Guidelines for Reviewers of GIS&T Body of Knowledge Topics

Thank you for agreeing to review a Topic for the GIS&T Body of Knowledge. UCGIS is committed to ensuring that the content it publishes is current, authoritative, and useful to educators and scholars worldwide. These guidelines provide instructions and suggestions for completing a review that will be as useful as possible to the author and the editorial team. Entries within this publication are neither traditional journal articles nor op-ed pieces. Instead, they are intended to be succinct descriptions of the Topics with an eye to both the relevance of the Topic within the broader world of GIS&T and the ways in which this Topic can be studied and understood. The authoritative character of each Topic draws from the knowledge that each subject-matter expert provides as its author rather than by it being an exhaustive or comprehensive coverage of every topical detail. Please keep this perspective in mind as you conduct your review.

UCGIS gratefully recognizes the American Society for Microbiology for sharing these types of review guidelines, now modified by UCGIS for our purposes.

General Policies and Procedures

Authors submit their entries electronically to UCGIS via ScholarOne (ManuscriptCentral). We apply a single-blind review process in that authors’ identities are known to reviewers but reviewers’ identities remain hidden to authors.

On receipt of the review invitation:

- Read the editor's transmittal e-mail, which includes the Topic’s summary abstract, to determine whether the subject is within your area of expertise and whether you can complete the review in the stated time period.
- Click the link in the e-mail to either accept or decline the invitation to review.
- The system automatically assigns a due-date for one month from the date on which you accept the invitation to review.

If you decline the review invitation:

- If possible, please suggest a colleague who may be able to review the submission. The editor may send a review invitation to that person but you cannot “transfer” your electronic invitation.
If you accept the review invitation, you will have access to the complete PDF of the Topic and should promptly:

- Double-check the Topic’s title page to determine whether there is any conflict of interest for you (with the author(s) or their institution) and whether you can judge the Topic impartially.

If you have either a time problem or a conflict of interest, contact the Knowledge Area Editor for instructions. He/she can have a system administrator extend the deadline, or cancel the review assignment as appropriate.

Do not discuss the paper with its author either during or after the review process. Although it may seem reasonable to discuss points of difficulty or disagreement directly with an author, especially if you are generally in favor of publication and do not mind revealing your identity, this should not be done because the other reviewers and the editors may have different opinions, and the author may be misled by conflicting communications.

The Topic provided to you for review is a privileged document and should be protected. Do not cite, use, or distribute the information that it contains until or unless it is published.

**The Review**

The purpose of the review is to assist the author as she or he strives for effective, accurate, and relevant communication about the Topic. *If what you typically review are journal articles, please recognize that these entries are not meant to be mini journal articles.* Instead, their primary intent is to serve as a brief and concise overview of the Topic, highlighting the matters that make the Topic particularly relevant and important to the broader field of geographic information science and technologies. A second characteristic of these Topics is their intended utility for educational purposes, whether that be in higher education, professional development, or other related audiences.

Reviews that are impartial and constructively critical will be the most helpful towards that goal. Shortcomings of style, syntax, or grammar should not be the focus of a review, but suggestions to clarify meaning are always welcome.

Overall, any criticisms, arguments, and suggestions will be most useful to the author and editor when they are carefully documented. Substantiate your statements. Reviewer's recommendations are gratefully received by the editor; however, since editorial decisions are usually based on evaluations derived from several sources, reviewers should not expect the editor to honor every recommendation.
Organize your review so that an introductory paragraph gives your overall impression of the entry and highlights the major strengths and shortcomings. This paragraph should be followed by specific, numbered comments. Here you may also specify items with respect to the review guideline questions (see below).

- Has the Topic been defined and described adequately and sufficiently? Has the author covered the features and characteristics of the Topic that you would consider the “core” knowledge? If not, what is missing?
- Does the entry seem too short, too long, or about right?
- Has the author written about the Topic in a way that it is likely to be understood by the broader geospatial community?
- Has the author expressed the significance of the Topic so that a reader will understand why it belongs with the GIS&T Body of Knowledge?
- Is the content organized in a way that aids in interpretation of the Topic?
- Has the author avoided jargon? Have they spelled out any necessary acronyms?
- Does the entry include the required elements? Would you suggest any additions, modifications, or deletions to these?
  - Definitions, if necessary
  - Literature cited - in APA style and formatting
  - Keywords
  - Learning objectives
  - Questions to aid in the instruction of the Topic?
- If the author included any Figures, Images, or Tables, are they clear? Necessary? Appropriately referenced within the text?

Publications Policies & Ethics

The Editorial Team may be able to note a breach of publication policy or ethical conduct after publication, but we rely heavily on the reviewers to detect such problems before publication. Some of the items for which you should be alert include:

- Plagiarism – Plagiarism may take place in any portion of the Topic, including figures and tables, in which material lacks reference or permission. Note that wording does not have to be exact to be copyright infringement; use of very similar words in almost the same sequence can also be infringement. Data themselves are not copyrightable, but their presentation is.
- Missing or incomplete attestation – In the reference section, authors must give appropriate credit to work that has been published previously. Topics in this publication cover knowledge that may already be broadly understood by many, but missing, incomplete, or incorrect references must be brought to the editor’s attention.

- Conflicts of interest – This may be unlikely with these types of submissions, but if you are aware of any conflicts of interest on the part of the author, bring them to the attention of the editor.