

International Collaboration for Pedagogical Innovations between Linköping & Rhodes University

Understanding multi-racial interaction through a time-geographic appraisal

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INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

We live in an increasingly global and multi-cultural world. This trend is hence also important for higher education environments.

Development of pedagogical research and practices are needed in order to cater for a high quality education for an increasingly internationalised student body.

Assmo & Fox has for almost 15 years collaborated in internationalisation of higher education, including web based learning and thereto related research topics.

Currently, Assmo & Fox run a Linnaeus/Palme student/staff exchange programme. The overall goal with the programme is to establish a self-sustaining international educational collaboration.

RESEARCH AIM

Our collaboration involve developing Swedish and South African students' understanding of different geographies through the use of a Time Geography appraisal.

Through the collaboration we can investigate and analyse our pedagogical approach and directly apply and test its outcome and result.

As a pedagogical tool, we use a web-based approach (google map) to enhance students experience in conceptualising processes in time and space.

The pedagogical development of time geography as a tool for multi-disciplinary analysis can be a strength and resource in an international higher education environment to address issues such as ethnicity, cultural diversity.

Students' time-geography analytical exercise

Being a cultural blend of students brought up in the post-apartheid period, the students used themselves as study objects in the specific geographical setting of Grahamstown to explore the following question.

What can a Time Geography perspective reveal about multi-racialism and segregation in Grahamstown 20 years after the end of apartheid?

In six integrated practical exercises they collected and mapped their own activities with reference to the multi-racial spaces and places of Grahamstown.

Google Drive was used for GeoReferencing their activities in space and time.

They completed questionnaires in which they reflected on the identity of Grahamstown and their knowledge of the place.

Lastly, they wrote brief documentary of their experience of Grahamstown and connectedness to its various places.

1. Racial mosaic

Grahamstown's racial data was collected in the 2011 census using South Africa's standard race categories.

2. Time Geography Questionnaire

This questionnaire was used at the start of the course and gave us demographic information and data designed to help us understand whether income, location, and availability of transport impacted on their activities:

3. Time-Space digital photography diary

As a Time Geography diary format we got the students photographing each place/activity they visited over a 24 hour period, then Georeferenced each place so they can be mapped using Fusion Tables in Google Drive. In addition to Georeferencing each place their Fusion Tables were edited, by them, to indicate the type of place and mode of transport used.

4. Sense of Place Questionnaire

This questionnaire was compiled at the end of the course, once they were familiarised with their own spatial activity patterns and the racial mosaic of Grahamstown. In this questionnaire we were trying to get them to indicate, using their own words, what it was that attracted or repelled them.

The Racial Mosaic of Grahamstown

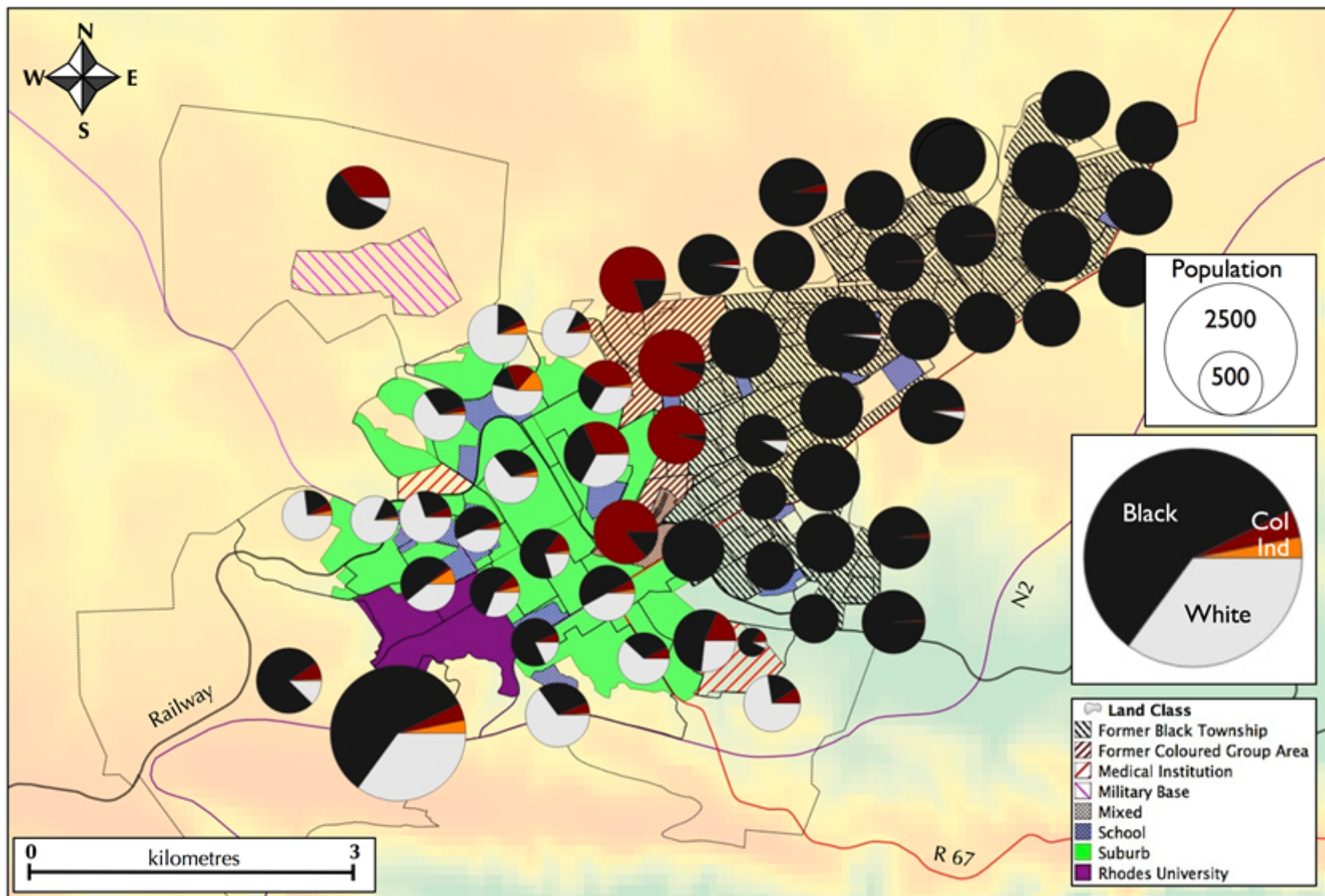


Figure 3. Activities Categorized by Race of Student

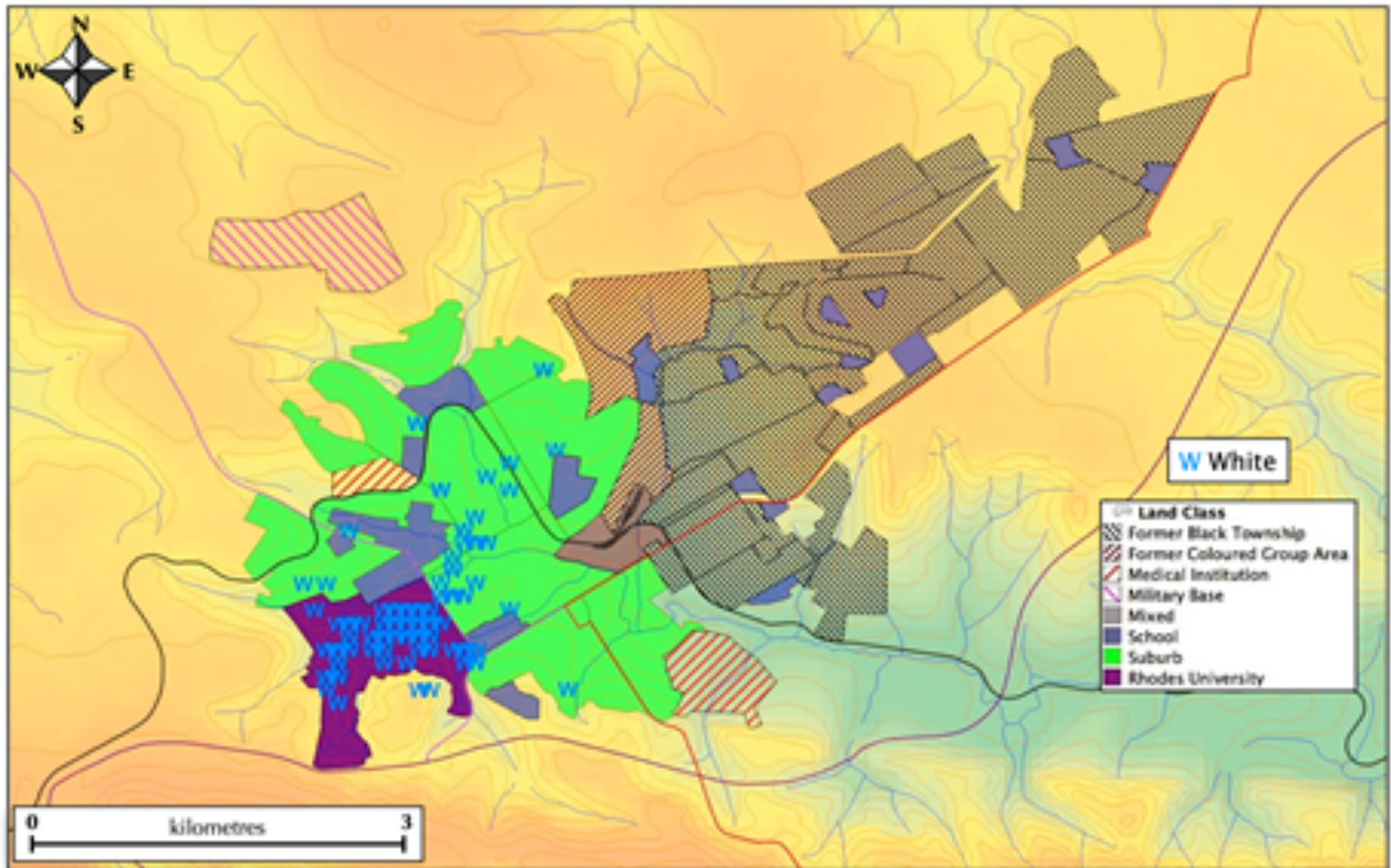


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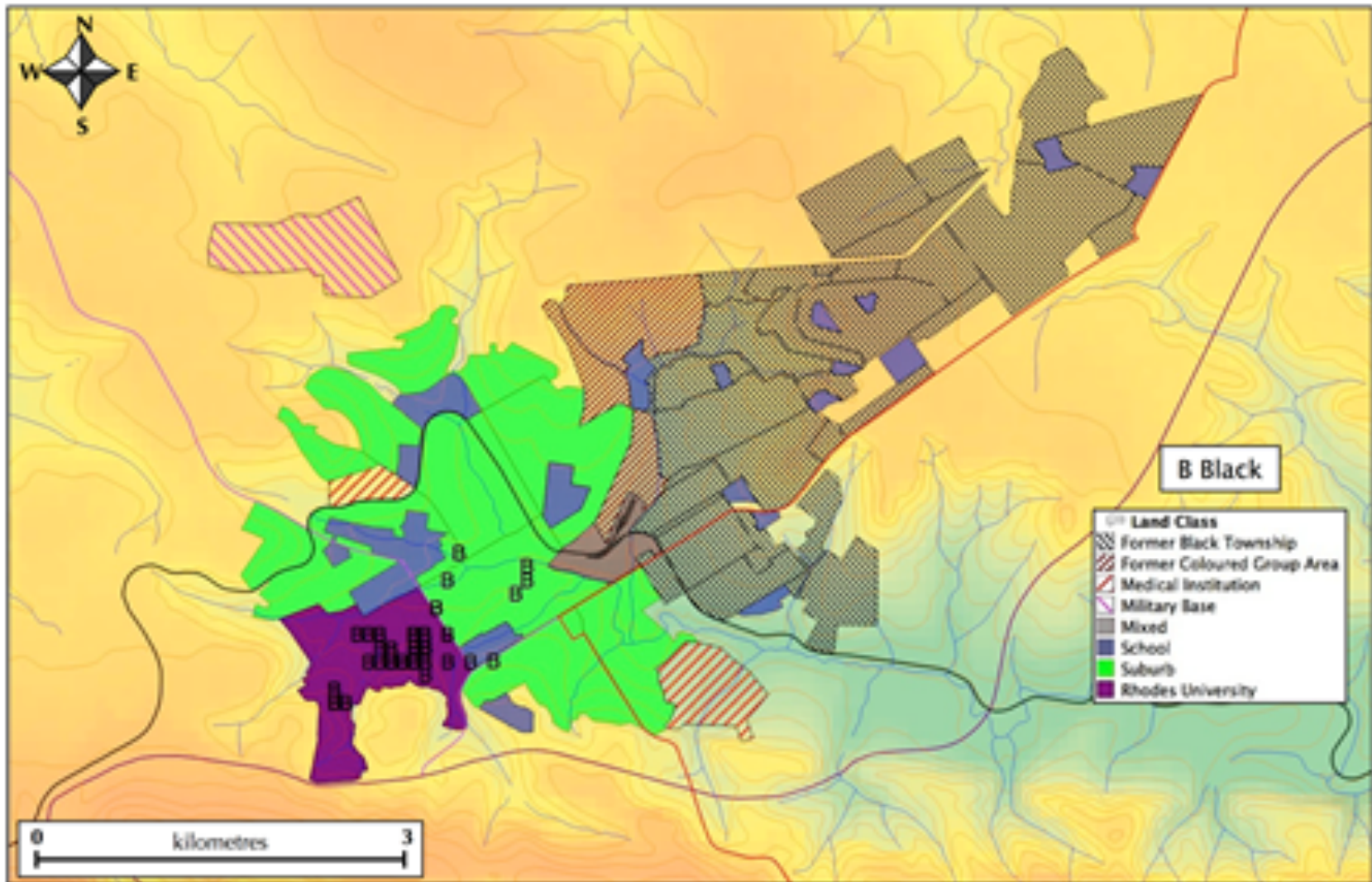


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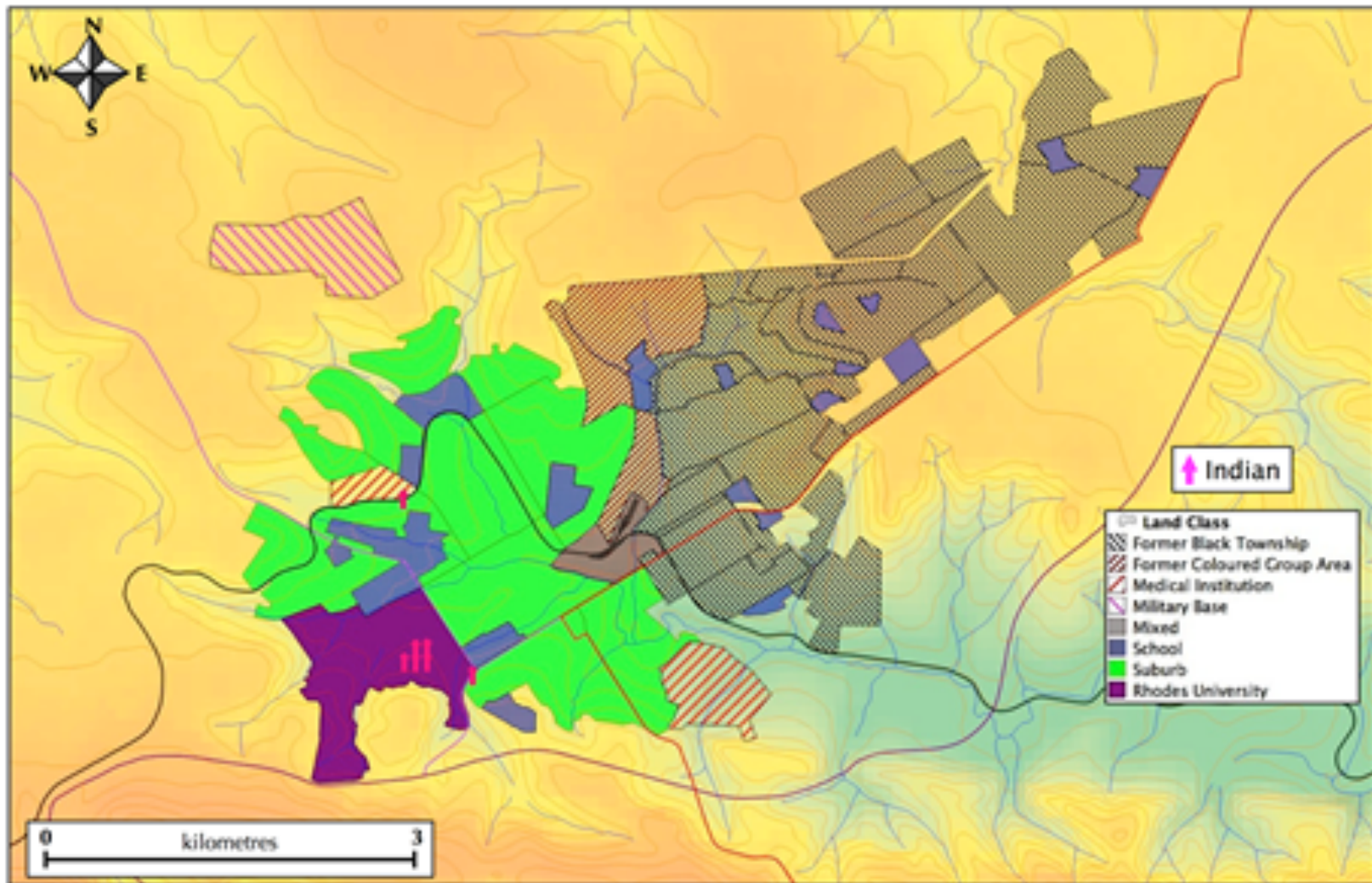
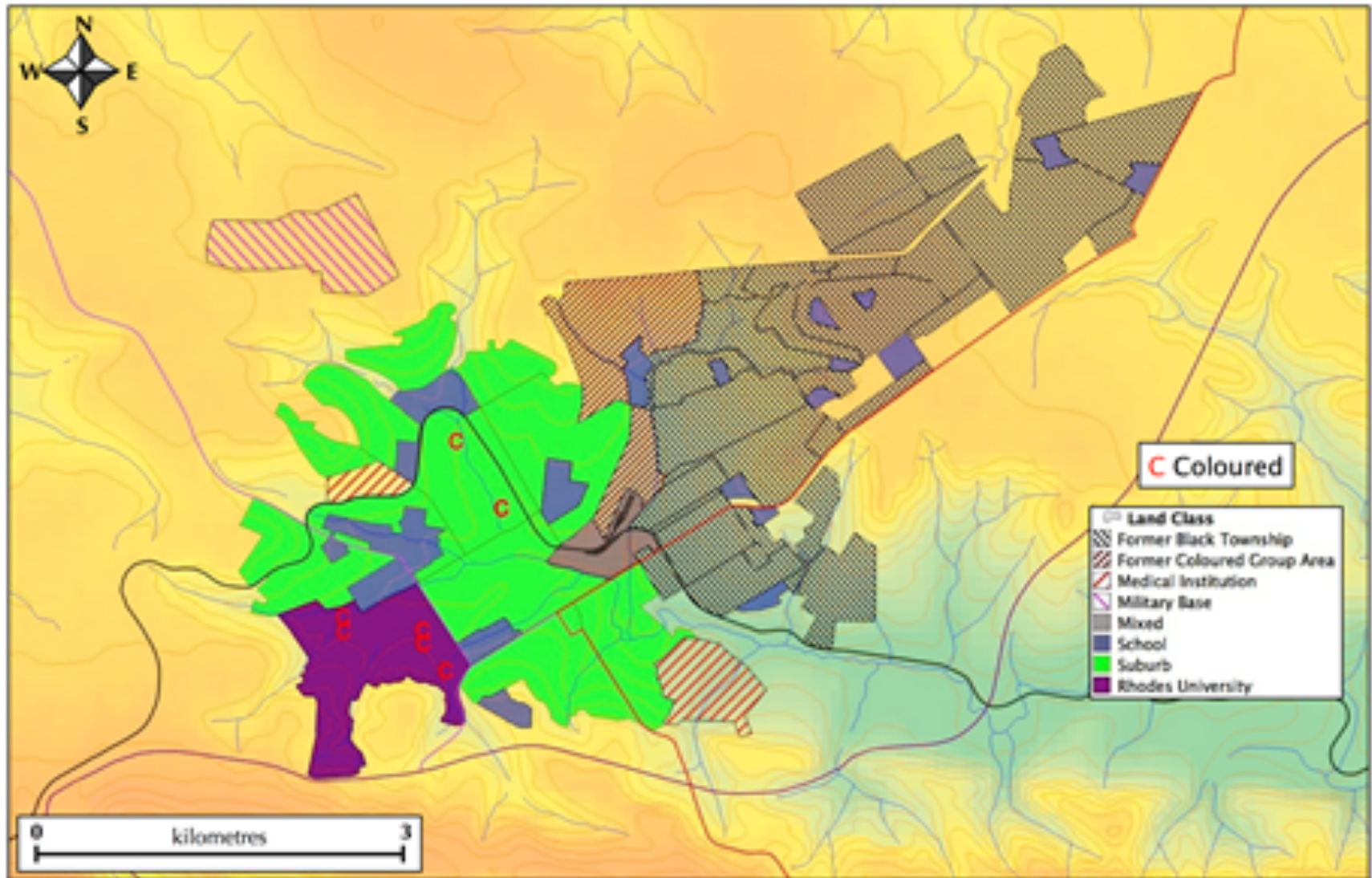
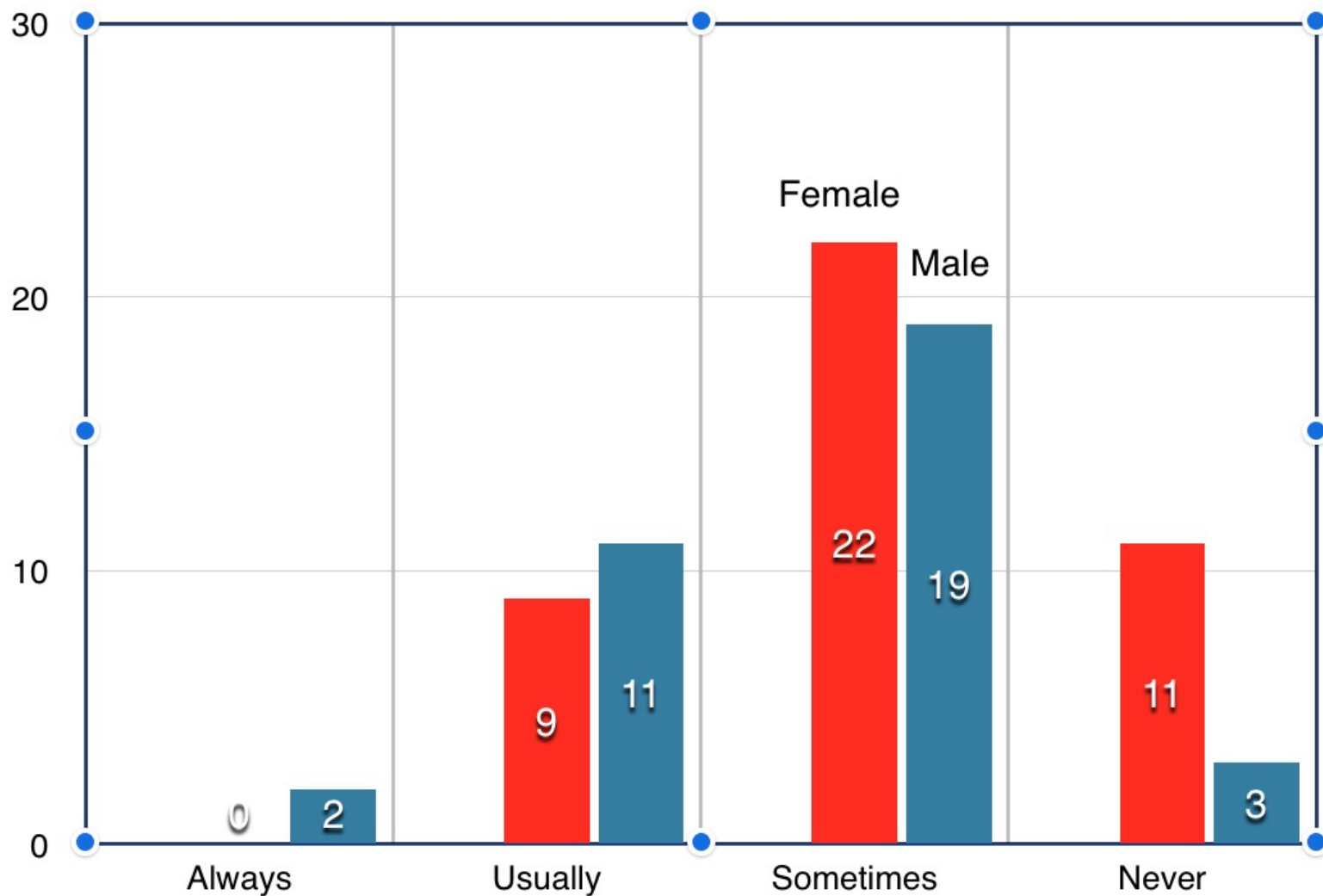


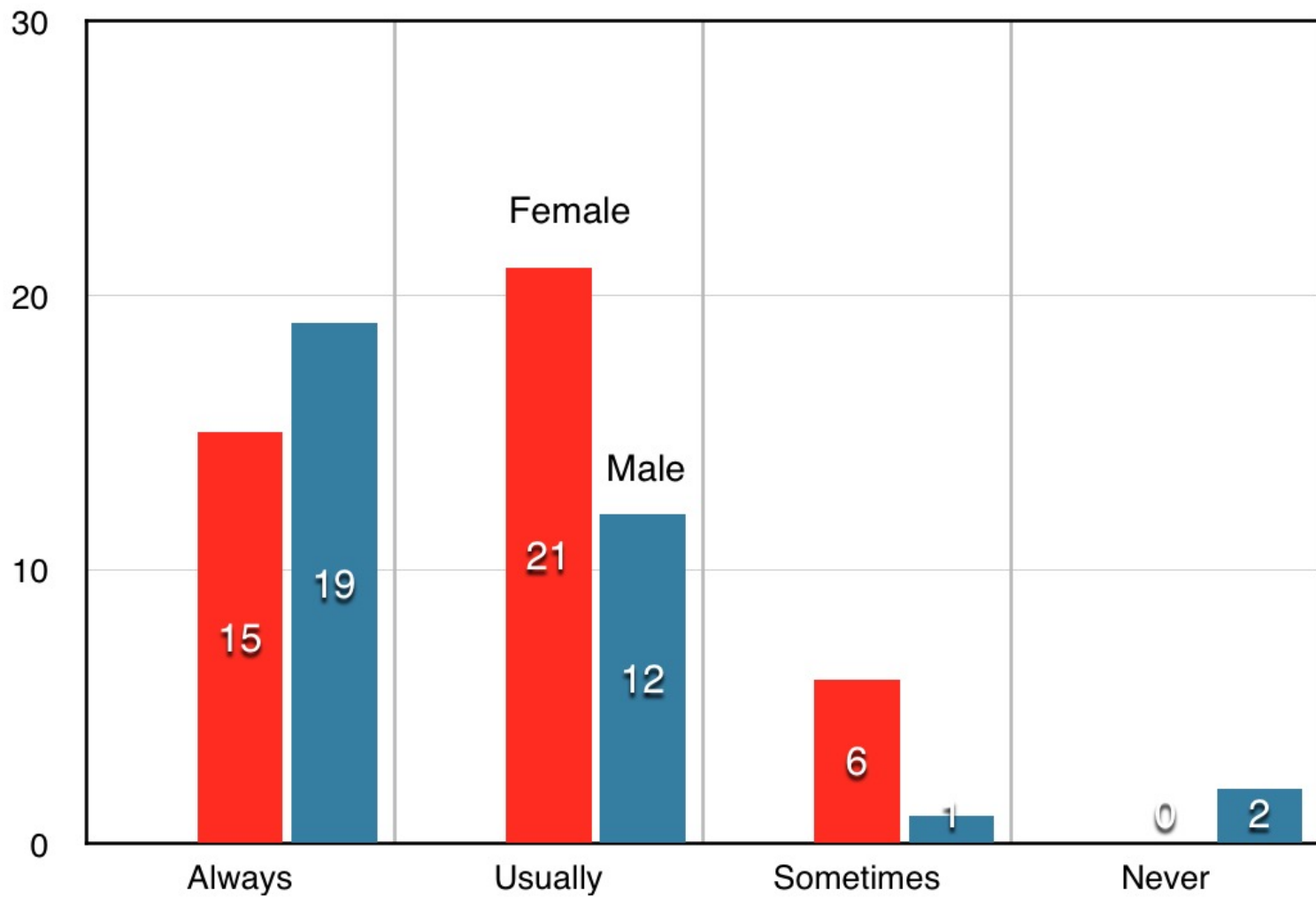
Figure 3-6. Activities Categorized by Race of Student



During night time do you consider travelling alone in Grahamstown to be safe?



During daylight do you consider travelling alone in Grahamstown to be safe?



The application of time-geography as a pedagogical tool, through innovative use of smart phone technology and Google Maps, have built up the students' awareness and understanding of time-spatial concepts.

The empirical data analysis also provided information for the students to reflect on their daily activity patterns against the backdrop of race-space in Grahamstown.

The time-geographic concept also illustrate the potential to add further depth to our understanding of multi-racial interaction and segregation, exemplified in the post-apartheid city.

Different Pockets of Local Order reveal how the various forms of constraints influence students (peoples) movements and activities in time and space.

In so doing, the time-geographic framework provides a suitable analytical tool aiding a policy instrument to analyse and understand issues of multi-cultural interaction and segregation in a specific time-spatial setting.