

Political Geography Specialty Group



2026 PGSG PRECONFERENCE

Updated 1/13/26

University of San Francisco

Monday, March 16, 2026

USF – McLaren Conference
Center

*2130 Fulton St, San Francisco, CA
94117*

Overview

All times are Pacific Daylight Time (GMT-7)

- 8:45-9:00 Check-In/Registration
9:05-9:20 Opening Comments/Welcome [McLaren 252]
9:20-10:50 Sessions I, II, III
10:50-11:00 Break
11:00-12:30 Sessions III, IV, V
12:30-1:45 Lunch Break (on own; suggestions on page 3)
1:45-3:00 Plenary [McLaren 252]
3:00-3:10 Break
3:10-4:40 Sessions VI, VII, VIII
4:40-4:45 Break
4:45-6:00 Sessions IX, X
6:00-6:10 Closing Comments [McLaren 252]
6:15-8:00 PGSG Dinner (optional)

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

- **Sunday, March 15th 12:00pm - 3:00pm:** Choice of two walking tours guided by the Shaping San Francisco team

- Cutting Corners: South of Market, A Transformed Landscape: On this historical walking tour we discuss the social, economic, and cultural forces which influenced the mid-to-late 19th century transformation of the South of Market and Mission Bay landscapes in the making of a new urban and industrial center on the West Coast.
- New Deal Murals, Italian SF, and Trash! Starting with an in-depth guided tour of the panels of Anton Refregier's murals encircling the upper walls of the lobby of the Rincon Annex, we discuss federal art programs, censorship, and depictions of San Francisco's past with all its blemishes. (registered participants only)
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- **Stanley D. Brunn Scholar Plenary with Emily Mitchell-Eaton: How soon is now? Decolonial horizons and political time:** Wednesday, 3/18/2026, 10:10 - 11:30 AM in Imperial B, Ballroom Level, Hilton Union Square
- **Political Geography Specialty Group Business Meeting:** Wednesday, 3/18/2026, 11:40 AM - 12:40 PM in Union Square 25, 4th Floor, Hilton Union Square
- **Plenary Lecture: Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez on Detours: A Decolonial Guide to Tourism - Sponsored by the Tourism Geography and Political Geography Specialty Groups:** Thursday, 3/19/2026, 4:10 PM - 5:30 PM in Golden Gate 3, Lobby Level, Hilton Union Square.

Registration, Cost, Contact Information, & Directions
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REGISTRATION

Register by **February 1, 2026** using the form here (also available via the PGSG website):

COST

Saturday Paper Sessions: There is a **\$25** fee *for tenure-track faculty only*.

- **Electronic Payment (strongly preferred):** Please pay in advance via the AAG's electronic payment site using the following process:
 - Navigate to this website: <https://www.aag.org/donate/#/donate/aec84235-fedc-ec11-a7b6-0022482aebcc>
 - **Ensure that "Political Geography Specialty Group" is listed under "Fund."**
 - Please write **"Preconference"** in the "In Honor/Memory Of" section.
 - Include your full name and contact information.
 - You will receive a receipt from the AAG via email.
 - Please maintain a printed or digital copy of your receipt (or screenshot). You will be asked to confirm your payment at event check-in.
- **Cash or alternative (if necessary):** Please contact Kate (kcoddington@albany.edu) to make alternative payment arrangements (e.g., Venmo, Zelle). If using cash, be sure to bring **exact change**.

Monday Dinner: PLACE/ADDRESS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organizers (contact with any questions)

- Kate Coddington, PGSG President (University at Albany, SUNY; kcoddington@albany.edu); Lindsay Naylor, PGSG Vice President (lnaylor@udel.edu) *Contact with pre-conference, paper session, or general questions*

Thank you to our local hosts!

- Ilaria Giglioli (University of San Francisco)

Thank you to our sponsors!

- *Political Geography*
- *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*
- Political Geography Specialty Group (AAG)

Conference Wifi Access and Dining Suggestions

Monday, McLaren Conference Center – **WIFI: [TBD]**

Breakfast & Coffee/Tea: There will be a *light, limited* breakfast (e.g., coffee, tea, muffins) available on a first-come, first-served basis on Monday. The following businesses are convenient to the pre-conference location:

Cafes on campus:

- Club Ed Cafe, inside the School of Education on the basement level
- Market Café, inside the University Center building (across from McLaren)
- Law Café, inside the School of Law

Coffee and such further afield:

- Matching Half (.5 miles)
- Mellow Coffee (.6 miles)
- Coffee to the People (.6 miles)
- Sunstream Coffee (.8 miles)
- Peet's Coffee (.8 miles)
- Third Wheel Coffee (1 mile)

Lunch: Lunch is on your own. The following businesses are open on Mondays and convenient to the pre-conference location—many options on Divisadero Street (.6 miles East of campus):

- Brenda's Meat and Three
- Eddie's Café
- Souva
- Banh Mi Viet
- Q's Sandwich Shop

DIRECTIONS

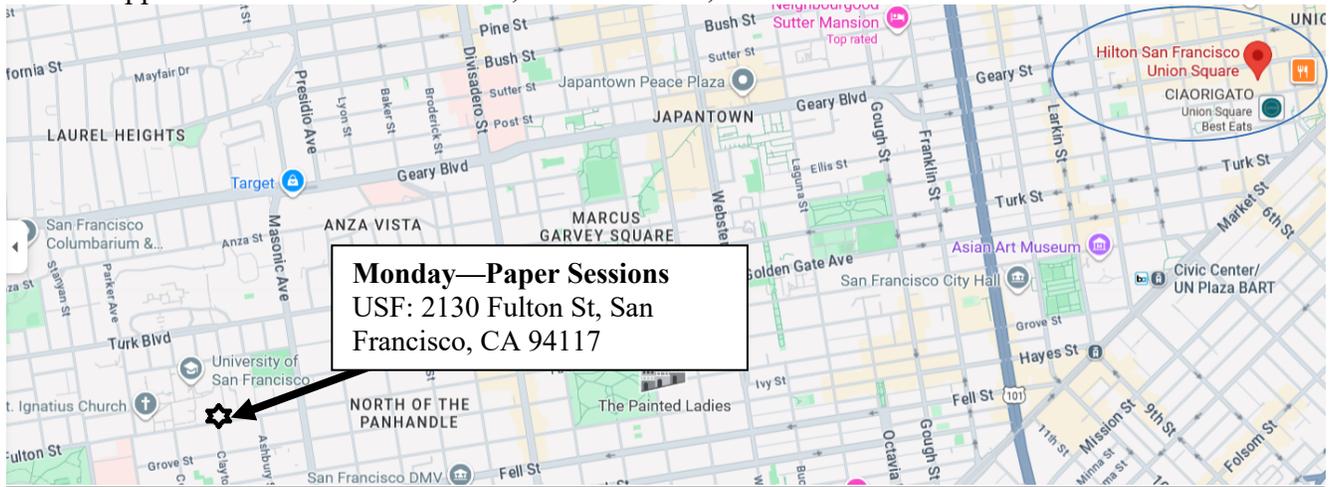
The preconference will be held at USF – McLaren Conference Center—**2130 Fulton St, San Francisco, CA 94117**

Public Transportation

- There is frequent bus service through the BART (<https://www.bart.gov/planner>) or the MUNI light rail (<https://www.sfmta.com/muni-transit>)
 - For those staying at/near the AAG hotel the bus or light rail is ~35 minutes ride to the Conference Center (\$3.00)

Parking

- Limited, 2-hour street parking available on side streets
- Public Parking Garage at USF: [At the intersection of Turk Blvd. and Parker Avenue](#) - Upper/Lower Koret Center Lots, San Francisco, CA 94118



Monday - SESSION THEMES AT A GLANCE

Room	250	251	252
9:05 - 9:20	Opening Remarks (McLaren 252)		
9:20 - 10:50	I = Urban Political Geographies	N/A	II = Geopolitics
10:50 - 11:00	10-Minute Break		
11:00 - 12:30	III = Migrants & Migration	IV = Critical Geographies	V = Energy & the Environment
12:30 - 1:45	Lunch		
1:45 - 3:00	Plenary: Migration, Politics, and Sanctuary in San Francisco Professor Bill Ong Hing , Founding Director of the Immigration and Deportation Defense Clinic, University of San Francisco and [TBD]		
3:00 - 3:10	10-Minute Break		
3:10 - 4:40	VI = Artificial Intelligence	VII = Development	VIII = Territory
4:40 - 4:45	5-Minute Break		
4:45 - 6:00	IX = Indigenous & More than Human Relations	N/A	X = Borders & Statecraft
6:00 - 6:10	Closing Remarks (McLaren 252)		
6:15 - 8:00	Dinner		

NOTES:

- Paper presenters should limit their presentations to **15 minutes**. A total of 15-30 additional minutes will be provided for discussion, either broken into short segments after individual papers, or collectively assessing the papers after they conclude (at chair's discretion).

- Please have presentation slides available on flashdrive or be prepared to present from your laptop.
- Abstracts for each paper are available on the Political Geography Preconference website.

9:20-10:50 Session I: Urban Political Geographies

Chair:

Urbicidal Encounters and Legacies: Examining the Temporalities of Urban Destruction through Tulsa, Anastasia Hollande (University of California, Los Angeles)

The Racial, Political and Physical Dynamics of Albuquerque's Metropolitan Flood Control Authority, Ramona Malczynski (University of New Mexico)

“If you just asked me questions, I would not have known what to say”: Q-methodology as a feminist approach to doing political geography, Aila Bandagi Kandlakunta (University of Nevada-Reno); Jessie Clark; Kerri-Jean Ormerod

9:20-10:50 Session II: Geopolitics

Chair:

Beyond Ottawa: Shifting discourses of landmines in contemporary conflict, Ruth Trumble (Hofstra University)

Geographies of Alliance and How India-US Strategic Coordination Shapes the Indo-Pacific Order, Ravi Dass (Central University of Haryana); M.L. Meena

With enemies like these: Enemy Ace as antihero and the critical geopolitics of war comics since the Silver Age, Ted Holland (University of Arkansas)

After Exceptionalism: The Balkans and the Geography of Significance, Bianca Malkoc (University of South Carolina)

11:00-12:30 Session III: Migrants & Migration

Chair:

The Geopolitics of the American Visa, Zoran Naroo (Cornell University)

“It’s Not So Bad”: Muslims’ Senses of Belonging to Rural, Southern West Virginia, Karen Culcasi (West Virginia University)

Stranger welcomes stranger: Missionary-constructed communities of belonging, becoming, and calling, Jill Thornton (University of South Carolina)

11:00-12:30 Session IV: Critical Geographies

Chair:

What's Left of Kant?: Kant's Political Writings and The Philosophy of Liberation, Zachary Gilpin (West Virginia University)

Whither the Left? Affirming the “Black Genius” of Zora Neale Hurston, Mark Purcell (University of Washington)

Spatial Politics of Silence: Free Speech, Memory, and Student Resistance at the University of California, Alexis Atsilvsgi Zaragoza (University of California)

“Social inflation” or hot air? Articulating police liability, reaction, and the contradictions of insurance accounting at the reparative conjuncture, Troy Brundige (University of Oregon)

11:00-12:30 Session V: Colonialism, knowledge, and anti-colonial practices

Chair:

Displaced Decarbonization: The Contested Spatialities of Green Hydrogen, Meredith DeBoom (University of South Carolina)

Energy Power and the Tough Nut of Transition, Corey Johnson (University of North Carolina, Greensboro)

Constructing legitimacy within United States Environmental Protection Agency: The Role of Sciences in the Rulemaking process, Ellen Kohl, (University of Maryland, Baltimore County); Marianne Sullivan

Make Sorghum Great Again: Tensions in Right-Wing Food Movements and Geopolitics of Gene Editing and Regenerative Agriculture, Gabriella Subia Smith (University of California, Berkeley); Lauren Gifford

4:45-6:00 Plenary: Migration, Politics, and Sanctuary in San Francisco

Professor Bill Ong Hing, Founding Director of the Immigration and Deportation Defense Clinic, University of San Francisco and [TBD]

3:10-4:40 Session VI: Artificial Intelligence

Chair:

Agentic Geopolitics: The Critical Geopolitics of ChatGPT and Deepseek in US-China Relations, Tom Narins (University at Albany); Davide Zoppolato

The Implications of AI for Critical Thinking About Political Regions, Alexander (Alec) Murphy (University of Oregon)

Advancing Analytical Geopolitics Through the Integration of AI Tools, Nuno Morgado (Corvinus University)

3:10-4:40 Session VII: Development

Chair:

Visions of Progress and Precarious Realities: The Politics of Cambodia's Funan Techo Canal, Leo Baldiga (Michigan State University); Soksamphoas Im, Kaley Clements, Junyi Yu, Veasna Ky

Restor(y)ing Coco Palms: Kānaka 'Ōiwi Restoration in Wailua, Kaua'i, Keegan Kessler (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

Exposing Slow Violence: Photography and the Maya Train in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, Irma Losada (University of California, Los Angeles)

When the Dragon Dances on the Roof of the World: Chinese Influence on Tibetans in Nepal Catherine Caya (Mount Holyoke College)

3:10-4:40 Session VIII: Territory

Chair:

From Zonguldak to Ankara, and Back: Coal Miners, State Power, and the Struggle over Scale, Mehmet Eroğlu, (Michigan State University)

New Strategies of Land Control and Dispossession in the West Bank, Oren Shlomo (The Open University of Israel)

Body, Mind, and Territory: From Life-Making to Nation-Making, Jublee Handique (The Ohio State University)

4:45-6:00 Session IX: Indigenous & More than Human Relations

Chair:

Forest rights, the state, and the future of forest-dependent people in central India, Priscilla Corbett (University of Colorado, Boulder)

Intimate Relationships and Counterepistemologies: Indigenous More-than-human Relations and Practices of Sovereignty and Solidarity, Sara Maaria Saastamoinen (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

Rendering Adaptation Redundant: Knowledge, Ambiguity, and Frictions within the Biopolitics of Adaptation in Sundarbans, Bangladesh, Faisal Islam (University of Delaware)

4:45-6:00 Session X: Borders & Statecraft

Chair:

“The Border Exists”: Territorial Attachment and Nationalist Attitudes in Republika Srpska, Fedor Popov (University of Colorado, Boulder)

Queer Borderscapes: The Geographies of Border Internalization for Queer Latin American Migrants in Barcelona, Fernando Lopez Oggier (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

The Center Beckons: Statecraft, Performance & Autonomy in Post-Assad Syria, Ali Hamdan (University of Amsterdam)

Smuggling, Morality, and Survival: Informal Economy, Kai-Yang Huang (National Taiwan University)