

## How Does Your Department Rate?

### Characteristics of Thriving Geoscience Departments \*

1. They are **dynamic and upwardly mobile** and they **manage change creatively and willingly**.
2. **The degrees they offer are highly valued by students, the institution, and employers.**
3. They are **student-centered** and have **loyal alumni**.
4. They know the rules and play by them: They can provide **internal and external validation of their excellence or potential**. They maintain **high quality instruction and research**. **Students meet stated program and learning goals**; and **Successful recruiting leads to appropriate numbers of students, majors, and a diverse population of students**.
5. They are **congenial and collaborative**; students, faculty and staff work hard, have fun, and are productive.
6. **Successful recruiting of faculty** leads to a diverse faculty with appropriate balance of skills and interests. Their staffs like to work at their institutions and they stay a long time.

\* From a list compiled by participants in the **Building Strong Geoscience Departments Workshop**, College of William and Mary, February, 2005, available at <http://serc.carleton.edu/departments/characteristics.html>

Educators who wish to take part in discussions on these issues are invited to join the **Geo Departments Listserv** or browse for ideas and information in the **listserv archive**.

Other ways to become involved with this project include the opportunities for departments to include information about themselves in the **Program Profiles** section or to contribute samples to a collection of **recruitment posters**. Visit the website for details.

#### PROJECT SPONSORS

This project is funded by the National Science Foundation. The original work was funded under grants GEO-0331930 and 0331933, and current work is being conducted under grants GEO-0614926, 0614570 and 0614393. Opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSF.

The program is also a sponsored activity of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers, the American Geological Institute, the American Geophysical Union, and the Geological Society of America.

For more information, contact:

Geoff Feiss, College of William and Mary,  
[pgfeis@wm.edu](mailto:pgfeis@wm.edu)

Heather Macdonald, College of William and Mary,  
[rhmacd@wm.edu](mailto:rhmacd@wm.edu)

Cathy Manduca, Carleton College,  
[cmanduca@carleton.edu](mailto:cmanduca@carleton.edu)

Randy Richardson, University of Arizona,  
[rmr@email.arizona.edu](mailto:rmr@email.arizona.edu)



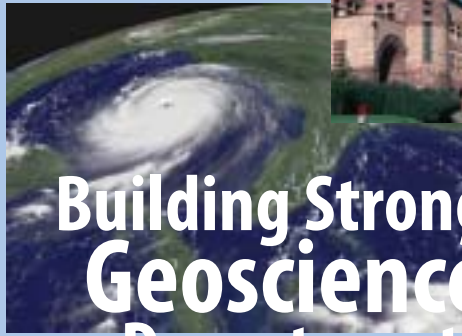
# Building Strong Geoscience Departments

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments>

Cover photo courtesy of Tim Vick, Carleton College



Information and resources to improve your geoscience program and enhance its presence on campus



# Building Strong Geoscience Departments

- Shifting institutional visions and missions, tight budgets, heightened competition for talented faculty and students
- Exciting new tools for teaching and research and unprecedented opportunities for building community and engaging in collaboration on a global level
- Mounting recognition of the critical importance of geoscience education and expertise

These are some of the challenges and opportunities that geoscience departments face in the 21st century.

**G**eoscience departments across the country have much to teach each other about effective practices and successful innovations for building thriving programs. That philosophy is the foundation of **Building Strong Geoscience Departments**, an NSF-funded initiative designed to provide geoscience departments with information and resources to improve their programs and enhance their presence on campus. This joins programs at the American Geological Institute, American Geophysical Union and Geological Society of America in supporting this critical undertaking.

## LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Geoscience departments have much in common — more than they realize — whether they're at two-year institutions, liberal arts colleges, or major research universities.

Through its workshops, website, and sessions at professional meetings, **Building Strong Geoscience Departments** stimulates discussions and disseminates community expertise on topics such as approaches to core content and curriculum, retaining and recruiting top faculty and students, and establishing and maintaining the department as a valued institutional partner.

**At its website**, it has amassed a large number of resources and links to information dealing with the issues facing geoscience departments today. Resources range from **lessons learned in other disciplines** to **ideas on how to stay relevant in times of budget cuts**.

Key to the program is facilitating ways for geoscience administrators and educators to **learn from one another**. The community activities section, for example, provides departments with **information about workshops, conference sessions, and other activities**.

## ONLINE RESOURCES



## WORKSHOPS

### 2006 AGU Heads and Chairs One-Day Workshop

AGU Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA  
Sunday, December 10, 2006

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments/heads-chairs06/index.html>

### The Department's Role in Preparing Future Geoscience Professionals

College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA  
January 10-12, 2007

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments/professionalprep/index.html>

### Connecting Geoscience Departments to the Future of Science: New Structures for Research and Curriculum

Carleton College, Northfield, MN  
April 25-27, 2007

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments/futureofscience/index.html>

### Strategies for Successful Recruitment of Geoscience Majors

2007 Geological Society of America Meeting, Denver, CO (October 28-31, 2007)

Date to be announced

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments/events.html>

<http://serc.carleton.edu/departments>