

Quarterly GIS BILT Meeting March 19, 2014

Meeting Minutes

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review by Phillip Davis

Update on new MOU partnership colleges—Phillip Davis

JJ –We’ve talked about adding a third MOU partnership but that is as far as that update goes.

Update on GISCI exam—Bill Hodge

Bill – We are moving forward as well. The implementation is going for 2015. There is no reason that it won’t be done by the end of the second quarter. We are into the writing phase. Rebecca will be assembling GIS... they are coming under Rebecca’s and our consultants ... they will be coming in and writing the exams. There will be an additional vetting of the questions and multiple choice. Screened carefully, we will look at the normal testing parameters until the courses are added. We will be going over how the exam will be put in a portfolio. It is not as easy as putting one question in a certain place; it won’t be up to GISCI to make that determination.

Phil – Will this be the engineering program?

Bill – Probably not. ICE is one of those. If I were to make an educated guess, they would provide ... it is speculation until the board decides which path to go down. We’re trying to make sure to cover our ways until we decide to go

Phil – Are we going to have provisional certification so the community college student will be able to take this?

Bill – That is correct; we are quite convinced that what we’re doing will allow students to test while they have school on their mind and they can advertise to their employers that they have it. We have not decided about whether it will be called a provisional certification.

Demetrio – I think a provisional GISP will be advantageous for those that are still in school but do not have a four year degree yet. That barrier should be there.

Brian King – I am a member of GISPIS, the way they do it is similar. If you take it before you graduate, you can take it and get your certification but you have to accumulate the working experience. It really seems to work with them and I know a lot of students really try to work towards getting it because education is still fresh on their mind. I think it is a great thing.

Phil – We are beginning to supplement the courses for the NISGTC. Those labs have all been built and they are on the remote servers. They have been used at Del Mar and JJ Nelson will give an update on that later. In terms of our MOU partnerships, we have great success. We currently have a GIS course being taken remotely. They have been using our labs. They have also adopted our 8 week format. They have gotten really good numbers and they anticipate running a few courses in the summer and in the fall. We’ve had some great success there.

Phil – We are revamping all of our GIS degree. Because the state of Texas requires 60 credit hours, we have taken this chance to revamp all of the courses. We just keep getting more requests from industry because of all of the gas and oil industry in South Texas.

JJ Nelson – As you know, TSSB was the lead on that developed in 2006. We're expecting a change around late fall. That is basically what we're looking for so the other schools in Texas can apply for that too.

Demetrio – Can you send a link out for that?

JJ Nelson – Yes, I'll send it through the chat window. We have already utilized all of our courses in our program. Our other partner colleges have the numbers necessary to run their second course. You will see those numbers every quarter and I know you will see a sizeable growth. We finished two cohorts and they have graduated. We have a third cohort going on now and we're going to our second class. We're also going ahead with our successful IT Boot camp so we're bringing that back. In regards to our GIS courses, we have about 24 students signed up for the fast track. The first class was last night and we have a 2103 this summer. Our numbers are up and I'm not sure if it is the oil and gas but we're really seeing a necessity.

Demetrio – Does anyone know if remote sensing courses are part of the GIS certificate?

JJ – One of our GIP courses is remote sensing.

Phil – I was wondering if we could have an update on Moraine

Tina – I'm filling in for Chuck. GIS 110200 was dropped due to low enrollment. We've had two GIS courses run this semester. We're offering the following GIS 101, 110, 112, 114 and 120 which will constitute the first GIS certificate. The university offers 100% of online courses. They are reviewing it now.

Demetrio – I remember there was some talk about shadow internships. Has anyone incorporating this in all for the courses since these courses are all online and there is no contact?

Christina – I can talk about how we've done it. We had the GIS pro from Albuquerque.. we brought in the higher level courses. The GIS pro just talked about the profession and the students were able to ask questions so that they know what GIS is. We've also had them share some of the maps that they created and they were able to get feedback from them.

Phil – I think this could be used in a number of ways. My oldest son is getting ready to graduate with his Masters in Geospatial Mapping. Anyone want to speak to that?

Brian King – I think I did something similar to what Christina was talking about. The students just got to ask me different questions about workflow and whatever else they wanted to do.

Changes in the Geospatial Technology Landscape since November 2013—BILT members

Phil Davis – I wanted to open this topic up for discussion for the BILT members before I share what we're

Demetrio – We have been looking at the open data erected by President Obama that directed government to use open source and to open up government. One of the examples of this is the Park Services that opened up portals; that was a big trend that we saw that has been pushed down from the President.

Phil – I'm here in Washington D.C and that is all that they are talking about here. It is all about open data, finding stakeholders, and connecting stakeholders to all the federal data that is being produced right now. I can tell you that it is a huge issue.

Demetrio – It is affecting the way we are thinking of professional development, training, how we connect all of that data.

Carl – Along with the open data, I'm seeing a lot more highly technical data exchange models appearing. Likewise, there are a lot of unstructured data models appearing. I am suspicious that the handling of high structured and unstructured data to merge them will start to become a very big challenge as open data proceeds. I just wanted to put that out on the radar.

Phil – Would that include some of these companies that are non-Sequel databases?

Carl – Even more so things like Open Street Map, where anyone can create a new tag. The way you approach the data is different than a GIS structured data model which tends to be thoroughly flat versus DOD data models that are very hierarchical in nature. They would have to be transformed to be GIS analysis friendly.

Phil – Right, so do you see this as a problem for us building curriculum for community colleges that transfer up to a university? Is there something that we need to look at such as special analysis?

Carl – I'm seeing more structured and unstructured data that CSIV lists so that might be where you would want to concentrate.

Phil – I wonder if we need a course or seminar on pure data and maybe cover some relational and non-relational database theory.

David Bitner – I think that sounds like a great plan because you could tackle what some of the intricacies are with document source, using a generic term for the unstructured data. I also think that is important because the more geospatial aspect of data is just getting slapped onto the side of other data sources. The more that a GIS professional knows how to deal with the various data sources, the better off they will be.

Phil – Demetrio, any comments?

Demetrio – Right now, there is a lot of terminology or different perspectives of the same things that we see happening, and you get bombarded with all of the marketing. From industry, we have another prime directive or guidelines for all of this.

Phil – Maybe some demonstrations of software limitations that cover different scenarios of pulling data, and have the demonstrators ask students to build projects on them and demonstrate their skills. Maybe if we could have a module and a couple hours for data formats, since we do not very much time left in the grant to create full courses.

Demetrio – The other thing that is happening is tapping into all of the social media data streams. That is almost real time analytics but there are a lot of caveats there; graduates should know about that.

Bill Hodge – Your comments are right on. I don't believe you need a new course or a full course on data access, manipulation, and integration. I believe having that as a part of a course allows them to be aware of it. They cannot be experts overnight but this will get them in the right direction.

Brian King – I agree with Bill; a data module sounds a lot better than creating a new course and I think it is a good idea.

Phil – Other ideas? I'm thinking UAVs; is that something that is relevant to our discussion?

Carl Anderson – In the commercial sector, there is the ongoing issue of the FAA approving UAVs but I know there is definitely interest in infrastructure monitoring and such.

Meeting adjourned 1:00pm
