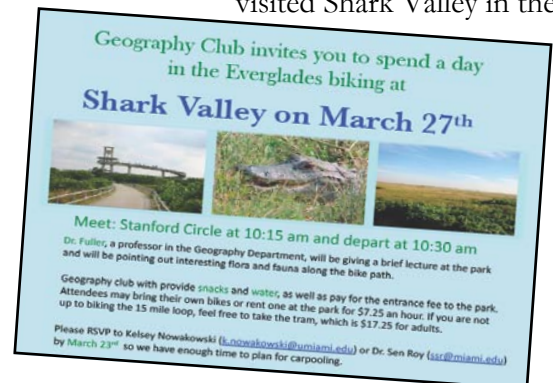


The Undergraduate Geography Club is keeping busy this academic year. Students screened two movies last fall, each of which was meant to spur discussions relevant to the field of Geography. In October, the club watched the Brazilian film *Iracema—Uma Trans Amazonica*. **Dr. Tatiana Schor**, professor at the Center for Cities Studies in the Brazilian Amazon at the Geography Department of the Federal University of Amazonas,

moderated the discussion and explained to students why analyzing the movie from a geographical perspective is extremely important to understanding the overall message of the film. In November, **Dr. Richard Grant** shared with the club the comedy *Bunny Chow: Know Thyself*, a South African film that follows the journey of three comedians to the country's largest rock festival. At the end of the fall semester, students and professors met at **Dr. Shouraseni Sen Roy's** home to have an ethnic potluck. Each person brought a different dish to share, which included tamales, mango salsa, and coconut cookies.



This spring semester, the club has screened *The Garden*, a documentary that follows the three-year struggle of a group of farmers in LA to save their community garden. **Luke Drake**, an MA student in UM's Geography Department who is currently conducting research on community gardens for his master's thesis, moderated the discussion. On Saturday, March 27th, the club visited Shark Valley in the



Everglades to bike a 15-mile loop. Before the biking commenced, **Dr. Douglas Fuller** gave a brief lecture about the Everglades and then pointed out notable flora and fauna along the path. As for the rest of this semester, the club is planning to visit Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and screen another interesting film. The Undergraduate Geography Club will end the semester with some spice by hosting a curry potluck!



The Undergraduate Geography Club gathered at Dr. Sen Roy's home

A Special Thanks For Your Gift to Geography:

Geoffrey P. Adamo	Frank and Linda Durgin	Christopher S. McGrayne
Jacquelyn A. Andrews	William V. Fries	Robert L. Pietro
Pamela Bissell	Eugene J. Gregory	Carol J. Pollock
Armando P. Boniche	Kathleen D. Homan	Robert A. Rosenthal
L. L. Britt	Grace and Howard Johnson	David A. Schild
M. S. Chenoweth	Joann A. Jones	Sue T. Stock
Jason B. Chorchos	Patricia R. Kingsbury	Alan D. Tannebaum
Ronald F. Cold	Greg S. Kupperman	Richard B. Wheeler

Like to join this list? Visit www.as.miami.edu/donate

Alumni News and Notes

Amy Cohen (MA '09) writes from her new home in California to extol the virtues of living in the Golden State. She continues to work part-time for the Everglades Foundation and is looking for longer-term employment utilizing her GIS skills in California. She also announced that she plans to get married in the spring of 2010. Congratulations, Amy!

Marco Milliones (MA '04) and **Dominique Werboff** (BA '06) are both working on PhD degrees in Geography at Clark University. Marco is currently undertaking field work in Mexico and Dominique is currently based on Negros Island in the Philippines.

Miles Kenny-Lazar (BA '09) was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to continue his research on the rubber industry in Laos. He is spending several months there doing extensive fieldwork and will enroll in a PhD program next fall. In addition to his Fulbright, Miles also received a prestigious Fellowship from the National Science Foundation, which will support his graduate studies.

Edgar Espinoza (MA '08) returned to his native Costa Rica shortly after receiving his degree. He works at the Rainforest Alliance in San Jose on food certification policy. Edgar is getting married this spring as well. Congratulations, Edgar!

Karen Katri (Former MA student) has returned to Miami after completing her law degree at Northwestern University. She is practicing law as an Associate at a major firm in Miami.

Message from an alumna:

After wonderful years at UM where I first experienced the pleasure and value of "learning to learn," I did graduate work in physical geography, conservation of natural resources and history, earned a Master's degree in science education at the University of Louisville, and then taught earth sciences in middle school and high school for over 25 years while raising a family and riding and training horses. In "retirement" I'm on the teaching staff at the

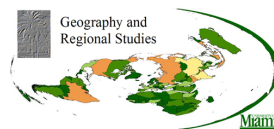
Creasey Mahan Nature Center where the emphasis is outdoor education. I have always strongly believed that geography encourages the tendency to make connections and engage in "big picture" thinking which contributes to an understanding of local and world events. My contributions to the UM Geography Department are but a tiny effort to say "thank you" and give to others what I have received.

Best wishes, Sue Tomhave Stock

Congratulations to Our Recent Graduates

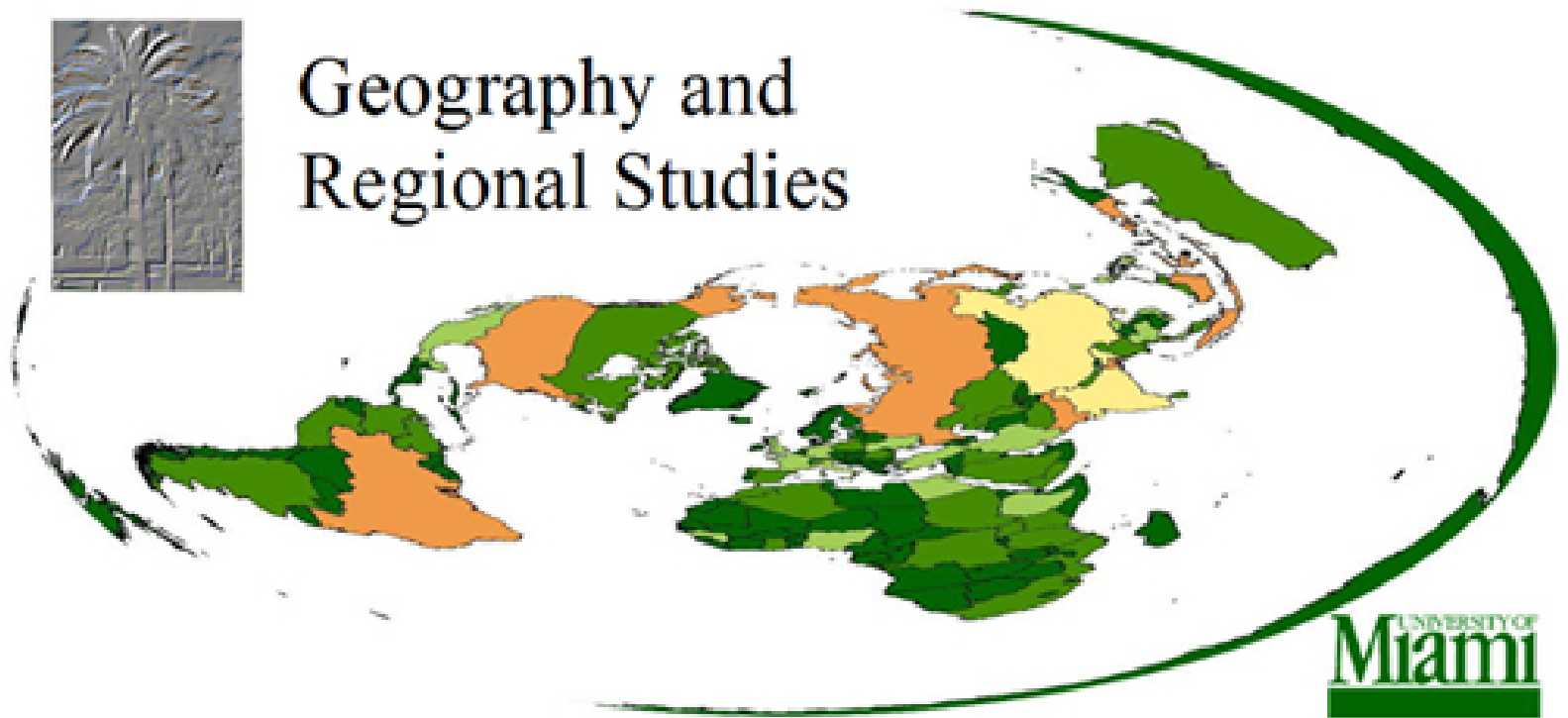
Jared M. Addis, BA '09
Stephen M. Gilbert, BA '09
Miles R. Kenney-Lazar, BA '09
William T. Mackie, BA '09

Amy R. Cohen, MA '09
Jason A. Cohen, MA '09
Kathleen L. Poncy, MA '09





Geography and Regional Studies



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