Notes from the Chair

Spring semester has been a busy time as always. We’ve been working hard and so have the students. This is the first semester of Don Petzold’s retirement and we have missed his dedication to the program and his tireless work with students. We honored Don at the Spring Banquet, which was held at the new Best Western in River Falls. It was a wonderful time and I wish to thank everyone who attended. We’ve been fortunate to have Chaina Bapikee from the University of Minnesota full-time this semester to take Don’s place and we look forward to having her comeback and teach with us next year.

The biggest news in the department has to be the development of our undergraduate certificate in GIS which is slated to begin this fall. It will be a part-time 15 credit sequence of courses and is intended for non-traditional and returning students who wish to further their education. It can be completed in one academic year. Students will be enrolled and take geography courses with traditional students. We anticipate that the GIS Lab will be bursting at the seams which right now is a good problem to have. We will have full information on the certificate on our department webpage very shortly.

More good news is that geography at UWRF will continue with five full-time positions and we will have Dave Brandt and another person to be named teaching part-time with us if all goes as planned for the next year. Matt, Charlie, and myself continue as tenure and tenure-track, Ian will be with us full-time as GIS Lab manager and instructor and Chaina will teach full-time next year. Despite budget cuts and the economy, we seem to be on the right track here, so keep your fingers crossed and continue the good thoughts. I can’t think of a more frustrating and yet rewarding year for Geography at UWRF.

In other news, UWRF hosted the 10th annual UW System Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity on April 30 and geography students were the largest contingent of presenters. One of our majors, Brett Sergenian presented a paper at the Midwestern Undergraduate Geography Symposium at Macalester College and Andy Moody a December graduate interned at the National Geography Society this spring. We also had one of our biggest spring graduating classes in awhile so it’s been very rewarding. I wish to thank, Charlie, Matt, Ian, Chaina, Dave, and Vicki for their hard work this semester which has made my job easier. Finally, the KFA project was finished so stop by this summer and look for us. The Lab will be open so feel free to relive the good ole days.

To conclude I wish to thank everyone who has made contributions to the Scholarship, Scott Nelson, and Geography Funds. Because of the market, we were not able to give the full $1000 scholarship. Our goal is to have a scholarship fund immune to market fluctuations which will require a bigger principal. If you can give any amount, it will be greatly appreciated. A lot of small donations will add up to big things.

John
Congratulations Spring Graduates!

Jacob Abbott  Daniel Bochman
Vincent Capeder  Emily Czerwinski
Douglas D’Jock  Mark Huonder
Ryan Mehlberg  Katherine Lindbom
Amber Schultz

DONATIONS
Donations to the department go to support both the Geography Scholarship and the Scott Nelson Fund. These provide us with the means to provide partial financial support for one student each year and a variety of other things such as awards for graduating seniors and the map of the year contest. Please consider donating to one of these funds. Thank you to those who have made donations.

Geography Scholarship:
Mike Albert  Cheryl Arcand
Barbara Bibeau  John Heppen
Ruth Hale  Joyce Knowlton
Ezra Zeitler

Geography Fund:
Scott Nelson Fund:
Marilyn Bostrack  Caroline Nelson
Richard O’Brien  Mickey Sigrist
Ron Swanson  Mike Voss

SGO Spring Semester
The group lost a few members due to graduation, and they were missed during the course of the end of the year. Good luck Christopher McPherson, Erika Kopp, Cheryl Arcand, and Andrew Moody! During the Spring semester, the Student Geography Organization was very busy as usual. We had two Bake Sales, the second of which was extremely successful. This year, the SGO took part in a new Geography awareness activity in the community. That activity was a Geography Trivia Table at a local elementary school’s carnival. The group was asked to come up with age-appropriate geography questions. The event was a smashing success and the SGO looks forward to doing it again in the future. Currently, the SGO is planning their annual Spring trip. This year’s location is the Wild River Campground, near St. Croix Falls, WI. Events on the schedule include a canoe trip, a visit to local winery, a visit to the St. Croix Watershed Research Station, and hiking around Taylors Falls. A final congratulations to our graduating students. We wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

SGO Banquet
Honoring Dr. Petzold’s Retirement

Don began his career at UW-RF Fall Semester 1988 after having taught at the University of Maryland for 10 years. He received his degrees in meteorology and climatology from McGill University. Over his distinguished career of 32 years, he has taught numerous courses and students in physical geography, climatology, environments, and the regional geography of Canada.

His academic work includes over 20 articles and monographs and numerous conference presentation on climate, radiation balances, albedo and lichens in the middle and high latitudes. Recently he has co-authored articles with students and faculty at UW-RF. In addition, he has two manuscripts in progress for children’s books - Cornelius, the Cunning Cumulus Cloud and The Strange World of Lichens. Since, 1992 he developed and taught his Weather Wonders program annually for Mann Elementary in St. Paul.

Don has always been actively involved with his students. He served as the SGO advisor from 1989-2001. He instituted the schoolyard map painting service projects. In addition, he has served as a mentor for several students and successfully nominated two students for The Chancellor’s Award for Excellence. His teaching evaluations were consistently excellent and in 2005 received the College of Arts and Sciences award for Outstanding Teaching and a Service Learning Award of Excellence in 2003.
He taught in the Wisconsin in Scotland Program in 1992 and served as an adviser for several Semester Abroad Europe projects for geography majors. His cheesecakes have been coveted SGO bake sale items.

He served as the Chair of the department from 1991-1997. He was a co-founder of the Geography Scholarship with Mike Albert, and he has remained an important benefactor. He served on numerous departmental, college, and university committees over the years. His work in program assessment and as the library liaison will have a lasting impact on the program.

We wish Don and Liny the best in his retirement and look forward to his continued engagement with the department. Don, keep in touch, eh?

2009-2010 Graduates

*****

Department Awards

Award of Excellence
(for outstanding academic achievement)
Emily Czerwinski

Student Leadership Award
(for outstanding service to SGO and the dept.)
Chris McPherson & Mark Huonder

Outstanding Graduating Senior Award
(for contributions to the department)
Cheryl Arcand

Outstanding Cartographer Award
Daniel Bochman

Geography Scholarship
Jenna Walz

Geography Scholarship
Christina Hopp

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Thanks to those of you who have updated us through the Alumni link on the department web page! For those of you who have not, please do so, we’d love to hear from you.
http://www.uwr.edu/geography/

CHRIS ATKINSON who taught as an instructor here from 2000-2002 successfully completed and defended his dissertation at the University of Kansas.

ROSS BUSHEY (‘09) stopped by late in the spring to say hello and stayed for Senior Colloquium presentations on that day. He is well and exploring career options.

REBECCA FOSTER (‘96) won the Mayor’s Community Involvement Commendation Award this year. It’s awarded to a City employee for outstanding volunteer service to the community, above and beyond his or her position with the City. She was nominated on behalf of all the work she does for the Consortium, MnGeo Councils and related subcommittees.

RYAN MILLER (‘04) and wife Annie welcomed new baby boy, Benjamin, in November. Ryan currently works at Xcel at their GIS helpdesk.

SALLY WAKEFIELD (‘97) has recently been appointed Interim Director of 1000 Friends of Minnesota. Sally majored in Geography and has a minor in GIS/Cartography. She has been actively involved in the GIS community in Minnesota since her time at UW-RF. She has served various roles in the public sector and has been heavily involved in the development of public policy regarding GIS having served on state boards and coordinating groups.

FACULTY & STAFF NOTES

Chaïna Bapikee has had a great first semester teaching in the department of Geography & Mapping Sciences. She has been very busy preparing lectures and teaching two sections of GEOG 110 and one section of GEOG 111. She has been enjoying getting to know her colleagues and students and being part of such a dynamic department. Chaïna won’t have much time off this summer. She will be teaching GEOG 110 online in June and finishing her Ph.D dissertation. She will also be preparing GEOG 212 for the fall semester. She has had a fun and very enthusiastic semester and is looking forward to a productive summer and an exciting academic year to come.
David Brandt had a great time teaching Advanced GIS this semester. As this is his fourth time teaching the class, the excuse of ‘If you don’t like the slides, they are Charlie’s.’ is wearing thin. He looks forward to teaching Intro to GIS this fall where he can renew the excuse! He appreciates the assistance from the entire department that allows him to teach and share some of his experiences with the students. Dave has also been busy working through the Sustainable Community Development master’s program which is tying in well with his ‘real’ job at Washington County. In the few free hours he has between work and family, he’s logged more than 1,000 miles on his bike. He is also brushing up on his French in preparation for a trip to the Tour de France this summer.

Matt Dooley has been busy teaching, working on research, and performing various administrative duties. He taught Introduction to Cartography and GIS, Map Design, and the Quantitative Methods course. He has been working on a couple of manuscripts - one is finally under review, and another is in preparation. With help from other faculty, he also prepared a proposal for a certificate of GIS - which we hope to begin offering next year. In the summer, he plans to wrap up some ongoing research and begin another project mapping UFO sightings with Ian Muehlenhaus.

John Heppen continued his duties as Chair and served on faculty senate. He taught Human Geography, Latin America, and Senior Colloquium. He attended the Annual Meetings of the AAG in Washington, DC this April. He presented a paper “Presidential Elections and Regional Differences in the U. S. Political Economy” and enjoyed the sights and sounds of Washington. He visited the National Mall and the monuments and ran into the Tea Party protest on April 15, which was interesting to say the least. He was asked to contribute some vignettes to a planned atlas of presidential elections being edited by some political geographers which he enjoyed working on. He hopes its coming to a library near you. Since there won’t be any relocation of geography this summer, he hopes to get some writing done in between summer registration in June and get recharge for next year.

Ian Muehlenhaus - After becoming a doctor, Ian’s life has changed dramatically. He is no longer pulling out clumps of hair on a regular basis, nor is he spending entire weekends isolated in his home office, rewriting paragraphs that no one but his committee will ever read. Instead, he is spending a lot of time working on journal articles – that even fewer people will probably read. Writing aside, Ian really enjoys having more time to spend with his daughter Svenja, and he is also sleeping much better than he has in years now that the relentless stress of being a student has ended.

Ian is excited to be teaching the animated/web cartography course this fall, and he is looking forward to being an adviser for the UWRF GIS Certificate program that is in the works – though he is not sure he is allowed to talk about it yet. (Whoops!) This summer he will be travelling to Germany with his family. He is stoked to drive on the Autobahn again; though, with a “baby on board” sticker, he may not be as freewheeling as he would like.

Charlie Rader is looking forward to summer. This past semester he taught a revised version of GEOG 368 – Digital Image Processing. It has been fun for him and one would hope for the students, too. He will travel with a small delegation from campus to Taiwan and Korea after school is out to work on developing student exchanges. On returning, house projects, canoeing, and photographing will occupy the remainder of the summer. Nancy and Charlie plan to explore Ontario’s Wabakimi Provincial Park on an extended wilderness canoe trip; flying in on a bush plane, paddling to a railhead and taking a train out. It should be an adventure and on successful completion, they will celebrate their 25th (yikes) anniversary. At the end of summer, Charlie heads off to Dalkeith, Scotland to teach in the Wisconsin in Scotland Program for the semester and Nancy will follow a bit later in the semester. Velcro is well.

Recommended Reading:
John McPhee (1969) – The Crofter and the Laird. An oldie but goodie recounting life and landscape on the Island of Colonsay in the Hebrides. OK, it doesn’t have a plot but it does have good description of people and place.

Steven Tanner (2009) – Afghanistan: A military history from Alexander the Great to the war against the Taliban (Revised). To say the least this book explains a lot about our current predicament.

Web Sites of Interest
The Beauty of Maps – companion website to a forthcoming BBC program on the history of cartography; hopefully, it will make it to this side of the pond. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/beautyofmaps/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/beautyofmaps/index.shtml)

Mapping software for the Mac – Mapdiva’s Ortelius software is out for the Mac OS X. The application looks like it has some impressive labeling capabilities. ($99) [http://www.mapdiva.com/](http://www.mapdiva.com/).

Clue Trust has released Cartographic, which is billed as a GIS for Mac OS X. It bills itself as a GIS, but appears to be more a mapping program. ($495) [http://www.macgis.com/](http://www.macgis.com/)

ATTENTION Newsletter Recipients!
If you would prefer to receive an electronic version of the newsletter rather than the 'hard copy' you receive in the mail, please email geography@uwrf.edu.