

A Message From our President

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Greetings from your graduate club President, and welcome to the club blog! I thought it appropriate for the first blog post to come from your elected President. I would like to start this first blog by giving credit to Carrie Roberts, Vice President and former President of the graduate club for proposing the idea of a monthly blog post for the club. Thanks Carrie! I'm very excited to get this blog up and running. A special thanks also goes to Kirstie Haynie, one of our newest PhD students. She's given our club website the revival it's needed for many years.

While this blog should always be about the current graduate students, their interests, both research and non-academic, I would like to take the opportunity to give a little introduction to the department. The department of Geology here at Buffalo provides an experience that is inherently unique since every geology department nationwide adds their own flavor to the classic recipe, depending on the research interests of each faculty member. Our geology department at UB houses 15+ faculty and researchers whose interests cover a rich and diverse spectrum of topics from Ordovician Paleontology to modern ice sheet modeling. Along with faculty, the department's graduate students partake in impactful research projects that send them all over the world, from Greenland to Uganda and even right here along the Lake Erie shoreline. I am proud to say my most memorable courses were conducted here at UB. For Quaternary Dating and Paleoclimate, Dr. Jason Briner led a troop of students into the deep woods of the Southern Tier in search of a record from the last ice age entombed at the bottom of a peat bog (in fact, much of New York state was once buried under thousands of feet of ice!). For Tectonics and Appalachians, Dr. Charles Mitchell took students on a journey through multiple chapters of American history from the formation of the Taconic foreland basin to Jefferson Rock at Harper's Ferry, where Thomas Jefferson famously proclaimed that the scene was "worth the voyage across the Atlantic" (in fact, the rock is highly metamorphosed green schist thrust up onto North America during the Cambrian Period).

While seemingly unrelated, I would like to end the pioneer blog post on a more somber note by encouraging everyone to contact our local legislator regarding the tax reform bill currently making its way through Congress. The bill, at least the one recently passed in the House of Representatives, is set to eliminate certain deductions, singling out not only graduate students with tuition waivers that will count as taxable income, but graduate students living in states like New York with exceptionally high state and local taxes. I'm afraid we are threatened with double trouble. Please follow the link(s) pasted below if you are interested in finding out what you can do to have your voice heard.

The AGU Policy Action Center

<http://actioncenter.agu.org/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=414514>

PhD comics: Tax attack!

<http://phdcomics.com/comics.php?f=1985>

I am honored to be your club President, and I am excited for this blog to become a regularly scheduled, monthly installment for our graduate club! Please also feel free to attend our bi-weekly meetings! We only have one more scheduled for the semester (Tues, Nov. 28th) but we will be resuming after winter recess. Stay tuned for the December blog post.

Until then, please enjoy this comic ripped from xkcd:

