

School of GeoSciences

Innovative Learning Week - Postgraduate Programme Schedule

MSc in GIS (Caroline.Keir@ed.ac.uk)

Innovative Conference

Tuesday, 21st February 2012

10.00 – 14.00 Lecture Theatre 2.13, Geography

10.00 Introduction (BMG)

10.10 Susan Bird, University Careers Service

10.40 Opportunities in Research (PhD or a Research Career), including personal experiences in Public Health

Liz Richardson, University of Edinburgh

11.00 Job Hunting Experiences and Working in Government

Shona Nicol and David Bruce, Scottish Government

11.20 Tea / Coffee

11.40 Working for a Small Company (Energy, Environment and Water Sectors) Paul Edmunds (Managing Director), Island GIS

12.00 Opportunities in ESRI-UK, Charles Kennelly (Technical Director)

12.30 Consultancy and the Role of the Consultant

Justin Hassall, Director of Programmes, Informed Solutions

13.00 Discussion

13.15 Sandwich Lunch to facilitate networking and further discussion

14.00 Close

Progressing the Dissertation

Wednesday, 22nd February 2012

13.00-16.30 Lecture Theatre 2.13, Geography

Overview

On Wednesday 22nd February, I intend to run a dissertation progress workshop. It is in three parts. The first is a discussion on the pitfalls and safety nets of doing dissertations; the second part is to break the group into small groups and have each person present the ambitions of their dissertations to the rest of the group, and to get feedback from your peers; the final third step is to hear from past students on what they did for their dissertations and what they learnt from the dissertation phase.

Ambition

- To encourage students to explore the viability of their proposed projects;

- To get students to articulate their ideas orally;
- To share ideas, expertise, synergy in the common parts.

Why bother?

For a few students, the dissertation is an unpleasant experience, when it should be the crowning phase. Students never get the data they were promised; they spend too long cleaning data; their supervisor goes AWOL; disconnect of expectation between student and supervisor; topic is too ambitious; technology/ software either too difficult to use, or not available, writers block, late start, absence from Scottish soil, poor ownership of project, poor knowledge of techniques, literature, poor time management. RPPP cautions and ‘cushions’ against all of these in various ways, but week 6, S2 offers a great opportunity to focus on future plans, to ‘trial’ ideas before they become too precious. There is untapped benefit in greater sharing of ideas and solutions (with acknowledgements of course!).

1 – 2pm Ideas to a safe journey: equipping yourself for the months ahead.

A selection of stories from supervisors about what went right, what went wrong, and with the magic of hindsight, what should have been done differently.

2 – 3pm Sharing ambitions – individual reporting on dissertation plans

Break into 6 groups of 4/5 (Appendix A). Summaries circulated prior to the meeting. Each student to give a 3 min ‘elevator pitch’ to the group. The other three to critique the idea, suggest their own ideas and thoughts (10 mins).

3.30 – 4.30 Confessions of Dissertation students – what I learnt from the process

A chance to hear from past MSc students – to hear from them about the issues they faced and how they managed their time.

Appendix A – Groups and their Location

Group 1 – Old Library

Nadila Alimu
Alice Duff
Chris Haworth
Xuchao Wu

Group 2 – Hutton Room

Anne Altringham
Graeme Erskine
Yuima Irigaki
Renaat Schoolmeesters

Group 3 – Watsons' Room

William Apted
Nuno Farinha
Nikos Lefkaditis
Felicity Rollings
Hao Xu

Group 4 – Darwin Room

Christian Boermel
Chris Ferguson
Michal Michalski
Mie Winstrup

Group 5 – Geddes Room

Alan Bragg
Theresa Fingler
Sulaiman Mosuro
Dan Wang

Group 6 – Lecture Theatre 2.13

Long Chen
Stuart Grieve
Mhairi O'hara
Jeske Van der velden