

LSGI Public Lecture Series

“Space, Time, and Context: Exploring the Urban Foodscape”

Overview

It was our pleasure to invite Dr. Xiang CHEN, Peter, Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Management at Arkansas Tech University, USA, to deliver a seminar of the LSGI Public Lecture Series, to deliver a seminar of the LSGI Distinguished Lecture Series on 31 July 2018.



Biography

Dr. Xiang Chen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Emergency Management at Arkansas Tech University, USA. His education is well rounded in geography (Ph.D.: The Ohio State University; BS/MS: Beijing Normal University), with training in GIS and a primary focus on urban food security. His research explores both the methodological formulation and health implications of the urban foodscape. This thread of research has generated 20+ publications in public health and geography journals (e.g., American Journal of Public Health, International Journal of Geographical Information Systems, Applied Geography, Remote Sensing of Environment) and the Jacques May Thesis Prize from the AAG Health and Medical Geography Specialty Group. In addition, he has served as a board member in multiple professional communities, including the AAG Health and Medical Geography, AAG Geographies of Food and Agriculture, and CPGIS. He also has a keen interest in other geographical fields, including location models, emergency management, and remote sensing.

Space, Time, and Context: Exploring the Urban Foodscape

The food industry in the US has stepped into an era where processed, packaged, and energy-dense food prevails: microwavable entrées are stocked in the freezer of corner stores, burgers and fries are on the menu of almost every restaurant, and desserts are saturated with artificial sweeteners. This food culture has put Americans into an ‘obesogenic’ dilemma, where they are surrounded by an environment that encourages them to eat unhealthily. This talk will highlight emerging geospatial methods to identify urban “food deserts,” or areas where access to healthy food (e.g., chain supermarkets) is relatively limited. These methods include geovisualization, space-time modeling, and big data analytics. The talk will further explore socioeconomic factors, contextual uncertainties, and methodological challenges that contribute to the formation of food deserts.