



MEETING MINUTES  
**Unsaturated Soils Committee**

Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm (Eastern Time)

Room: Charlotte Convention Center, Room E214

1. Welcome/Introductions (McCartney)
  - The meeting started at 3:10 PM ET in hybrid format.
  - Attendees: Majid Ghayoomi, John McCartney, Bill Likos, Claudia Zapata, Xiaoyu Song, Sandy Houston, Mohammad Sadik Khan, Dunja Peric, Zhen Liu, Aritra Banerjee, Nariman Mahabadi, Farshid Vahedifard, Matt Evans, Marcelo Sanchez, Idil Akin, Anand Puppala, Omid Ghasemi-Fare, Xiong Zhang, Jongwan Eun, Ron Rizzo, Taiwo Akinlye, Tommy Bounds, Alishan Ahmed, Austin Olaiz, Ravi Ravichandaran, Krystina Scott, Shivangi Jain, Soonkie Nam, Mohammad Khosravi, Jean-Louis Briaud.
2. Review of Minutes from 2021 Fall virtual meeting– Appendix (McCartney)
  - Ghayoomi moved the motion; Banerjee seconded, all approved.
3. Updates on Recent Conferences
  - Geo-Extreme 2021 Specialty Conference
    - i. Savannah, Georgia, November 7-10, 2021.
    - ii. Committee member Farshid Vahedifard was the conference co-chair.
    - iii. First in-person after pandemic
    - iv. 250 or so folks attended
    - v. Plenary talks and panel discussions in addition to technical sessions.
    - vi. There were unsat-related topics presented in the papers.
    - vii. Next Geo-Extreme will be in 2025.
    - viii. Special session on unsaturated soils can be considered for the next event.
  - Geo-Congress 2022
    - i. Charlotte, NC; March 20-23, 2022
    - ii. A session on unsaturated soils was organized by Asif Ahmed and Alex Wallace, but was merged into the poster session. No details on the number of papers on unsaturated soils was available.
    - iii. Technical overview committee assigned session chairs.
    - iv. Less involvement from the technical committees in this event.
4. Updates on Upcoming Conferences
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conf. on Energy Geotechnics, La Jolla, CA (Chaired by John McCartney and Ingrid Tomac)
    - i. April 10-13, 2022.
    - ii. Proceedings is published in Fall 2020 open access through ISSMGE: <https://www.e3s-conferences.org/articles/e3sconf/abs/2020/65/contents/contents.html>
    - iii. Hybrid format: Two in-person days and one remote day following.
    - iv. Approximately 60 in-person and 40-remote attendees.
  - ICSMGE 2022, Sydney, Australia, May 1-6, 2022.
    - i. Hybrid format
    - ii. Some committee members will attend: Claudia Zapata and Marcelo Sanchez are delivering state-of-the-art presentations.

- Geo-Congress 2023
    - i. Los Angeles, CA; March 26-29, 2023
    - ii. John McCartney is on the organizing committee
    - iii. Several papers on unsaturated soils were submitted.
    - iv. Abstract decisions were made by the organizing committee, but the technical committee will be involved in reviewing papers and selecting the papers for presentation.
    - v. Opportunities for organizing special sessions or panels are available.
    - vi. Omid Ghassemi Fare and Marcelo Sanchez noted that their session proposal from Geo-Congress 2022 may be applicable for this conference as well.
    - vii. Jongwan Eun and Xiong Zhang both volunteered to participate in session organization.
  - UNSAT 2022 Conference, Milos Island Greece, 2022.
    - i. Rescheduled for 3-5 May 2023.
    - ii. No online details available yet.
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific UNSAT 2023
    - i. Will be hosted by RMIT in Melbourne, Australia.
    - ii. Proposed for November-December 2023.
  - 5<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Unsaturated Soils
    - i. Scheduled for 2024, call for proposals is being sought.
  - 4th Pan-American Conference on Unsaturated Soils
    - i. Scheduled for 2025, call for proposals is being sought.
  - Geo-Extreme 2025
  - There was a general discussion on whether ASCE G-I events should continue in-person only meetings or move to hybrid meetings. The overall consensus was that in-person is preferred mainly due to the interpersonal interaction and also the fact that the hybrid events make the in-person registration more expensive.
5. Reports from Liaison Organization Contacts
- TCC updates (McCartney)
    - i. Matt Evans (Liaison) was present and provided an update.
    - ii. In past conferences there was a call for session and then people reply to that but then recently the G-I evolved away from that model.
    - iii. G-I tends to go back to the old model with some modifications.
    - iv. TCC will have conference liaison from each committee to make sure there are dedicated committee member.
    - v. State of geo-institute is strong in ASCE; the most profitable.
    - vi. There will be more money for special projects
    - vii. GSP's effort has been on Geo-Institute since other ASCE chapters do not have that.
    - viii. Our committee has been active and can compete for committee of the year
    - ix. Our initiatives in the past included speaker series, webinars and they were picked up by Geo-Institute at large.
    - x. Bob Holtz has funding to sponsor international travel.
  - G-I Geo-environmental (McCartney)

- i. Manual of practice is almost ready – John McCartney has a chapter on the design and construction of base liners for landfills (which includes topics on clay compaction).
- G-I Geology and Site Characterization (Puppala)
  - i. No update.
- G-I Shallow Foundations (Zhang)
  - i. Brochure for shrinking/swelling soil is prepared.
  - ii. Design guidelines for foundations on expansive soils is being developed.
- G-I Soil Dynamics Committee (Ghayoomi)
  - i. No update.
- G-I Soil Properties and Modeling (Muraleetharan/Hoyos)
  - i. Alejandro Martinez was nominated for and won the Arthur Casagrande Professional Development Award
  - ii. Giuseppe Buscarnera (a member of Unsat committee) was nominated for the Huber Civil Engineering Research Prize together with the Unsat Committee (currently awaiting announcement).
- G-I Embankments, Dams and Slopes (Vahedifard)
  - i. Farshid Vahedifard is the new vice chair
  - ii. They had a student conference and could be something that can be implemented by this committee.
- ISSMGE TC 106 Unsaturated Soils (Zhang/Hoyos)
  - i. Enrique Romero was elected as new chair of TC106.
  - ii. Award nominations/deadlines to be announced.
  - iii. Proposal for hosting 5th European Conference on Unsaturated Soils in 2024 to be announced.
  - iv. Proposal for hosting 4th Pan-American Conference on Unsaturated Soils in 2025 to be announced.
  - v. Nominations for next Blight Lecture to be announced.
  - vi. Still no news on Muralee's nomination for the Innovation Award.
- ISSMGE TC 308 Energy Geotechnics (Sanchez)
  - i. Looking for new chair; so please nominate.
  - ii. Next symposium will be either in the US or Italy.
- TRB AKG40 Mechanics and Drainage of Saturated and Unsaturated Geomaterials (Siekmeier)
  - i. No update.
- ASTM D18.04 Hydrologic Properties and Hydraulic Barriers (Ghasemi-Fare)
  - i. January 25 meeting; current related works include (1) English Units to be included; (2) SWCC document to be revised; and (3) Review hydraulic conductivity and SE measurement.
- 6. Awards (McCartney)
  - "Variation of Resilient Modulus of Subgrade Soils over a Wide Range of Suction States" by Banerjee et al. was nominated for the Norman/Croes medal.
  - "Seismic Compression of Unsaturated Silty Sand: A Strain-Based Approach" by Mousavi and Ghayoomi was nominated for Middlebrooks awards.
  - Alfred Nobel prize deadline is soon (May 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline).
  - TC106 Nominations/Deadlines

- Paper nomination deadlines are on the ASCE website, but the committee awards committee should receive nominations at least a month in advance. Please contact Dunja Peric for nominations.
  - For non-paper awards please contact John McCartney directly.
  - GeoInstitute Awards committee has streamlined their process so all paper awards will be under one nomination process: Norman/Croes/Middlebrooks/Collingwood
7. Progress on Webinar Series
- Has not been an active.
  - Goals for future webinars should be decided.
  - We can package the past ones on the website, so people receive a direct link, and to help advertise the past work of the committee.
8. Web conference
- Mohammad Sadik Khan proposed a web conference for unsaturated soils committee last round, but GI staff said that it was too late for that year and recommended waiting until next year.
  - There will be a call in July with a decision on September, and then the event on December. Our committee should propose one this year.
9. Progress on Special Journal Issues
- None in progress.
10. Update on Special Projects (McCartney)
- Our committee did not have a special project in 2021.
  - Discussion on ideas for proposals:
    - i. Creating videos on unsaturated soils that can be incorporated into a presentation given by the committee members to local chapters, universities, etc., or discuss basic principles of unsaturated soil mechanics, or highlight new areas for advancement.
    - ii. One idea from our last meeting was to create a YouTube channel with short videos on different unsaturated soils topics mostly for educational purposes.
    - iii. The proposals are due in September and our committee must do one this year.
    - iv. The goal is to bring committee members together, so several members work on the topic.
    - v. Large case histories can be also looked at.
    - vi. Games or cool videos that educate unsaturated soils concepts.
    - vii. DIGGS
    - viii. Geotech Tools
11. Website Update (McCartney - Leo)
- i. The G-I website is updated and ready now. Zhen Liu is working on adding content.
  - ii. The roster however needs to be also updated.
  - iii. We need to ask people to see if they are being involved in the committee or want to be involved.
  - iv. Austin Olaiz proposed and can spearhead on student/young member initiatives. Also, he proposed to invite committee members to local chapter presentation at ASU.

12. Other Business

- i. There has been a while we did not have an Unsaturated soil-related piece in Geo-Strata issues. Please propose ideas.
- ii. Geo-Legend nominations can be made by the committee, but currently there is a long waiting list.

13. Adjourn 4:52 PM

- i. Idil Akin moved; John McCartney seconded, all approved.