Almost as soon as last week's newsletter went out, Tracy asked me if I heard of the major earthquake that hit Christchurch, New Zealand. I instantly got on the web, and indeed a 7.4 (later revised to 7.1) quake hit Christchurch at about 4:30 AM on Saturday morning. (That is 11:30 AM on Friday morning in Alabama.) When I started to look for information, it was still early morning and dark in New Zealand - and with power off, there was little news coming through. I spent most of Labor Day week-end emailing and talking to friends and colleagues in New Zealand. Due to the time the quake struck (when almost everyone was in bed) and being prepared for earthquakes, no one was killed on only a few people injured. Most of the damage to buildings was older buildings built before the earthquake codes were put into effect. So, some of my friends with older houses lost chimneys (see photo). Of course, the interior damage to the Chemistry and Physics Departments (both in the same 8 story high, long skinny building that really swayed with the quake) had major damage to the contents. Bookshelves that were bolted to the walls toppled and after all the books and papers were scattered on the floor, the water pipes broke flooding the entire building. The university is closed for two weeks to get buildings cleaned up and give people a chance to “recover.” I hear many complaints about waking up night after night with large aftershocks (even one week later), and people feeling sleep deprived. PHOTOS: A broken chimney, a mess of lab books and the bookshelves toppled like dominoes in the library.

-- Lou
Department News

Check your class roles!
Faculty, Adjuncts, GA’s - please make sure that all students attending classes are actually on the class roll. This request is coming from the Dean’s office because many students were dropped from their classes (due to financial aid) and they have no idea they’re not registered. Check all of your classes ASAP and then email me once you’ve done this. I need to report back to the Dean’s office by September 14th. -- Tracy

Meeting of Geographers
The geographers will meet with Lou on Friday, September 10 at 3:00 for a short meeting to discuss how can compare our majors with other geography students in the US.

Meeting of Chemists
The chemists will meet with Lou on Friday, September 17 at 11:15 for a short meeting to discuss a 100 level honors section of chemistry. We will meet in Lou’s office.

Call for Promotion and Tenure
Faculty who are eligible to apply for promotion and/or tenure may pickup binders in the VPASA Office, #235 Bibb Graves. Please refer to the website http://www.jsu.edu/academicaffairs/promotiontenure/index.html for guidelines and schedule.

Faculty Travel and Self Improvement Grants
Applications are due to Lisa Williams’ office by Monday 27 September (this is a couple of day EARLIER than I guessed it would be last week.) Please make certain that you make this deadline! Rules for the grant applications and the PDF form can be obtained at the website http://www.jsu.edu/academicaffairs/travel_grant.html
Note: Although there has been no word about this being the ONLY request for proposals (historically there are two each year), I would assume this will be the ONLY request this year. The University is anticipating very tight finances this year with the end of the recovery payments made to JSU.

University News

Academe New Faculty Reception
Academe invites all faculty to attend a reception honoring our new faculty on Tuesday, September 28, 2010 at 3:15 p.m. in Room 1101-B, Houston Cole Library. Please plan to join us there!

Go Advisors
Gamecock Orientation is the summer program for all incoming freshmen. The faculty serve as advisors for these students in both the fall and spring following their enrollment. Our orientation sessions will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the months of June and July of 2011. During the next few weeks, faculty will receive applications for this position. These applications will be due in October, and we will make our selection by early November. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rhonda Kilgo at rwilks@jsu.edu or by voicemail at 8247.
2010 Art Department Faculty Exhibition
The Jacksonville State University Department of Art would like to invite everyone to the Art Faculty Exhibit at Hammond Hall. This annual exhibit will feature art crafted by the faculty of Jacksonville State University’s Department of Art over the past year. It will be on display at the Hammond Gallery from September 9 through October 7 weekdays, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The exhibit will feature works ranging from photographs to charcoal-on-paper drawings. In addition, oil-on-canvas, ceramic art and mixed media artworks will also be featured.

Silent Sixth Floor at the Houston Cole Library
Remember the good ol’ days when libraries were quiet places? Well, this semester the Houston Cole Library wants to bring back a bit of the good ol’ days. Due to student and patron demand, the sixth floor of the Library is now a “Quiet Floor.” If you need a place to think or just an oasis of calm, stop by. Now you can come to the Library to study, daydream, meditate, or focus without the incessant chatter and noise.

Employment Opportunities

Note: These are sent to the Head, and I am passing them as information. I do not want ANYONE to leave. However, these might be offer opportunities that are special or these might be appropriate for a friend or colleague or former student. (The increase in these offers is a good sign of economic recovery!)

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS, 61920. Eastern Illinois University.
The Department of Geology/Geography invites applications for a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Geography with primary expertise in Geographic Information Science and Cartography, to begin August 2011. A Ph.D. in Geography is required by time of appointment. Eastern Illinois University is an ESRI certified campus. The department offers BS degrees in Geography, Geology, Teacher Certification in Earth Science, and Teacher Certification in Geography and participates in the multi-disciplinary Masters of Science for Natural Sciences program. Applications due 29 October 2010, to Dr. David C. Viertel, Chair, Search Committee. E-mail: dviertel@eiu.edu. Phone: 217-581-6244. Fax: 217-581-6613. For more information on the position and the department, check our home page http://www.eiu.edu/~geoscience.

University of Wisconsin-Madison. Assistant Professor of Geography
A tenure-track position in GIScience. Ph.D. is required at the time of appointment. Preference will be given to applicants broadly trained in Geovisualization having a strong background in cartographic design. Nine-month, academic year position starting August 29, 2011. Please see http://geoguwmadison.wordpress.com for more information about the opening and department life in Madison. Electronic submissions are preferred.
Apply: Jim Burt, Search Committee Chair, Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 160 Science Hall, 550 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1491. Tel: 1-608-262-2138, Email: jeburt@wisc.edu. Application deadline: October 15, 2010.

Smith College. Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Invites applications for tenure-track, full-time Assistant Professor of Organic Chemistry to begin July 2011. Applicants must have a Ph.D. in chemistry and a commitment to both excellence in teaching and to high-quality research with undergraduates. Submit applications on http://jobs.smith.edu Review of applications begins on 1 October 2010.
NORTH DAKOTA, GRAND FORKS-- Department of Geography invites applications for two positions. The first is for an urban geographer with a strong interest in cartography/GIS to fill a tenure-track appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor beginning 16 August 2011. A Ph.D. in Geography or a closely related discipline is required by 16 August 2011. The second is for a broadly-trained geographer to fill a non-tenure-track, one-year appointment with the possibility of future multi-year contracts based on performance and budget at the rank of Assistant Professor beginning 16 August 2011. A Ph.D. in Geography or a closely related discipline by 16 August 2011 is preferred, although ABDs will be considered. Applications due 1 November 2010 (or until position is filled) to: Search Committee, 221 Centennial Drive Stop 9020, Department of Geography, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202-9020. Telephone: (701) 777-4246; Fax: (701) 777-6195; email: mailto:bradley.rundquist@und.edu

Web site: http://www.und.edu/dept/Geog/mainpage.htm

Conferences and Meetings


The University of Kentucky Political Ecology Working Group (UKPEWG) invites you to participate in the first annual “Dimensions of Political Ecology” conference February 18-19 2011 in Lexington, Kentucky, USA. We focus on political ecology as a key word because of its popularity as a framework for exploring nature-society relationships. We encourage submissions from all scholars who are engaged in research on the ecological dimensions of political, economic, social, and scientific change regardless of their topical, theoretical, or methodological frameworks. For a suggested but not exhaustive list of these topics and approaches, please see the website. We invite faculty and graduate students to present papers, organize sessions, or serve as discussants. We ask that potential presenters send abstracts no longer than 300 words, as well as a list of up to 5 key words. If you would like to organize a session or panel please put together a session plan, including title, presenters, organizers, and paper abstracts. Send all materials to Brian Grabbatin, Jon Otto, and Patrick Bigger at UKPEWG@gmail.com by December 1, 2010. Session organizers should feel free to circulate their own CFPs. More information on the conference and an updated list of speakers and keynotes will be posted on the conference website: http://www.uky.edu/as/geography/pewg

Grant Opportunities

MESC Meetings for Gulf Oil Spill Research (first meeting report back from Biology)

Drs. Cline and Rayburn report that the meetings were quite good for JSU. The 4 projects proposed by JSU faculty and incorporated into the broader question groups ranked very high. In the upcoming weeks, JSU faculty will be asked to refine their proposals and integrate them into the larger group questions. The probability of JSU getting funded in very good. JSU stands to possibly receive $75,00-$120,000. The overall goal is to prove to the US gov’t and BP that Alabama scientists are fully capable of research in their own backyards. If we cannot come together and work together we will get little of the proposed $470,000,000 of upcoming Gulf of Mexico research funds for long term studies. -- Frank Romano [Note: Al Nichols, David Steffy, Jan Gryko and Nixon Mwebi are attending the second meeting this week.]
NSF International Collaboration in Chemistry between US Investigators and their Counterparts Abroad

Funding for chemistry collaborations with chemists in one of the following countries: Germany, Austria, United Kingdom, China, France, Japan, Russia, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Spain.

http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppId=56993

Community News

Anniston Museum Offers FREE Weekend

The Anniston Museum of Natural History invites JSU employees and their families to FREE admission to the Museum on Saturday, September 25 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday, September 26 from 1 - 5 p.m. Simply bring your JSU ID or pay stub as proof of employment. Either day, you can walk on the nature trails, stroll the Bird of Prey Trail, see koi swim in the beautiful courtyard pool or sit in a serene demonstration wildlife garden. The Museum Store will be open also, with items from 'round the globe.

Degenerate States

So That's What It Means

- In Shakespeare’s time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase "goodnight, sleep tight."
- It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride’s father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer so this period was called the honey month, which we know today as the honeymoon.
- In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. In old England, when customers got unruly, the publican would yell "Mind your pints and quarts, and settle down." That’s where we get the phrase "mind your Ps and Qs"
- Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim, or handle, of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

[If you are tempted to believe any of these, you can probably understand the dangers of students using an unedited web as the source of all knowledge. – Lou]

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.