

Michelle Ruiz

Geography PhD Candidate | University of Florida
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EDUCATION

- Ph.D.,** Geography, **University of Florida**, Gainesville, FL **August 2022 - present**
Dissertation topic: From Damage to Dialogue: Understanding Risk, Perception and Communication of Rapidly Intensifying Hurricanes in Vulnerable Communities
Advisor: Dr. Kevin Ash
- M.S.,** Geography, **Texas A&M University**, College Station, TX **December 2014**
Thesis topic: Assessment of the Potential Effect of Climate Change on Hurricane Risk and Vulnerability in Florida
Advisor: Dr. Steven M. Quiring
- B.S.,** Geography, **University of Florida**, Gainesville, FL **May 2010**
With Certificate in Meteorology and Climatology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Geography Department **August 2022-Present**
University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
Courses: GEO 2006- Natural Hazards Geography, GEO 2242- Extreme Weather, IDS 2935- The Next Pandemic, IDS 2935- Global Patterns of STIs
- Research Assistant**, Summer Scholars Program **May 2025- July 2025**
NSF Coastal Hazards, Equity, Economic Prosperity, and Resilience (CHEER) Hub
Greenville, NC
- Academic Advisor II**, College of Arts and Letters **November 2020- June 2022**
Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL
- Adjunct Instructor**, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Department **August 2019- May 2020**
Metropolitan State University of Denver, Denver, CO
Course: ENV 1200- Online Introduction to Environmental Science

Academic Advisor and Retention Specialist, Biology Department
Metropolitan State University of Denver, Denver, CO **November 2017- October 2020**

Instructor, College of Architecture
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **August 2016 – December 2016**
Course: CARC 181- First Year Seminar

Academic Advisor I, College of Architecture
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **November 2015- May 2017**

Academic Mentor, Athletic Department
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **September 2014- November 2015**

Tutor, Athletic Department
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **September 2012- August 2014**

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Atmospheric Sciences
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **January 2014-May 2014**
Course taught: ATMO 202- Atmospheric Science Laboratory

Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Geography
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **May 2011- August 2011**

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Geography
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX **August 2010-May 2012**
Course taught: GEOG 203- Planet Earth Laboratory

PUBLICATIONS

He, H., Yao, S., **Ruiz, M.**, Paro, F., Zhang, W., & Chu, H. (2024). Promote Breast Cancer Screening: AI-Generated Health Messages Targeting and Tailoring Women of Color. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Ruiz, M. "Assessment of the Potential Effect of Climate Change on Hurricane Risk and Vulnerability in Florida." MS thesis, Texas A&M University, 2014.

RELEVANT SKILLS

Languages: Spanish (Proficient speaking, reading and writing)

Technical Skills: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), ArcGIS Pro, Python, HAZUS -FEMA Risk Modeling Software, JMP Pro 16

PRESENTATIONS

Ruiz, M., (2025) Rapidly Intensifying Hurricanes and Spanish-Speaking Communities: Examining Risk Perception and Communication Challenges. Bill Anderson Fund Lightning Talk oral presentation at Natural Hazards Workshop, Broomfield, CO, July 2025.

Ruiz, M., (2025) ¿Se habla español? Closing the Gap in Hurricane Risk Communication in Eastern North Carolina. Oral presentation at Coastal Hazards, Equity, Economic Prosperity, and Resilience (CHEER) Hub Summer Scholars Research Showcase, Greenville, NC, June 2025.

He, H., Yao, S., **Ruiz, M.,** Paro, F., Zhang, W., & Chu, H. (2025). Harnessing AI for Tailoring and Targeting Health Communication: Promoting Breast Cancer Screening Among Women of Color. Poster presentation at D.C. Conference on Health Communication, Washington, D.C, May 2025.

Ruiz, M., (2025) In The Path Of Destruction: Investigating the Spatial Relationship Between Social Vulnerability and Property Losses Post-Hurricane Michael. Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the Florida Society of Geographers, Gainesville, FL, February 2025.

Ruiz, M., (2024) In The Aftermath: Predicting Property Losses Post-Hurricane Michael Using Social Vulnerability Indicators. Poster presentation at Natural Hazards Workshop, Broomfield, CO, July 2024.

Ruiz, M., (2024) In The Aftermath: An Evaluation Of The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) In Predicting Property Losses Post-Hurricane Michael. Oral presentation at Annual Meeting of the Florida Society of Geographers, St. Augustine, FL, February 2024.

Ruiz, M., (2023) SoVI in SoFLA: Reframing the Social Vulnerability Index (SoVI) for South Florida. Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Denver, CO, March 2023.

Guest Lecturer, “Assessment of the Potential Effect of Climate Change on Hurricane Risk and Vulnerability in Florida” Sustainability in Mitigation Planning undergraduate course, Metropolitan State University of Denver, December 3, 2019.

Ruiz, M. and Morales, E., (2017) Breaking the Barrier: Communicating with first generation minority students and their English as a Second Language (ESL) Families. Oral presentation at Texas A&M University Advisors and Counselors Symposium, College Station, TX. February 2017

Ruiz, M., (2014) Assessment of the Effect of Climate Change on Florida’s Future Hurricane Event Risk. Poster presentation at Geography Graduate Student Research Symposium, College Station, TX, March 2014.

Ruiz, M., (2013) Assessment of the Effect of Climate Change on Florida’s Future Hurricane Event Risk. Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society, Austin, TX, January 2013.

Guest Lecturer, “How will Climate Change Affect Florida’s Future Hurricane Event Risk?” Principles of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) undergraduate course, Texas A&M University, April 10, 2012.

Ruiz, M., (2012) Assessment of the Effect of Climate Change on Florida’s Future Hurricane Event Risk. Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, New York, NY, February 2012.

Ruiz, M., (2011) How Will Climate Change Affect Florida’s Future Hurricane Event Risk? Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Division of the Association of American Geographers, Austin, TX, November 2011.

Ruiz, M., Steffen, J. (2009) Assessment of Direct Hurricane Strikes for Oil Rig Locations along the Gulf Coast. Poster presentation at Annual Meeting of the Florida Society of Geographers, St. Augustine, FL, January 2009.

AWARDS AND HONORS

First Place Ph.D. level Poster Presentation

Florida Society of Geographers Annual Meeting, \$100

February 2025

Bill Anderson Fund Fellowship

September 2024- present

Graduate Student Travel Award, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

University of Florida, \$400

April 2024

Little Family Graduate Excellence Award, Department of Geography

University of Florida, \$1,500

March 2024

Evan Coe Graduate Excellence Award, Department of Geography

University of Florida, \$1,500

March 2024

First Place Ph.D. level Oral Presentation

Florida Society of Geographers Annual Meeting, \$250

February 2024

Graduate Student Travel Grant, Graduate Student Council

University of Florida, \$350

Spring 2023

Graduate Student Travel Award , College of Liberal Arts and Sciences University of Florida, \$300	Spring 2023
Grinter Fellowship , Department of Geography University of Florida, \$6,000	August 2022-2025
Lechner Scholarship , Department of Geography Texas A&M University, \$3,000	August 2010
John R. and Fawn T. Dunkle Award , Department of Geography University of Florida, \$1,000	April 2009

CERTIFICATES

Academy of Future Faculty Fellow Certificate , Center for Teaching Excellence, Texas A&M University	April 2015
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PROFESSIONAL AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Student Volunteer , Natural Hazards Workshop and Researchers' Meeting Broomfield, CO	July 14-18, 2024
Graduate Representative , Student Services Committee Geography Department, University of Florida	August 2023- July 2024
Chair , Research and Professional Development Committee College of Arts and Letters Advising, Florida Atlantic University	October 2021- June 2022
Member , Social Media Committee College of Arts and Letters Advising, Florida Atlantic University	October 2021- June 2022
Member , Academic Petition Committee College of Arts and Letters Advising, Florida Atlantic University	April 2021- June 2022
Facilitator , Microaggressions Awareness Campaign Metropolitan State University of Denver	June 2020- October 2020
Secretary , Latinx/a/o Faculty and Staff Association Metropolitan State University of Denver	October 2019- October 2020
Invited panelist , Early Career Paths Panel, Climate Specialty Group American Association of Geographers (AAG) Annual Conference Denver, CO	April 2020
Facilitator , Transcend Tri-Institutional Social Justice Retreat Metropolitan State University of Denver	January 2020

Graduation Marshall Metropolitan State University of Denver	December 2019
Committee Member , First-Generation Initiatives Metropolitan State University of Denver	June 2019- November 2019
Member , STEAM Community Outreach Team Metropolitan State University of Denver	September 2018- October 2020
Facilitator , Student Success Series Workshops, Metropolitan State University of Denver	September 2018- May 2019
Graduation Marshall Texas A&M University	May 2016- May 2017
Executive Board Member , University Advisors and Counselors College of Architecture Representative Texas A&M University	January 2017- May 2017
Symposium Committee Member , University Advisors and Counselors Texas A&M University	September 2016-February 2017
Advisor Briefing Day Committee Member , University Advisors and Counselors Texas A&M University	June 2016-September 2016
Logo Committee Member , University Advisors and Counselors Texas A&M University	January 2016- March 2016
Judge , Student Research Week Texas A&M University	March 2012

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Natural Hazards Engineering Research Infrastructure (NHERI) Graduate Student Council	February 2024- Present
American Association of Geographers (AAG)	2010-Present
Florida Society of Geographers	2023-Present
Florida Academic Advising Association (FLACADA)	2021- 2022
National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)	2015- 2022
American Meteorological Society (AMS)	2008-2014

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

National Academies of Sciences Virtual Workshop

February 5-6, 2024

*Advancing Risk Communication with Decision-Makers
for Extreme Tropical Cyclones*

Participated in a virtual workshop centered around current challenges and potential solutions when communicating hurricane risk.

NCAR BRIGHT Virtual Workshop

August 1-3, 2022

Exploring Coastal Flood Risk Through Geospatial Storytelling

Utilized ESRI StoryMaps and Dashboards to visualize the impacts of storm surge on coastal communities

Appreciative Advising Institute, Florida Atlantic University

July 21-24, 2019

Participated in an active learning workshop focused on the six phases of the Appreciative Advising framework

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**STEAM-A-Palooza, Grandview High School,
Aurora, CO**

November 2018

Participated in weather jar (precipitation) demonstration and discussed academic and professional path opportunities with public and students

**STEAM for All Festival, Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum,
Denver, CO**

September 2018

Participated in weather jar (precipitation) demonstration and discussed academic and professional path opportunities with public