

# Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (PCAG)

## Year-End Report (2025)

Prepared by: Dr. Jennifer Mateer, President

### 1. Executive Summary

2025 marked a period of renewal and strategic rebuilding for the Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (PCAG). Building on momentum generated by the successful Fall 2024 meeting at the University of North Dakota and in anticipation of Brandon University hosting the Fall 2025 conference, the Division focused on strengthening governance continuity, expanding member engagement, and aligning divisional priorities with national efforts in equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and decolonizing and Indigenizing practices.

Key accomplishments this year included:

- Continued stabilization of the PCAG Executive following a period of leadership transition.
- The planning and coordination for the Fall 2025 PCAG Annual Meeting hosted by Brandon University.
- Support for student participation and recognition, with renewed emphasis on awards and conference access.

### 2. PCAG Governance and Executive (2025)

#### Executive Officers:

- **President:** Dr. Jennifer Mateer (Brandon University)
- **Past-President:** Dr. Chris Malcolm (Brandon University)
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** Dr. Kamil Zaniewski (Lakehead University)

#### Members-at-Large (MALs):

- Brandon University – Rachel Heron
- University of Regina – Ulrike Hardenbicker
- University of Manitoba – *Vacant*
- University of Winnipeg – *Vacant*

The Executive continued to meet quarterly to support conference planning, membership outreach, and coordination with national CAG initiatives. A key priority for 2025 was maintaining continuity in leadership roles to ensure the successful delivery of the Fall 2025 PCAG Annual Meeting at Brandon University.

### 3. Membership and Engagement

PCAG continued to face challenges related to declining and uneven institutional representation across the Prairie region. Vacancies remain at the University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg, highlighting the need for targeted outreach and renewed strategies for member recruitment. Our key actions in 2025 included:

- Direct outreach to geography and related departments across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and neighboring regions.
- Invitation for members to participate in conference committees rather than relying solely on host institutions.

#### **4. PCAG Annual Meeting – Fall 2025 (Brandon University)**

The Prairie Division’s primary focus in 2025 was the planning and coordination of the Fall 2025 PCAG Annual Meeting, hosted by Brandon University. The meeting was held October 17–19, 2025, at Elkhorn Lodge in Onanole, Manitoba. Eleven papers were presented along with two posters. The field trip to Riding Mountain National Park to discuss controlled burns, fire safety, and invasive species prevention for Clear Lake was a highlight for members.

During the AGM, the membership voted on a trial of a divisional conference committee model to distribute organizational responsibilities across institutions and career stages. The membership also conducted outreach to students and early-career scholars to encourage participation, presentations, and volunteer involvement.

PCAG extends its sincere thanks to Brandon University for hosting the Fall 2025 Annual Meeting, and in particular Ms. Wenonah Fraser van Heyst and Dr. Dion Wiseman for their hard work in coordinating and organizing the conference.

#### **5. Student Support and Awards**

PCAG remains committed to supporting student participation and recognition within the Prairie region and awarded Paul Simpson-Housley Awards to Carter Baranyk, Anna Cushon, Joy De Castro, Tobi Hofer, Patrick Horne, Drayden McKay, Gina Lynn Musgrave, and Daniel Oppong.

The Division continues to explore new models for student competitions and presentation awards, drawing inspiration from initiatives in other divisions, including Ontario and Atlantic Canada.

#### **6. Publications and Knowledge Mobilization**

PCAG continues to encourage submissions from students and early-career scholars, and to explore opportunities for greater visibility and cross-divisional collaboration in geographic publishing. The journal welcomes research papers, reviews, photo essays, field trip guides, and occasional notes on prairie-based topics, as well as broader geographic scholarship authored by prairie-based geographers.

Submissions and expressions of interest can be sent to the editor at [Bernard.Thraves@uregina.ca](mailto:Bernard.Thraves@uregina.ca).

## **7. Challenges, Reflections, and Priorities for 2026**

PCAG continues to navigate a set of interrelated structural and organizational challenges that shape its capacity to engage members and deliver programming across the Prairie region. Institutional participation remains uneven, with several campuses underrepresented or vacant in formal governance roles, limiting the Division's ability to sustain broad regional involvement. At the same time, the Executive continues to rely heavily on volunteer labour, creating capacity constraints that affect long-term planning, continuity, and the ability to pursue new initiatives.

Despite these challenges, 2025 has also been a year of reflection and opportunity. Discussions at both the Executive Meeting and the Annual General Meeting highlighted the Division's need to strengthen engagement across institutions and to explore more sustainable and collaborative approaches to governance and conference planning. There was strong support for moving beyond a single-institution hosting model and toward a distributed, committee-based approach to organizing future conferences, drawing on the collective capacities of members across the region.

PCAG also reaffirmed its commitment to student participation and recognition, most notably through the approval of enhanced Paul Simpson-Housley Awards for students, which include both a financial award and CAG membership. Members further emphasized the importance of encouraging student and early-career scholar involvement in publishing and divisional activities, particularly through submissions to *Prairie Perspectives* and greater engagement with conference programming.

**Respectfully submitted,**



Dr. Jennifer Mateer  
President, Prairie Division  
Canadian Association of Geographers  
[mateerj@brandonu.ca](mailto:mateerj@brandonu.ca)