

To the Applied Geography Conference board,

I am currently in the second year of my master's in Environmental Sustainability at the University of Oklahoma in the Department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability. I am planning on pursuing my doctorate in Geography at the University of Oklahoma as well. Briefly, my current thesis research is looking at what environmentally conscious individuals know about the impacts of wind energy development and biodiversity conservation on one another. I'm working on research related to comparative ecosystem service valuation of the Kiamichi River watershed between southeastern Oklahoma, central Oklahoma, and the rest of the state. I'm also collaborating on various modelling research, with one project combining spatial epidemiology data with ecological modelling techniques and another refining a novel spatial modelling technique for predicting species habitat use (this project is being presented by my advisor Dr. Rebecca Loraamm, the lead author on the paper, at AGC this year).

I am excited to be considered for an AGC board position. As a graduate student on the board, my hope is to bring a new perspective to planning future conferences that includes sessions and components that will be relevant and valuable to graduate and undergraduate students. For example, I think it's important that AGC offer sessions related to career paths in Geography, hosted by professionals in both the academic and non-academic realm, and advertise these sessions. I also think it'd be valuable to have combined faculty and student sessions related to what methods in the classroom work and don't work to inspire Geography in the real world (how can professors make sure their class reassures students Geography is the field for them). Lastly, I would like to see graduate students encouraged to put together sessions – I think, while technical paper sessions and discussions are valuable, a session or two on life as a Geography graduate student, for example, would help beginning students feel more welcome. My goal as a student board member would be to make graduate students working in Applied Geography feel they can also contribute ideas to future AGCs by having a representative in the planning process.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire Burch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Claire Burch