

October 6, 2008

THE HEAD'S PERSPECTIVE

Geosciences Accreditation

There is a debate going on in the Geosciences about formal accreditation of undergraduate programs (perhaps similar to the accreditation that is used in engineering programs). Recently, two articles in the Geological Society of America (GSA) publication *GSA Today* have presented both sides. A national survey of geoscientists found strong support for accreditation. However, there is less consensus on the format and details of accreditation. Excerpts from the Ad Hoc Committee on Accreditation:

"A meeting of the GSA Associated and Allied Societies in 2005 spontaneously generated a discussion of whether a system of academic accreditation for undergraduate programs would be good for the geosciences. As an outgrowth of that discussion, an ad hoc committee was formed to explore the concept of academic accreditation for geoscience departments. The committee, which was hosted by GSA, includes members from a spectrum of the Associated Societies.

"While a significant majority of respondents favored some system of accreditation, a minority clearly had strong concerns about the positive effectiveness of accreditation. The primary concerns fall into three categories: (1) the impact of reporting requirements for paperwork and other efforts on the part of teaching faculty; (2) restriction of the opportunity for innovation in curriculum design; and (3) a negative impact on small departments—the possibility that a college or university might choose to close a department rather than strengthen it to meet accreditation standards. Mitigating the first two of these concerns must be a primary goal of any accreditation system design. The third concern is not as strongly shared by chairs of small departments, who in the 2007 survey voted 60% in favor of accreditation, in contrast to the 49% favorable rating for the entire survey."

(Continued on next page)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Friday, October 10

- Strategic Plan Committee, CIVL 2201 (8:30 a.m.)
- ATMS Tea, CIVL 2201 (2:30 p.m.)

EAS SEMINAR

Thursday, October 9, at 3:30 p.m. in CIVL 1252:

"Snow-Soil Parameterization and the Effect on Weather/Climate." Wen-Yih Sun, EAS – Purdue University

Refreshments at 3 p.m. in CIVL 2201

For more information, see the EAS online [calendar](#).

OUR RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Quansah, J.E., B.E. Engel, and I. Chaubey, 2008. Tillage practices usage in early warning prediction of atrazine pollution. *Transactions of the ASABE*, **51(4)**, 1311-1321.

HALLOWEEN FUN

Would you like to join in the fun and wear a Halloween costume to work on Friday, October 31? There will be a \$1.00 entry fee and prizes will be awarded.

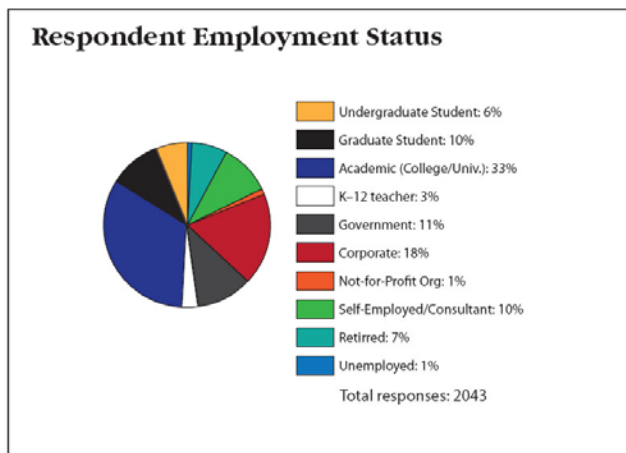
The office staff has not done so for several years now, but Jerry Krockover comes in costume every year for his class.

If you are interested, please sign up in the Main office. Thank you.



HEAD'S PERSPECTIVE (Continued from front page)

The distribution of survey respondents is illustrated in the figure below.



Excerpts from the Bralower and others article:

"Earth scientists are in a unique position to contribute to pressing issues of great societal relevance, from managing water supplies to extending the supply of fossil fuels and other energy sources, mitigating the effects of natural hazards, evaluating environmental health, and predicting and mitigating the consequences of global warming. Geoscience departments have a unique responsibility to address these issues effectively as they educate students, build research programs, and provide outreach and service to society. It is in this light that we examine the potential impact of accreditation of geoscience bachelor degree programs (B.A. and B.S.) now under development by a coalition of professional societies as presented in the September *GSA Today* (GSA Ad Hoc Committee on Accreditation [GSA ad hoc comm.], 2008)."

"Much of cutting-edge geoscience lies at the interface among disciplines. A rigid accreditation curriculum focusing on traditional geology would hamper interdisciplinary education. By restricting curriculum flexibility, accreditation would also be at odds with attempts to increase enrollment in geoscience departments by focusing on important new areas of study. New degree programs that couple geoscience with other sciences and with public policy, business, and law require flexibility. Many departments, however, are not in a position to develop new degrees and must instead broaden existing bachelor's degree programs; accreditation would hinder such progress."

At the recent meeting of the CIC Geoscience Departments heads and chairs, the accreditation issue was discussed and there was a strong consensus against formal accreditation. I am sure that there will be continued discussion of this issue. The two *GSA Today* articles (including online pdfs) are listed below.

GSA Ad Hoc Committee on Accreditation, 2008, Report: GSA Ad Hoc Committee on Accreditation: *GSA Today*, v. 18, p. 64–67, doi: 10.1130/1052-5173(2008)18 [64:GAHCOA]2.0.CO;2, (<http://www.gsjournals.org/archive/1052-5173/18/9/pdf/i1052-5173-18-9-64.pdf>).

Bralower, T., and others, 2008, Accreditation: Wrong Path for the Geosciences: *GSA Today*, October, v. 18, p. 52-53, (<http://www.gsjournals.org/archive/1052-5173/18/10/pdf/i1052-5173-18-10-52.pdf>).

STS-125 Space Shuttle Mission to the Hubble Space Telescope - Launch Delayed

Because of a malfunction in the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), the launch of the Space Shuttle (STS 125, including EAS Alum Drew Feustel; see last week's newsletter) has been delayed, probably until early 2009.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

On Friday, September 26, Lucy Flesch gave an invited talk at Virginia Tech entitled, "Comparison of Surface and Mantle Deformation in Tibet Inferred from Shear-Wave Splitting and GPS Data"

Terry West presented an invited talk on Saturday morning, September 27, 2008 at the Westminster Village Men's Club, Westminster Village Retirement Center in West Lafayette, Indiana. More than sixty men and women attended the presentation entitled "Overview of Two Environmental Issues, Global Warming/Climate Change and Drilling for Oil in ANWR, Alaska National Wildlife Refuge." Dr. West provided handout information to all present who responded with a lively question and answer session following the PowerPoint presentation. Greg Chmiel served as technical assistant for the talk and several EAS students were in attendance.

On Tuesday, September 30, Harshvardhan gave a seminar at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, in the Department of Atmospheric Science. The talk was entitled, "(Mis)adventures with MODIS cloud properties."

Professor Larry Braile presented the following workshop sessions at the IRIS AS-1 Seismograph workshop for teachers, September 19-21, Kansas City, Missouri. Twenty teachers who were selected to receive classroom educational seismographs as part of the IRIS Seismographs in Schools program attended.

Recognizing Patterns in Seismograms – Tutorial for Interpreting Seismograms

Where did "OUR" waves come from? – Using the Seismic Waves Software

Calculate the Magnitude of an Event w/ AS-1 Data – Magnitude Scales and Determining the Magnitude from Seismograms

REV, Seismic Monitor, Google Earth Earthquake Maps, and Other Online Tools

ITAP NEWS

Office 2007 upgrade over October Break

Office 2007 has been advertised to all centrally-supported EAS Windows machines since August 5. Many EAS users have already upgraded to the new version. In order to promote a simple and stable computing environment, any machines that have not been upgraded to Office 2007 will be upgraded over October Break. If you choose to, you can run the installation this week.

To run the installation, double click on the "Run Advertised Programs" icon on your desktop or go to "Start - Settings - Control Panel - Run Advertised Programs". Select the "Microsoft Office 2007 - Microsoft Office 2007" package and click "Run". You may also wish to install "Microsoft Office 2007 Add-ins - SaveAsPDFandXPS" to give Office the ability to write PDF files.

Please note the following:

- The installation may reboot your machine, so please close any open applications before running the Office 2007 advertisement.
- There are a few user clicks needed at the beginning of the installation.
- The installation takes approximately 20-30 minutes. You may wish to close all applications and run the advertisement prior to going to lunch or a meeting.

Please let us know should you have questions by sending email to eas-itap@purdue.edu.

RCAC Service Outage October 9-13

Due to electrical upgrades to the Mathematical Sciences Building, many RCAC services will be unavailable from Thursday, October 9 until the afternoon of Monday, October 13. This includes the pete and steele clusters.

In order to promote stability on hypocenter, the /scratch mounts will be removed at noon on Thursday, October 9 and restored at noon on Monday, October 13. /scratch mounts on other EAS machines will remain in place, but will not work during the outage. Fortress is expected to remain available for the duration of the outage window. For more information, see <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/newsroom/detail.cfm?newsId=1791>

Information Technology Assistant opening

The EAS Technology Support staff currently has an opening for an Information Technology Assistant (ITA). ITAs work directly with EAS faculty, staff, and students, resolving technology problems, and developing solutions for future needs. No experience is necessary, although computer support and/or web design experience is preferred. For more information, see http://www.purdue.edu/eas/resources/it/student_jobs.html

Schedule of Classes

A link to the *Schedule of Classes* which does not require logging in may be found on the Registrar's home page at: <http://www.purdue.edu/registrar/>.

P. F. LOW AGU TRAVEL AWARD

Professor Cushman annually provides travel funds for EAS PhD students to make presentations at the Fall (San Francisco, CA) American Geophysical Union (AGU) meeting. The P. F. Low AGU Travel Award Competition for EAS PhD Students fellowship is named in honor of the late Philip F. Low; a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a pioneer in the rigorous use of thermodynamics for the study of clay-water interactions. The goal is to support the travel of one Atmospheric Science and two Earth Science students each year. This year's recipients include:

Moetasim Ashfaq – Dr. Diffenbaugh's student
Courtney Creamer – Dr. Filley's student
Sarah Stamps – Dr. Calais' student

THANK YOU!

A big "THANK YOU" to Moet Ashfaq, Paytsar Muradyan, Tonya Richardson and Reuben van Hooionk for assisting at the Big10 Expo recruiting fair held this past Monday. Your efforts were greatly appreciated!

National Physical Science Consortium Graduate Fellowship in the Physical Sciences

The Fellowship Program of the National Physical Science Consortium (NPSC) is again open for receipt of applications at www.npsc.org. NPSC offers two programs.

1. The Traditional NPSC Program provides a two-phase, six-year fellowship. Initial support is for two or three years, depending on the employer-sponsor. If the student makes satisfactory progress and continues to meet the conditions of the award, support may continue for a total of up to six years. Students typically apply during their senior year.
2. The Dissertation Support Program provides support while the graduate student conducts dissertation research. Students should apply in the year prior to the beginning of their dissertation research program, but not until they can describe their research at least in general terms.

The deadline for the online application is November 7, 2008.

A NOTE FROM OUR ACADEMIC COUNSELOR Internships

Discovery Park Undergraduate Research Internship (DURI) Opportunities: Spring 2009

Engage in interdisciplinary research projects at Discovery Park and earn a \$500 scholarship for a part-time internship in the spring. Sophomore status by SPRING 2009 with a minimum 3.0 GPA--individual projects may list additional requirements, eligible to submit applications for up to five projects.

Search project descriptions and submit applications online: <http://www.purdue.edu/dp/duri>.

Callout is Monday, **October 6**, 4:30-5:00 p.m., MGRN 129. Application Deadline: Friday, November 7, 5:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact: Kelly Furlong, Intern Coordinator, Burton D. Morgan Center, Room 229. Phone: 765/496-1617 Email: kfurlong@purdue.edu

Interns for Indiana

Spring 2009 Information Sessions:

Tuesday, October 7, 4:30-5:00 p.m.

Friday, October 10, 4:30-5:00 p.m.

The Burton D. Morgan Center, Room 129

Undergraduate students with junior standing or higher and a 2.8 GPA or higher and all majors welcome to apply. Work with high-tech start-up companies. Students are placed in a part-time academic term internship, earning a \$500 scholarship and one academic credit for the mandatory companion seminar series (Thursdays 4:30-5:20 p.m.). The program is a great way to gain significant internship experience during the school year and can result in a full-time summer internship as well. Application Deadline: November 7, 2008 by 5 p.m. www.purdue.edu/dp/learningcenter.

SCA Student Conservation Association

Information Session on Monday, **October 6**, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. in Pfendler 120

Tuesday, **October 7**, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Ag Career Fair – Memorial Union Ballroom

Guest Speaker and SCA Alumna, Beth McCarthy

Learn about environmental internship opportunities nationwide where you get hands-on conservation experience in the field while giving something back to the world. Cannot attend but still interested? Contact Beth: oncampus@thesca.org 603-543-1700.

Internships Abroad

IAESTE United States will be on campus **October 10**. Students can set up appointments by contacting Collin Morgan (iaeste.purdue@gmail.com). The IAESTE representative is Courtney Cohn, University Relations Coordinator, IAESTE United States 10400 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 250, Columbia, Maryland 21044-3519. Tel: 443.539.0540. Fax: 410.997.5186.

<http://www.iaesteunitedstates.org/IntProgs/>

2009 Critical Language Scholarships for Intensive Summer Institutes

Information Session, Monday, **October 6**, 7-8 p.m. STEW 218A.

Speakers will include Cristy Cornell, national/international scholarships coordinator and Purdue's 2008 CLS winner, Emily Dawes (College of Liberal Arts), who will share her experiences

studying Arabic and living in Amman, Jordan in the summer of 2008.

CLS scholarships (sponsored by the US Dept. of State) “provide seven to ten week group-based intensive language instruction and extensive cultural enrichment experiences at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels” of eleven critical need foreign languages. Applicants must be US citizens, currently enrolled in a US degree-granting program at the undergraduate or graduate level, and must have completed at least their first year of university level study by summer 2009.

Participants are expected to continue their language study beyond the scholarship period and later apply their critical language skills in their future professional careers in any field. Additional details are available at www.clscholarship.org. Instruction in the following languages is available: Arabic,

Azerbaijani, Bangla/Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, Russian, Turkish, Urdu. For more information, please contact Cristy Cornell at ccornell@purdue.edu.

Nancy

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Wen-wen Tung – October 8



ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER:

This weekly newsletter is the place to look to keep up with departmental happenings, announcements (seminars, student group events, scholarship and award deadlines, departmental committees), job and grant opportunities, and anything else you need to know about the department. It should cut down on the glut of email and other forms of separate announcements – **if it is in the newsletter, we assume you know about it** and no other reminders are needed. Past issues will be available on our departmental web site (www.purdue.edu/eas/). Material for inclusion in the newsletter should be submitted to Gina Richey (grichey@purdue.edu) by **Friday noon** of each week for inclusion in the Monday newsletter.

For answers to common technology questions and the latest updates from the EAS Technology Support staff, please visit <http://www.purdue.edu/eas/resources/it>.

Also, as an additional resource for information about departmental events, seminars, deadlines, etc., see our departmental calendar at <http://calendar.science.purdue.edu/eas/seminars>.



Joseph S. Francisco
CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT OF THE
AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

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We cannot always build the future for our youth,
but we can build our youth for the future.
-Franklin D. Roosevelt

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