Powerful Geography: International Perspectives and Applications

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Springer Book Series: International Perspectives on Geographical Education

Call for Authors

Introduction

Powerful Geography is an approach to teaching and learning that aligns geography instruction with the life and career aspirations of students. The approach originated in the United States as a practical response to the international GeoCapabilities project, which sought to reassert the importance of geographic knowledge in school curricula and to help students see the application of powerful geographic knowledge, skills, and technology in everyday life.

A significant challenge facing geography teachers is making powerful knowledge accessible to diverse groups of learners. This is where Powerful Geography offers new pathways to teaching and learning supporting what Wesley Null refers to as a "liberating curriculum".

The Powerful Geography approach emphasizes the importance of teachers who account for the students they teach before making important decisions about what and how to teach. To practice Powerful Geography, teachers collect information about what their students aspire to be and do in the future. With this information in hand, teachers engage their students in geography lessons that are applicable to their aspirations. The content of the lessons is based on research into the work of real-world geographers who apply geography in a wide array of jobs and careers.

Through Powerful Geography, students gain the opportunity to think geographically while applying what they learn to address issues and solve problems they care about. The approach directly supports teachers who are increasingly expected to have deep subject matter expertise, prepare students for the workforce, and practice pedagogy that is inclusive and tailored to a diverse student body.

We seek authors to contribute their ideas of how the Powerful Geography approach can be conceived, developed, and enacted in the context of their country and geography education system. As described below, participation in this project will require authors to collect data from students and professional geographers prior to writing their chapter.

Organization of the book

Each chapter in the book will follow a common four-part structure while allowing authors a large amount of creative freedom. Refer to the "Author Template" for more detailed instructions.

Part 1: Student Aspirations

In this section, authors should summarize the career aspirations of students in a geography class that they currently teach. Authors may collect this data with the help of the Powerful Geography student aspirations survey to be provided by the editors. Authors will be able to translate the survey if necessary and modify the survey questions to capture local contexts of the geography workforce. Once the survey data are available, authors will be able to determine the most popular career aspirations of their students.

Part 2: Applied Geography Example

To assist in this section, authors will need to find a non-academic professional geographer who works in an occupation connected to at least one of the most popular career areas identified in the student survey data. Using an interview protocol provided by the Grosvenor Center, authors will identify the geography knowledge, skills, data, and perspectives applied in the geographer's work. Authors should also describe this person's educational background, current job, and major responsibilities. Authors may modify the interview protocol with alternative or additional questions.

Part 3: Teaching and Learning Activity

Using the results of the interview, authors will create a lesson for school or university-level geography instruction that models the work and applications of the interviewed geographer. The lesson could be an inquiry activity, fieldwork, GIS analysis, case study, etc. This section of the chapter should also explain how the lesson connects to the geography curriculum in the author's country.

Part 4: The Future of Powerful Geography

In this concluding section, authors will reflect on their design process and consider how the Powerful Geography approach might be further developed. How will teachers need to be assisted? What is the role of pre-service teacher education? How might parents, policy makers, and other stakeholders be involved in the process? How might this new approach be expanded through presentations to appropriate professional associations?

Application

To apply for consideration as an author, please send the following items to Dr Michael Solem (msolem@txstate.edu) by **June 15, 2022**:

- Curriculum vitae
- A brief statement of interest that indicates (a) the student population (e.g., school or university) that will be the focus of your chapter, (b) the geography class where you will collect student aspirations data, and (c) how you plan to access and contact prospective professional geographers (e.g., an alumni network or professional organization).

Author selections will be completed by July 1, 2022, after which time the editors will prepare the formal book proposal for Springer. We anticipate a starting date for chapter development in early fall 2022.

Background Information

Here are a few resources to learn more about GeoCapabilities and Powerful Geography:

Solem, M., Lambert, D., & Tani, S. (2013). GeoCapabilities: Toward an international framework for researching the purposes and values of geography education. *Review of International Geographical Education Online*, *3* (3), 214–229.

Lambert, D., Solem, M., & Tani, S. (2015). Achieving human potential through geography education: A capabilities approach to curriculum making in schools. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *105* (4), 723–735. DOI: 10.1080/00045608.2015.1022128

Boehm, R. G., Solem, M., & Zadrozny, J. (2018). The rise of powerful geography. *The Social Studies,* 109 (2), 125-135. DOI: 10.1080/00377996.2018.1460570

Solem, M., & Boehm, R. G. (2018). Editorial: Research in geography: Moving from declaration and road maps to actions. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 27(3), 191-198. DOI: 10.1080/10382046.2018.1493896

Larsen, T, B., Solem, M., Zadrozny, J., & Boehm, R.G. (2021). Contextualizing powerful geographic knowledge in higher education: Data-driven curriculum design to interweave student aspirations with workforce applications. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, DOI: 10.1080/10382046.2021.1902622

Powerful Geography website: www.powerfulgeography.org