Geoscience Departments: Developing Pathways to Strong Programs for the Future
February 24-26, 2005, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA

Daily Road Check-Friday, February 25, 2005

1. What are the important things that you learned today that you want to take back to your colleagues? These could be general concepts and/or specific ideas.

- Specifics: Importance of portfolio, alumni—all in various ways for various reasons
- General: Items that appear to link with thriving programs
- Several lists of attributes:
    1. Geoff Feiss list of successful dept. attributes
    2. Table #1 (Fri. am) list of measures of success
    3. Lisa and Beth's list of desirable faculty attributes

- Revisit department alignment with college/university mission
- Continue to revise curriculum for future—simultaneously sell to Dean
- Keep doing what we're doing—continue to pay attention to things that have made us healthy
- How to bring community service activities into the classroom and use for recruiting
- How to involve students even more in building the community
- Diversity of departmental concerns
- Habituation of Dept. cultures—thing we accept without examining
- I have a clearer concept of the role of a good chair in a healthy environment
- I have an arsenal of ideas for making our graduate community stronger
- We need to schedule a retreat to create a department mission, including a specific goal of making ourselves "the best" at something
- There are no generic solutions
- The idea of chosing one thing to be really good at
- Make sure our goals are in alignment with the university
- I want to go over Geoff Feiss' whole talk with them
- Almost everything
- I learned that there are a variety of ways to define the success of a program, but that my colleagues and I are doing most of them.
- I learned one of the most important things that I must foster in my colleagues is the willingness and desire to accept change for the better.
- I'm intrigued with student portfolios and need to learn more about these and I have some ideas on how to improve the learning community in my department.
- I've heard a lot of good ideas about ____?___ other program, employing in curriculum development, recruitment of majors
- I thought Jack Hehn gave a very good talk and I think Geosciences should do something similar

- We do pretty well with criteria for being a thriving department. These include development and mentoring of new faculty, curriculum reform, and building a learning community
- The need to connect what the department does to the University goals and mission and to challenge faculty in the department to explicitly connect their (our) work to that mission
- The fundamental similarities between these healthy departments are striking. They all are substantially student focused, intent on growth, and recognize the need to be flexible but to build on the core strengths of the faculty.
- The power of being intentional—setting a direction for the department and finding a pathway to success
- The importance of good leadership in a Department, College, University. There are lots of responsibilities on Chairs to lead, to make faculty accountable, make a community of scholars. It's a very challenging set of tasks.
- AGI statistics/poster—eye opening. The administrative "big picture". Needs to be shared with all geoscience departments
- Most geology departments do feel threatened—dome demoralization appears to exist
- Geology curriculum does not appear to have changed much in last 50 years
- "Affect" issues in department—whether physics (Hehn) of geology appear to swamp other issues
- I think we need to be doing a better job in our department in the following areas:
  - Mentoring faculty, especially new faculty
  - Getting our students to designate a major
  - Building community in our student population
- I'd like to share some of the results from PKAL and Physics about how important space for students is in our new building
- Curricular reform has many dimensions and long life spans and there is no "magic bullet"
- Strong departments usually share a common set of goals
- Ways to recognize success and importance of communicating success stories clearly to Deans, Provosts, etc.
- Wide range of requirements for designing successful curricula
- Curricula alone do no make a successful department—importance of "community"