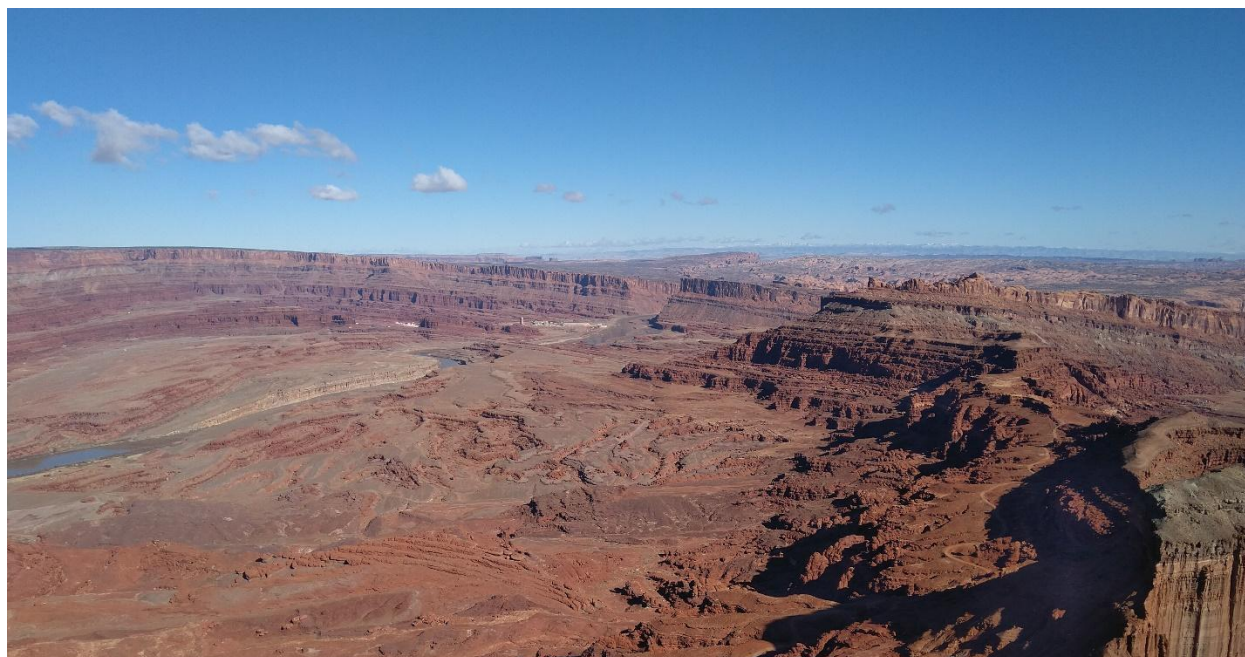


Geoscience Education Division Winter 2022 Newsletter

<https://community.geosociety.org/gedivision/home>

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Here it is, your moment of zen: a giant anticline.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear GSA Geoscience Education Division members,

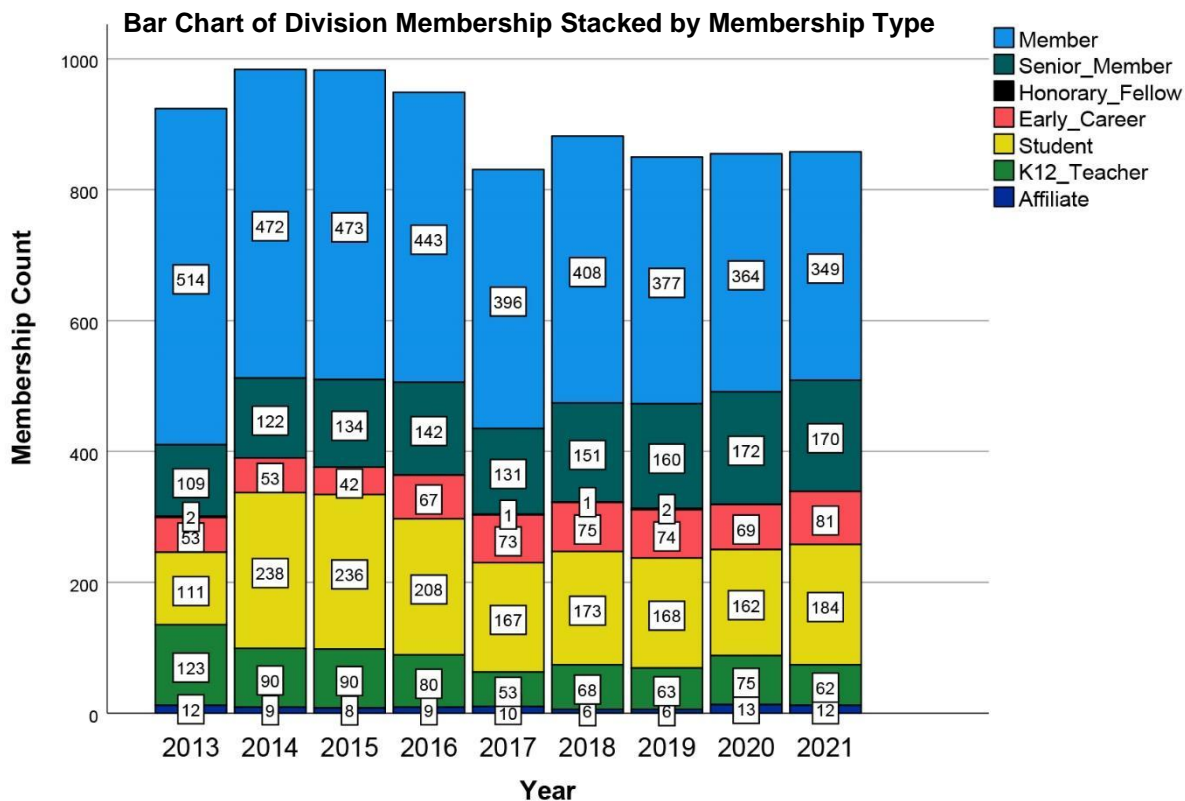
Welcome to the first division newsletter of 2022! I hope that everyone is staying healthy so far in the new year. I'm sure it has been a challenging start to the year for many, especially for those that have returned to face-to-face teaching in the '21-22 semester.

I'd like to use this space to provide some information about the membership of the Geoscience Education Division (GED) as well as some of the work that we do that is supported by your membership dues. Hopefully this information will be of value to recently joined members, but also a nice refresher for longstanding members. There are probably lots of questions, and even some misconceptions, about the GED in terms of size, composition, and the role we play in advocating for members.

Over the years as I've been a GED member myself, I've often heard people say that the GED is one of the biggest divisions. Unfortunately, that is probably not true, depending on how you define "one of the biggest." The graph on the next page shows membership for the last nine years, and as you can see, we tend to have between 800-1000 members in any given year (2022 is not included, as membership slowly grows over the year). Our membership numbers have remained pretty consistent over the last five years, which is great, but where does that put us in terms of GSA's 22 scientific divisions? Well, over the last nine years we have consistently ranked as either the 7th or 8th largest division. The largest divisions are some of the more traditional geology fields of engineering, hydrology, mineralogy, geomorphology, sedimentary, and structure. Ranking 7th of 22 does put us in the top third, so if that's how you define one of the biggest, then we've made it!

Just a few more random notes about division membership that you might find interesting. The spike in student memberships in 2014 was due to the introduction of a free division membership of choice for students in that year. By 2017, the thrill of a free divisional membership must have worn off, as we have not maintained the 2014 & '15 levels of student membership. This was not unique to GED, as most divisions did not maintain this increase in subsequent years either.

The GED is only one of two divisions that does not offer lower dues for students (if not their first choice), early career professionals, and K-12 teachers. We also have more K-12 members than any other division, although membership of K-12 members has been dropping over the last nine years, and perhaps the division or GSA as a whole is failing to serve their needs. I think this is definitely something the division should start to look into. Finally, over a third (~37%) of GSA members don't belong to a division at all, and GSA is currently exploring why this may be.



While all this information on the GED membership is useful in helping us understand our place in the broader GSA community, it is also important to be thinking about ways that we can maintain or even grow our division, while exploring ways to better serve our members. GSA recently surveyed members concerning their division membership(s) and the reason they do/don't join a division. This would probably also be a fruitful exercise for us to conduct at the division level. It would probably also be useful to use this time to communicate the benefits of membership and the programs that division fees support currently support.

There are three main ways that division fees are spent. The first is that we use them to fund travel grants for students to both annual and sectional GSA meetings. This is a great benefit to our student members, who often don't have funding to travel and present at distant conferences. Second, in non-pandemic times, we have hosted the Educators' Reception (with support from NAGT) at the GSA annual meeting. This is a social event that is usually put on at a non-conference venue, and has been a very popular event in the past where members of the GED have been able to network and reconnect in a less formal setting at the beginning of the annual meeting. We are hopeful that we will be able to host a reception at the 2022 GSA Connects in Denver. Finally, fees are used to fund Foundation Award accounts. These are investment accounts that we can use the earnings on to fund division awards. We currently have two foundation awards, the Biggs Award and the Totten award. The Biggs is awarded annually to an outstanding Earth science educator at the college level, while two Totten awards are given to one student and one early career presenter at the GSA annual meeting for high quality research in geoscience education. The Biggs award was largely made possible from a donor, but the

Totten award was completely funded through member fees saved over the years. Unlike some other divisions, the Geoscience Education community hasn't historically had large donations; it therefore takes a while for us to save up the \$25k needed to establish a Foundation Award account. But we will continue to save some funds so that we can potentially establish more awards funds in the future. If you are able, I encourage you to consider [making a financial gift to the GED fund](#) to support these efforts.

One of the often-unseen benefits provided by the Division, is that we serve as a voice to represent and protect the interests of the Geoscience Education community within the broader GSA community. A recent example of this was in response to the December 2021 cover story of GSA Today title "Why Publish in GSA Today?" In this piece, the editors made it clear that geoscience education research would not be considered for science cover articles. This decision appears to be based on the editors' perceptions of what is of interest to the society as a whole, and the claim that they have a hard time finding peer reviewers for such articles. We found the tone of the editors and this decision unacceptable, as opportunities like a cover piece in GSA Today should be available to all members of GSA, regardless of their geoscience discipline. In response, the GED has submitted a letter to GSA leadership voicing our concerns over this editorial policy, and asked leadership to publicly clarify that claims made by the editors are indeed the policy of the society, and if not, to ensure that the editorial policy is inclusive of all members of the society moving forward.



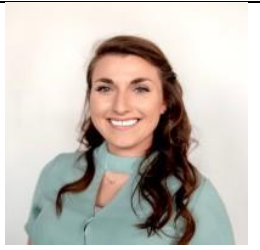





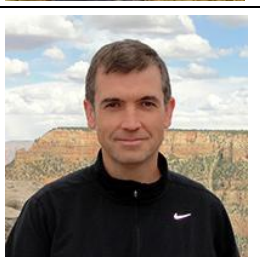

Finally, we are thankful for the support of all of our members, and we hope that you have found value in GED membership. If there is any way that we can serve you better or if you have suggestions for the GED (like content you'd like to see in future newsletters!), please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for reading, and I wish everyone a healthy and productive 2022!

Your 2022 GED Chair,



Doug Czajka
Department of Earth Science
Utah Valley University

DIVISION MANAGEMENT BOARD

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<p>NAGT Representative: Jamie Macdonald Environmental Geology Program Florida Gulf Coast University Fort Myers, FL jmacdona@fgcu.edu</p>		<p>GSA Education Committee Representative: Katherine Ryker School of the Earth, Ocean & Environment University of South Carolina Columbia, SC kryker@seoe.sc.edu</p>	

GSA EVENTS: ANNUAL AND SECTION MEETINGS

We would like to remind everybody that the [GSA Connects 2022](#) (the artist formerly known as the GSA Annual Meeting) will be held **October 9-12 in Denver, CO**. The deadline to propose **Topical Sessions**, and **Short Courses** is February 1, 2022. If you are thinking of proposing a geoscience education session for the conference and would like division sponsorship, please use the division sponsorship request form ([click here](#)) and then submit your proposal to GSA ([click here](#)). It is worth noting that all technical sessions will be livestreamed at the 2022 meeting, so both in-person and online presentations will be an option.

It has been a goal of the GED to improve our presence at the GSA sectional meetings, and this is something we are still working on. The sectional meetings are a great venue for networking and collaboration within the geoscience education community, especially for members (and non) who have difficulty traveling to an annual meeting. These sectional meetings are a great venue to engage with K-12 teachers, two year college faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students, many of whom lack funding for travel to distant annual meetings. While deadlines have passed for abstract submission to the sectional meetings which are held in the Spring, we'd like to highlight some of the geoscience education sessions that are happening at these meetings, in the hope that you might consider attending and possibly submitting an abstract or chairing a session at a sectional meeting next year.

[The Cordilleran and Rocky Mountain Sections](#) will host a joint section meeting from March 15-17 in Las Vegas, Nevada:

- No geoscience education sessions this year, let's change that next year!

[The North-Central and Southeastern Sections](#) will host a joint section meeting from April 7-8 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

- T25. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Geoscience Classroom
- T26. Nevertheless She Persisted (or Not): Challenges to Retention of Women in the Geosciences through the Pandemic and Non-Pandemic Times
- T27. The Future of Geoscience Teaching after the "Great Disruption": Lessons from Lockdown

[The Northeastern Section Meeting](#) will be March 20-22 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania

- No Geoscience education sessions this year, let's change that next year!

[The South-Central Section Meeting](#) will be held March 14-15 in McAllen, Texas and online

- T7. Geoscience Education I: Geosciences Education Advancing Concepts and Inclusion
- T7. Geoscience Education I: Geosciences Education Advancing Concepts and Inclusion (Posters)

CALL FOR BIGGS AWARD NOMINATIONS

The GED is now accepting nominations for the **Biggs Earth Science Teaching Award**, which recognizes innovative and effective teaching in college-level earth science. The award is open to Earth science instructors and faculty members from any academic institution who are engaged in undergraduate education and have been teaching full time for 10 years or fewer. Peer- and self-nominations are accepted, so please consider nominating!

Nomination packages are due by March 1st and can be submitted using the **Biggs Nomination Form** ([click here](#)). Nominations packets consist of the completed form, 2-4 letters of support from colleagues, 2-4 letters of support from students, current CV, and a teaching philosophy from the nominee with supporting materials (10-page limit). More information is available in the form, and any questions about the award or the nomination process can be directed to Vice Chair Meagan Gilbert (meagan.gilbert@gov.sk.ca).