

Colin Polsky, Ph.D.

Director of the Florida Center for Environmental Studies at Florida Atlantic University

Boca Raton, FL, US

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Biography

Colin Polsky joined the Florida Atlantic University faculty as professor of geosciences in August 2014. His primary responsibility is to direct the Florida Center for Environmental Studies. CES was founded in 1994 under the superb leadership of Len Berry, who served as director until Polsky joined. Thankfully, Berry remains active in CES as emeritus professor of geosciences. Under Polsky's leadership, CES has embraced a new vision that builds on past successes while expanding into new domains. The vision of CES is to improve Florida's sustainability through research, education and outreach on wetlands ecology and coastal resilience. Polsky is trained as a geographer, specializing in the human dimensions of global environmental change. He has completed four degrees with majors in four disciplines, plus a two-year postdoctoral training in a fifth field. This background in mathematics, humanities, French, geography, and science and international affairs (from the University of Texas, Penn State, and Harvard, respectively) has led to a sustained interest in advancing knowledge of U.S. climate vulnerabilities, in both methodological and applied terms. As part of several interdisciplinary teams, Polsky has received NSF grants totaling close to \$18 million of which \$1.7 million has been directed to his stewardship. His publications include 26 peer-reviewed articles, two co-authored books, 17 book chapters, and 11 other reports; he has delivered close to 100 public presentations in eight countries. Polsky has served as co-convening lead author for a chapter in the 2013 National Climate Assessment, served on NRC, NSF, and USGCRP committees, and prepared reviews for several IPCC reports. Polsky's administrative experience includes service for eight years as director of a university undergraduate research program, one-and-a-half years as associate dean, and one year on an elected governance board. These experiences have led to significant experience with leadership and program-building, both within and across university departments; fundraising from public and private foundations; staffing of diverse and multigenerational teams; and communicating with varied audiences, for both persuasive and reporting purposes.

Areas of Expertise

U.S. Climate Vulnerabilities, Geography, Humanities , Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, Mathematics, French, Science & International Affairs

Affiliations

U.S. Global Change Research Program, U.S. National Climate Assessment : Member, Adaptation and Hazards Indicators Technical Team, NEON Urban Ecology Working Group, NSF LTER Program : Member, National Academies of Science/National Research Council (NAS/NRC) Committee on Strategic Directions for the Geographical Sciences in the Next Decade : Committee Member

Education

The Pennsylvania State University
Ph.D. Geography

The Pennsylvania State University
M.S. Geography

The University of Texas at Austin
B.A. Plan II (Humanities)

The University of Texas at Austin
B.S. Mathematics

Accomplishments

Charter Fellow
2012 Colleges of Worcester Consortium Fellows in Academic Leadership Program

Clark U. Hodgkins Award for Research Excellence
2008 One of two junior faculty recipients

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