

Mu Kappa annual report, 2021-22.  
(Submitted to GTU in June 2022 by Kari Jensen.)

On November 15, 2021, Dr. Jim Thatcher, Associate Professor at the Urban Studies program at the University of Washington-Tacoma, gave a guest lecture on zoom attended by several of our Mu Kappa members as well as students and faculty from Geography and other disciplines. The title of his talk was "Everything is Gerrymandered - but How Matters".

This was Mu Kappa's and the Department of Global Studies and Geography's "Geography Awareness Week Lecture", and it focused on congressional redistricting. Specifically, Dr. Thatcher gave an in-depth description of methods that he has co-developed with colleagues and undergraduate students involving the use of travel times and other advanced mathematical methods as the basis for better defined and more impartial communities of interest in drawing congressional electoral districts. This research was funded by the National Science Foundation's REU program.

On May 3, 2022, Mu Kappa organized another guest lecture, this time with Joy Arden, Landscape Curator at Bayard Cutting Arboretum. The title of her talk was "Introducing GIS Technology into the Landscape".

Ms. Arden spoke about her professional experiences employing GIS and associated technologies such as GPS and drone photography in better tracking and planning botanical landscape processes. She contextualized this amidst her professional development as a GIS specialist, which Hofstra students responded to. They commented that they found Ms. Arden's work inspiring and relevant in helping to develop their own careers in the field. The talk was attended by students from several different majors at Hofstra University.

The very next day, May 4, 2022, Joy Arden gave the keynote speech at our annual initiation ceremony at the Hofstra University Club, where Mu Kappa members had a chance to interact with her more informally. Nineteen students were initiated into Gamma Theta Upsilon in a ceremony led by student members of the Mu Kappa executive board: President Kayla Staderker and Vice President Kate Meagher. The ceremony was attended by Mu Kappa student and faculty members, as well as other faculty from the Department of Global Studies and Geography. It was very nice to be back in person again after two years of initiation ceremonies on zoom.

Short version:

November 15, 2021: Mu Kappa organized a talk (on zoom) by Dr. Jim Thatcher, Associate Professor at the Urban Studies program at the University of Washington-Tacoma, titled "Everything is Gerrymandered - but How Matters". By focusing on congressional redistricting and displaying maps and engaging geographical research, Dr. Thatcher was able to effectively promote the discipline of Geography and more specifically demonstrate the relevance of GIS in working towards sounder redistricting.

May 3, 2022: Mu Kappa organized a guest lecture in the Student Center Theater at Hofstra University with Joy Arden, Landscape Curator at Bayard Cutting Arboretum. The title of her talk was "Introducing GIS Technology into the Landscape". She amply demonstrated how GIS can be used effectively in horticulture management, which was a fascinating, new use of GIS for the audience to learn about.

Mu Kappa on GTU's Facebook page:

April 7, 2022: We posted a picture of the poster we used to promote our Geography Awareness Week's talk by Dr. Jim Thatcher which was organized on November 15, 2021.

May 6, 2022: We posted a photo of the new Mu Kappa initiates together with other Mu Kappa student and faculty members and our guest speaker, from the ceremony on May 4, 2022.

June 2: We posted a photo of Joy Arden from her GIS talk on May 3, 2022.