

# GHHCSG October 2023 Communiqué

What's happening in Canadian Health Geography?



Canadian Association of Geographers  
Association Canadienne des Géographes



Geographies of Health and  
Health Care Study Group

Jenna Dixon (UBC-O): Chair (2023-25); Andrea Rishworth (UTM): Vice Chair (2023-25); Emily Shantz (UW): Secretary (2023-24); Abraham Marshall Nunbogu (UW): Social-Communications (2022-24); Cynthia Itbo Musah (UW): Student Representative (2023-24)

**A note from the executive :** As a few of the regional CAG divisions are holding their annual meetings around this time, we know that many health geographers will be attending their first ever conference. Conferences are a fantastic way to engage community and learn about the great work that is happening in your area. But they are also a very unique place (both in person and virtual) that require considerations outside the daily norm. We thought it would be fun to have a communiqué to think about how we best engage with the conference setting. Our great thanks to the IHL for such a thoughtful contribution (starting on page 2 - a must read!) on readying for academic conferences as a natural extension of broader lab philosophies and trainee engagement. As always, reach out to [ghhcsg@gmail.com](mailto:ghhcsg@gmail.com) if you have ideas of what you'd like to see in the next edition.

- Jenna, Andrea, Emily, Abraham and Cynthia.

## The art of good questions

Conferences are not just about a one-way dissemination of information, they also an opportunity for dialogue between academic peers. Yet, not all question and answer sessions are productive. Heady and Vossler (2020) humorously describe four common types of poor questioners:

- **The Autobiographer** - who exploits a captive audience to speak at length about their own research, analysis of the presenter's ideas, and personal accomplishments;
- **The Heckler** - who seeks out weaknesses in the research and uses questions to discredit the presenter (the Heckler is rare in Geography, we're a pretty supportive audience overall);
- **The Rambler** - who has trouble distilling their question into a coherent thought;
- **The Ambassador** - who take it upon themselves to speak for an entire group of people and tends to ask statements not questions.

So how can audience members ask constructive questions? Consider:

- **Factual questions** - those that seek specific, concrete information. E.g., what software did you use? Which author did you find most helpful in informing your work?
- **Clarifying questions** - those that paraphrase and seek yes/no responses to determine understanding. E.g., Are you suggesting X? Would you say you're in favour of policy Y?
- **Exploratory questions** - those that require presenters to apply ideas in a new context, or to speculate about far-reaching possibilities. They require thought, creativity and longer responses. E.g., How do you prefer to bring people together with a shared sense of purpose? How would you apply these ideas to the context of Z?

Adapted from Heady, C., & Vossler, J. (2020). Conference Presentations and the Art of Asking Effective Questions.

## Indigenous Health Lab: Training Together, Presenting Together

In June 2022, Indigenous Health Lab members from Western University presented their research at the **International Medical Geography Symposium** at the University of Edinburgh. The process for preparing IHL group members to share their work in public forums is rooted in foundational Indigenous research concepts of relationship-building, reciprocity, and respect that are nurtured in each trainee from the day they join the Indigenous Health Lab through graduation.

**The Indigenous Health Lab (IHL)** is stewarded by **Dr. Chantelle Richmond**, Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Health and Environment in the Department of Geography and Environment at Western University (London, Ontario, Canada). IHL trainees are Indigenous and non-Indigenous graduate students at the master's, doctoral and post-doctoral levels. Trainees join the IHL with various research interests (i.e., Indigenous Peoples' experiences in health, academic, and urban environments) but are connected through a shared passion for Indigenous geographies of health research and scholarship, most notably that which engages communities. Nurturing the next generation of scholars of Indigenous geographies of health requires intentional training and mentorship in Indigenous research methodologies with multiple opportunities to practice well before trainees pursue research projects.



One of the most common ways the Indigenous Health Lab engages trainees in Indigenous research practices is through bi-weekly Lab meetings. Often by sharing a meal together, meetings provide needed space to build relationships (academic, professional, and personal) amongst Lab members, seek or provide feedback to each other, and recognize the unique experiences, skills, and knowledge each trainee brings to the Lab. During the one-hour in-person and virtual meetings, each trainee is provided time to share steps taken in their research and scholarship as well as personal developments. These informal discussions are opportunities for trainees to reflect on research, engage with each other as scholars and most importantly provide peer mentorship and encouragement. The scholarly function of these meetings build community within the Lab through discussions that range from serious frustrations in overcoming research challenges to laughter-filled moments acknowledging that every researcher has had at least one embarrassing moment in their career.



Readying for academic conferences is a natural extension of Lab activities as through the bi-weekly Lab meetings and other group activities, trainees are made aware of and in different ways, become engaged in each other's research. In the case of IMGS, and all gatherings, IHL trainees bring the value of reciprocity to conference attendance and presentations. This means respecting the time that the audience is sharing with presenters, and demonstrating this respect by being prepared and professional in presentations. Trainees also respect that many of IHL presentations speak about the experiences and lives of community partners who cannot be present at international conferences and events. It is extremely important to the IHL that sharing research is done in a way that intentionally and lovingly represent community voices and community-led research outside the Lab. One way IHL trainees do this is through careful and collaborative preparation. Another way is through careful attention to the role positionality plays in forming the narrative of presentations. Awareness of self and how to integrate positionality into the research story during a presentation by bringing our journey of how we are informed as health geographers, is important towards communicating sense

of belonging, community, and connectedness.

### **So, what does this mean in practice?**

Weeks in advance, trainees prepare all presentation materials and present them to Dr. Richmond for review and approval. Then as the conference nears, we present for our lab colleagues in order to gather feedback, practice our public speaking skills, and become more familiar with our speaking notes. At the IMGS conference, for example, this looked like sharing snacks, drinks, and downtime at an Airbnb while presenters took turns practicing. Practicing presentations to a friendly and supportive group helped boost trainee confidence while refining slides and notes. Presenting Indigenous health geography research is an important facet to being an Indigenous health geographer. Presenting is a demonstration of ones understanding of foundational Indigenous research concepts – respect, reciprocity, and relationship-building. Thoughtful intentional training and mentorship are critical to preparing trainees. For the Indigenous Health Lab at Western University, this training and mentorship spans the entirety of trainee's studies and is practiced regularly through formal and informal knowledge-sharing.

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**Read more about the IHL training environment:**

Ambtman-Smith et al. (2023). [You can't just bring people here and then not feed them: A case in support of Indigenous-led training environments](#). *Environment and Planning F*.

## Six tips for giving a fabulous academic presentation

Adapted from Golash-Boza. (2022). [6 Tips For Giving a Fabulous Academic Presentation](#). The Wiley Network.

- 1 Use your slides for images, and relatively few words**
  - Visuals are powerful and help with memory and learning
  - Never use less than 24pt font
  - And no reading straight from your slides
- 2 Structure is your friend**
  - Introduction/ Overview
  - Theoretical Framework/ Research Question
  - Methodology
  - Discussion of Data/ Results
  - Analysis
  - Conclusion
- 3 The audience wants to hear about your research. Tell them.**
  - Background information should only include what is necessary
  - Start discussion of your data well before the 1/2 way mark
  - Conferences are for learning about your new and exciting research, not old work
- 4 Keep to your time limit**
  - Check your time guidelines and the time allotted for questions
  - E.g. 15 min time slot, with 3 min for questions, means the presentation is 12 min
  - Estimate 2 min talking/typed doubled spaced page,
  - 1 min talking/slide
- 5 Practice, practice, practice**
  - Practicing ensures you will consistently hit proper time
  - And that you are smooth and confident with your delivery
  - You cannot practice too often
- 6 Don't read your presentation**
  - Reading is not engaging
  - You can lean on notes, but practice several times, and deliver with emotion, conviction, and variation in tone

**Additional presentation tips:**

- Use your peers to practice ahead of time.
- Let your passion and excitement come through!

## Other things to know this month:

### 1. University of South Carolina Cluster Hire: multidisciplinary Social Determinants of Health and Health Justice

UNC seeking scholars who will push the frontiers of conceptual and methodological advances in addressing the social determinants of health and health justice. This inaugural cohort will play a crucial role in establishing a faculty collective on the social determinants of health. With a start date of August 16, 2024, the College seeks to hire four full-time faculty positions on a 9-month pay basis, two at the tenure-track Assistant Professor rank and two additional open-rank positions at the tenured/tenure-track Assistant, Associate or Professor rank. Review of applications will begin November 15, 2023, and continue until the positions are filled.

See: <https://uscjobs.sc.edu/postings/154714>

### 2. Call for Graduate Students: Environmental Health

The Green Lab is an interdisciplinary research group that explores how natural, built, and social environments shape human health and disparities. Current projects focus on understanding (a) pathways linking greenspace to health using mobile health (mHealth) technologies (e.g., smartphone-based GPS, wearable devices); (b) health and equity impacts of community-based greenspace interventions and natural experiments (e.g., tree-planting programs); and (c) structural and contextual causes of health disparities (e.g., historical redlining). Learn more at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/jobs/research-assistantship-available-for-graduate-student-phd-in-environmental-health>

### 3. Call for Papers: Longitudinal Analysis in Geospatial Health Applications



This Special Issue of [Health & Place](#) invites submissions that examine longitudinal analyses of geospatial health data. Guest editors: Dr. Desjardins (Johns Hopkins University) and Dr. Rinne (Aalto University). The submission deadline has been set as 31st December 2023. Learn more at:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/health-and-place/about/call-for-papers#longitudinal-analysis-in-geospatial-health-applications>

## Job postings

Associate/Full Professor Human Geography, Dartmouth College. Open until filled. <https://apply.interfolio.com/130044>

Assistant Professor of Indigenous Geographies, Simon Fraser University. Open until filled. <https://www.sfu.ca/geography/about/work-with-us/ap-indigenous-geographies.html>

Assistant Professor, Human/Environmental Geography in Community Health, Texas A&M. Review begins October 31, 2023. <https://faculty.tamu.edu/JobDetail?JobId=131127>

Assistant Professor in Environmental and Resource Economics, University of Alberta. Closing November 1, 2023. <https://www.careers.ualberta.ca/Competition/A100151619>

Assistant Professor - Experiential Education in Global Health, York University. Closing November 1, 2023. <https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/assistant-professor-in-experiential-education/>

Assistant Professor - Global Health Knowledge Mobilization & Implementation Science, York University. Closing November 1, 2023. <https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/assistant-professor-in-global-health-knowledge-mobilization-implementation-science/>

Assistant Professor - Human Geography, Université de Montréal . Closing November 3, 2023. [https://www.cag-acg.ca/files/ugd/513bc6\\_6027e0e5810d4f5bad4c86bc56093256.pdf](https://www.cag-acg.ca/files/ugd/513bc6_6027e0e5810d4f5bad4c86bc56093256.pdf)

Assistant and other ranks of Professor - Cluster hire in Social Determinants of Health and Health Justice, University of South Carolina. Review starts November 15, 2023.

Assistant Professor (Contractual Limited Term Appointment) - Urban Innovation, University of Toronto Mississauga. Closing November 20, 2023. <https://jobs.utoronto.ca/job/Mississauga-Assistant-Professor-Contractual-Limited-Term-Appointment-Urban-Innovation-ON/574146417/>

Assistant/Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, Tier II in Economics of Sustainable Global Prosperity, Carleton University. Closing November 29, 2023. <https://carleton.ca/deputyprovost/2023/assistant-or-associate-professor-and-canada-research-chair-tier-ii/>

Assistant Professor - Human Dimensions of Climate Change, University of Waterloo. Closing November 30, 2023. <https://uwaterloo.ca/geography-environmental-management/available-positions>

Assistant Professor - Urban and regional planning, Queen's University. Closing November 30, 2023. <https://www.queensu.ca/geographyandplanning/about-us/employment-opportunities>

Assistant or Associate Professor and SSHRC Tier II Canada Research Chair - Disability Justice, Carleton University. Application review begins January 8, 2024. <https://carleton.ca/deputyprovost/2023/assistant-or-associate-professor-and-sshrccanada-research-chair-tier-ii-sociology-and-anthropology/>

Send us your job openings at [all levels](mailto:ghhcsg@gmail.com) at [ghhcsg@gmail.com](mailto:ghhcsg@gmail.com) to have it highlighted in the next communiqué.

## Dates of note

October 27 to 28, 2023 - CAGONT (CAG Ontario Division) annual meeting in Toronto, hosted by Toronto Metropolitan University. See <https://cagacgont.wixsite.com/cagont-2023>

November 15 to 17, 2023 - RGQ (CAG Quebec Division) annual meeting, virtual. See <https://www.cag-acg.ca/rgq-congres-annuel>

April 8 to 12, 2024 - Global Public Health week of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA). See <https://www.wfpha.org/global-public-health-week/>

April 16 to 20, 2024 - American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii. Abstract submission and registration now open. November 16 abstract submission deadline. See <https://www.aag.org/events/aag2024/>

May 15 to 16, 2024 - Human geographies of climate change adaptation in Bergen, Norway. Registration now open. See <https://tinyurl.com/adaptconf>

July 14 to July 19, 2024 - The International Medical Geography Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia. Abstract submission and registration dates TBA. Website now partially active, see <https://imgs2024.org/>

August 14 to 19th, 2024 - Canadian Association of Geographers Annual Meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland. Details TBA.

*The GHHCSG executive recognizes that the vast landscape that the members of the CAG reside on is land that has been stolen from Indigenous Peoples, and this land is now also home to im/migrants, forcibly emplaced peoples, and refugees from the around the world. Learn more about Decolonizing and Indigenizing action within the CAG at <https://www.cag-acg.ca/decolonizing-indigenizing>*



have a great month