

THE *Current*

October 31, 2014

[Andrea Estrada](#)

Geographer Krzysztof Janowicz is Named UCSB's 2014-15 Plous Award Winner

Krzysztof Janowicz, assistant professor of geography at UC Santa Barbara, has received the 2014-15 Harold J. Plous Award. One of the university's most prestigious faculty honors, the award is given annually to an assistant professor from the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences who has shown exceptional achievement in research, teaching, and service to the university. Presented by the College of Letters and Science, the award was established in 1957 to honor the memory of Harold J. Plous, an assistant professor of economics.

Janowicz will showcase his research when he delivers the annual Plous Lecture next spring.

"My congratulations to Professor Krzysztof Janowicz on this recognition of the Plous Award from his campus peers," said Pierre Wiltzius, dean of UCSB's division of mathematical, physical, and life sciences. "Krzysztof has greatly strengthened the geography department's offerings in Geographic Information Science through his research achievements and contributed effective teaching and mentorship. We are very proud of his early career accomplishments."

Said Dan Montello, professor and chair of geography, "The Department of Geography is thrilled that one of our own, Krzysztof Janowicz — Jano, for short — has

won the prestigious Plous Award. The award is presented annually to one assistant professor based on his or her 'outstanding performance and promise' and 'contribution to the intellectual life of the college community.' We enthusiastically appreciate the wisdom of the committee in finding that Jano amply meets these criteria."

Janowicz, who came to UCSB from Pennsylvania State University in 2011, is a specialist in semantics and ontology as they relate to the ability to search the Internet to retrieve, translate and name geographic phenomena based on their location. His work is also relevant to research that involves big data, searching for patterns in large observational or behavioral databases. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Münster in Germany, where he also worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Geoinformatics.

Over the past three years, Janowicz has authored 36 journal articles, proceedings and book chapters, as well as several editorials and reports. According to Google Scholar, his work has been cited almost 1,400 times, which represents an increase of 500 citations in one year. In addition, since joining the UCSB faculty, he has been awarded 11 grants totaling over \$400,000.

Geography department professor Dar Roberts said Janowicz has "exceeded expectations" since arriving on campus in 2011.

"Professor Janowicz is at the forefront of a new generation of scientists who are developing and utilizing the tools of computer science in a geographic context," Roberts added. "These tools are particularly relevant in a society that is becoming increasingly engaged with devices such as smart phones, tablets, sensor networks or other navigational aids, where the link between language, and the geographic features we seek to find require intelligent tools for sifting through disparate geographic databases to identify optimal solutions. He is also at the forefront of a generation of scientists sifting through the immense volume of data produced by these devices to better understand human behavior. The Department of Geography is proud to have him as a member and pleased to see this recognized through the Plous Memorial Award."

A gifted and popular instructor, Janowicz has taught introductory, upper-division and graduate courses. His nominators described him as one of the most valued young instructors in the geography department. As a mentor to graduate students, he has

served on three Master of Arts committees, and 10 doctoral committees at UCSB and other institutions, four of which he chairs or co-chairs.

At UCSB, Janowicz has organized or co-organized academic conference panels and workshops at a rate of four per year. He has served on the geography department's graduate, computing and affirmative action committees, and on the search committee for the Jack and Laura Dangermond Endowed Chair. He has been the geography department's representative to the Academic Senate, and in 2013 he became one of two geography undergraduate advisers.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.