INTRODUCING DR. JORDAN HOWELL

The Department of Geography & Environment is proud to welcome aboard our newest faculty member, Dr. Jordan Howell. And right now, Dr. Howell is taking a deeper look into the world of garbage. More specifically, solid waste management and energy issues in remote parts of the USA such as the Hawaiian Islands and also right here in New Jersey. As part of his PhD. dissertation for Michigan State University, Dr. Howell explores waste-to-energy incinerators in the United States.

You can find the 27-year-old Michigan native and fan of “Parks and Recreation” in the classroom this semester teaching Environmental Studies: Social Perspectives and Cultural Geography. Next semester, he is offering up a new course, “TECHNOLOGY – ENVIRONMENT – SOCIETY” which will be exploring multiple scales of these unacknowledged correlations. If you haven’t met Jordan yet, get to know a little more about him below.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT – Q&A WITH DR. HOWELL

Favorite thing about being a professor?
My favorite thing about being a professor is actually three things that I like equally well (what a professor answer). First, is working with students. Second, is working with all of the interesting people that you can find at universities. Third, is being able to develop my own research questions, design a research plan, and write about what I find.

Most threatening environmental problem our world faces?
I think the most threatening enviro problem we face is an inability to link the habits of our daily lives to the production processes that cause ecological problems. A lot of folks don’t critically examine where our food, clothing, energy, housing, etc. come from. I think that if we did, we would demand stronger action on environmental issues and, truthfully, move away from harmful practices.

How well do your pug & cat get along with each other?
Well, the dog is my parents’. His name is Napoleon and he’s a French Bulldog, not a pug (thank you very much). He is indifferent to cats because they have nothing to offer him in terms of food or telling him that he looks good.

Our cat, Marilyn, however, does not like Napoleon very much...he is too loud for her taste.

First thing I do when I wake up....
The first thing I do when I wake up is stumble to the coffee maker and hope that I set up the auto-brew feature correctly the night before.

Tell us a little more about “Environmental Sociology”
Environmental sociology is an application of sociological theory (Marx, Weber, Durkheim) to environmental problems. I think it is a useful alternative perspective to the approaches to environmental issues found in Geography, Science & Technology Studies, and Environmental History, as it tends to be a bit more applied. I like to try and draw from all four bodies of literature in my research and expose students to all four in my classes, too.

Favorite food or meal...
Wow, the food question is tough. I will say that it depends on the time, place, and occasion, but I will also say that the meal which has never, ever let me down is baked salmon with roasted sweet potatoes and broccoli. It is both delicious AND nutritious. Also, I love a good brunch.

Craft beer versus fine wine... More specifically favorite kind?
You shouldn't have asked me this because you’re going to get a dissertation for an answer. One of the things I will miss most about Michigan is the beer scene, which is excellent. Bell’s Oberon, Bell’s Two-Hearted, and Arcadia Whitsun Ale are world-class beers and I don't
know that they are available in NJ. My favorites with wider distribution are Franziskaner Weissbier (Germany), Stella Artois (Belgium), and Modelo (Mexico). There are very few occasions where either Stella or Modelo would be a bad idea. I also like Sierra Nevada beers, which all taste the same despite the color of the label if you ask me.

We also enjoy a range of fine and less-fine wines. I personally like wines that have a strong earthy element to them, such as malbecs from Argentina (and French ancestor, Cahors) and some of the less outrageously-priced Bordeaux blends. I like a bit of that leather/pepper/dirt flavor in my Riojas and Cotes-du-Rhone wines as well. California Zinfandels that are not high-alcohol also fit the bill. Bota Box “Redvolution” has the best quality-to-price ratio in the market, and Petit Verdot is the most underrated varietal right now. However, the hands-down, single greatest wine of all time is the Virginia Trianon from the Williamsburg Winery in Williamsburg, VA. It is a true expression of terroir and you can really taste the love and care that the winemaker put into it.

Favorite place on earth…
There are a million places you could be, but only one where you actually are. You’ve got to find the joy wherever you are!

OK on the count of three, name your favorite dinosaur, don’t even think about it just do it. 1, 2, 3
I have actually thought about this before: Stegosaurus.

Favorite musical group…
I will give you a few: Vampire Weekend; A Tribe Called Quest; 311; Jack Johnson; Ximena Sarinana; Ghostface; Crosby, Stills, Nash (and Young).

If you had everyone in the world’s attention, what would you tell them?
I would tell everyone to relax, breathe, spread love, and practice peace.

GET INVOLVED WITH GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT – IT’S EASY, HERE’S HOW!

GETTING R.E.A.L. ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Rowan Environmental Action League (R.E.A.L.) is a student run group that aims to increase awareness of environmental issues across Rowan University's campus and throughout Glassboro. REAL was formerly called GEO, a name that dates back to Glassboro State College. REAL plays an active role in making Rowan a more environmental and sustainable community through student involvement and campaigning for change.

REAL takes a stand against fracking, as well as promotes clean, affordable water, and sustainable living. Thanks to help from the Food and Water Watch and the Rowan student body, REAL is making water refill stations a reality on the Rowan’s Glassboro campus. So far, refill stations are located in Robinson Hall and the REC Center.

Join the REAL team! Meetings are held every Monday in the Student Center, room 129 at 9:00 pm.

- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/2263213749/

JOIN GEOGRAPHY CLUB!

The Rowan Geography Club is an informal setting where people gather who are interested in discussing geographic topics. The topics cover GIS, environmental science, planning and we're always seeking new areas of discussion. We also host outdoor activities that include hiking and service projects. Specific meetings and times vary. Members will be contacted through email and Facebook.

- President: fuhrme77@students.rowan.edu
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/151711798210450/
G&E STUDENTS MAPPING NEW JERSEY’S PRESERVED FARMLAND

Beginning in October G&E students have the unique opportunity to take part in one of the most progressive land preservation programs in the Northeast. The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which runs the New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program, has turned to Rowan’s Geospatial Research Lab for assistance in mapping over 200,000 acres of preserved farms across New Jersey’s 21 counties. This work will provide real world experience with desktop GIS including air photo interpretation, heads-up digitizing, topology editing & planar geometry enforcement, attribute population, using subtypes and domains and SDE database management.

GeoLab interns will be mapping over 2,000 preserved farms for the NJ Farmland Preservation Program. This mapping service will be an invaluable tool for the SADC to carry on future monitoring and stewardship.

G&E INTERNS GET THEIR BOOTS MUDDY

In January, the Rowan GeoLab kicked off internship collaboration with the New Jersey Army National Guard. This time we are partnering to take on environmental compliance at their facilities across the Garden State. This summer, interns got their boots dirty wandering through phragmite jungles completing wetland delineation surveys.

These planning level surveys keep National Guard armories in compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. For any wetland that is found within an installation boundary or within 15 feet of one, a site survey and subsequent wetland report must be maintained at that armory and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) office in Lawrenceville. To date, the program’s Intern Advisor (Anjelica Sinigaglio) & three interns (Josh Hitchner, Terra Luke, & Caitlin Bell- the “Intern Team”), have assisted William McBride, Environmental Specialist at the EMB, with wetland delineations at 11 facilities.

Prior to visiting the wetland areas, interns perform a desktop review, which consists of researching the soil and existing wetland data at each facility. This information is then reviewed while on site and helps with planning a course of action for the day.

Field work is comprised of multiple stages; isolating areas of interest, studying/recording the flora of an area, investigating/recording the soil properties of an area, determining whether or not that area is considered a wetland, and reevaluating the former delineation boundary, if necessary. The latter involves collecting GPS points for updated maps.

Once all site visits are completed, the Intern Team will update the entire wetland delineation report, including ArcGIS maps for each facility. Every delineation provides interns with a look at the flora and overall ecology of various areas in the state (coastal zones, pine forests, high elevation areas, etc.), and offers comprehensive experience with the thorough act of delineating a wetland.

For more information, feel free to contact Anjelica Sinigaglio @ sinigaglio@rowan.edu.
MAPPING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Rowan GeoLab is proud to announce their latest project — NJ MAP (New Jersey Municipal Asset Profiler). Easy and intuitive to use, NJ MAP is a project providing geospatial information for everyone in the Garden State. The website, http://njmap.rowan.edu, is hyperlocal – with each municipality in New Jersey having its own customized webpage to aid decision-making at the local level.

NJ MAP uses a thematic, standardized approach to present information on each municipality to help to facilitate regional coordination. NJ MAP currently presents four themes:

- Land Use Change
- Landscape Project Habitat information
- Agricultural Preservation Toolkit
- Impervious Surface within Watersheds

As part of the newest theme, NJ MAP: “Growth,” http://njmap.rowan.edu/growth, the Rowan University GeoLab is on a mission to produce a new 2007-2012 urban development map. But they need your help!

On October 8th, the Department of G&E hosted an hour long mapping competition to see who could hunt down the most development using the interactive NJ MAP tools. The theme works via crowdsourcing -- by asking NJ citizens to identify development growth across millions of acres of aerial photography through a fun mapping interface. The state’s most current land use map is now six years old and delivery of an updated map still several years away. The Growth project will create a quick snapshot of how development has occurred since 2007.

The Rowan GeoLab invites everyone to use the interactive web mapping tool to make contributions to areas where they know development has occurred since 2007. Once updates start coming in from throughout the state, Rowan GeoLab will make the information publicly available.

We encourage you to check out this new resource and send any comments, questions and feedback to gis@rowan.edu.

NJ MAP: Growth - By the numbers – As of Oct. 30th

- 19,295 “development points” have been added to date*
  *Each point represents a new development structure that has been erected since 2007 (including commercial/industrial use, single family & large lot residential homes, townhomes/apartment buildings etc.
- There were 1,311 points added during an hour long mapping competition held in the Geography & Environment department @ Rowan University.
- GIS sophomore, Connor Hornibrook, won the mapping competition by adding 361 points in one hour.
- Other top Rowan contributors were Chris Ford, James Heaton, Brenna Leary, Terra Luke and Shannon Reed. Many thanks to all contributors and participants!

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT:

The degree programs in the Rowan University Department of Geography and the Environment offer an exciting pathway for learning about the world, understanding environmental challenges, and developing a career that can help foster a sustainable future. Graduates of our programs have gone on to rewarding professions as environmental managers, earth and environmental scientists, teachers, professional land planners, GIS specialists, and many other rewarding and meaningful careers that meet the challenges of our times.

For more information about programs offered please visit www.rowan.edu/geography or contact department chair, Dr. John E. Hasse at hasse@rowan.edu or 856-256-4811. The department offices are located on the third floor of Robinson Hall.

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