

Charter for the **Education Workgroup** of the California GIS Council

Adopted: March 11, 2021

Problem Statement

The California GIS Council (CGC) aims to promote a greater understanding and use of the benefits of GIS and facilitate cooperation throughout the State of California by supporting the collection, acquisition, sharing, and dissemination of GIS data, standards, and policies.

As of 2020, limited progress has been made with regards to comprehensively improving the state of GIS in California to address issues such as those outlined in the California GIS Council charter (adopted January 7, 2017). Topics include leveraging GIS to improve the quality, accuracy and responsiveness of government services, duplication of effort among statewide entities, standardized approaches to data management, and most importantly, leveraging resources to increase the cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of geographic information in California.

Now that a formal, dedicated Geographic Information Officer has been appointed by the State government, and the CGC is reinvigorated to address the previously identified objectives, one of the biggest questions is how the Council can offer the support to address these issues and achieve the objectives for the state of GIS in the state. Given limited resources, can we achieve this to not only benefit state agencies and the general public, but also provide educational and professional development opportunities to grow the next generation of GIS professionals? One of the solutions is to involve the rich resources residing within educational and research institutions in academia.

Although the Council has participants/members from higher education, there has not been a formal structure or mechanism developed to allow faculty, staff and students with expertise and/or interest in the field of GIS to actively or effectively participate in statewide collaborative efforts.

Mission Statement

The Education Workgroup (EWG) of the California GIS Council aims to facilitate the involvement and collaboration of faculty, staff and students from higher education across the State to support efforts to build a better statewide GIS and provide opportunities for the next generation of GIS professionals. The workgroup is open to entities such as K-12 education and education-focused organizations or companies. However, the primary focus will remain on higher education.

Objectives

The Education Workgroup seeks to:

- Identify subject matter experts in the fields of GIS and geospatial technologies in academia.
- Assist with the development of GIS-related policies and standards by connecting public agencies with subject matter experts in academia.
- Identify missing or incomplete datasets needed for research and education.
- Develop and foster career pathways between higher education and public agencies.
- Make recommendations to the CGC regarding approaches to facilitate and improve communication and collaboration between the education sector and public agencies.

Operating Principles

The EWG will work according to these principles:

- Discussions are focused, concise, open-minded, and inclusive - all views will be considered in making a consensus-based decision.
- Decisions will be based on fairness, consistency, transparency, economic sustainability, and strategic prioritization.
- Principles of plan, check and adjust will be followed.
- During the decision-making process, the EWG will strive for consensus, and if a consensus cannot be reached, the EWG will implement procedures identified in the general California GIS Council Charter.

Authority

The EWG will report to and receive direction from the Council. The EWG is empowered to collect recommendations, review priorities and initiatives, and incorporate them into the Council Strategic Plan.

Ownership

Participants volunteer their time to serve because they recognize the need for improved collaboration between higher education/academia and state agencies in California.

Communication Strategy

The EWG plans to meet as needed by teleconference and communicate via email and/or web-based scheduling apps and will provide a report to the CGC at its quarterly meetings. This report will be posted on the CGC website as well. The chair and/or individual members of the EWG will respond to questions by the CGC Executive Committee upon request.

Success Indicators

Success occurs when:

- The EWG is formalized by crafting a charter that has been accepted by the CGC.
- The EWG develops a web-based publicly accessible list of subject matter experts.
- The EWG identifies a process by which faculty, staff and students can identify missing or incomplete datasets used for research and education.
- The EWG assists with development of a GIS internship program for students.

Participants

To maintain participant diversity, the EWG will aim to have *at least* 1 representative (faculty or staff) from each type of higher education institution in California (California State Universities, University of California, community college and private universities). Additionally, the workgroup will make best efforts to include participants who represent geographic regions across California, and who represent a variety of disciplines within the geospatial science and technology fields. Student representatives are also highly encouraged to participate.

Current Participant List:

Name	Affiliation
Danielle Bram	California State University, Northridge
Jason Schwenkler	California State University, Chico
Mono Simeone	UC San Francisco - GIS Education Center
Erin Mutch	UC Merced - Spatial Analysis and Research Center
Noli Brazil	UC Davis
Tim Pudoff	Santa Rosa Community College
Craig Davis	Sacramento City College
Dan Scollon	Shasta College
Hugh Howard	American River College
An-Min Wu	USC Spatial Sciences Institute

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