

Department of Geology and Astronomy Mission Statement

In keeping with the mission of West Chester University, the primary mission of the Department of Geology and Astronomy is to provide high quality undergraduate education for geoscience professionals and future teachers in the broad fields of the earth and space sciences. Our secondary mission is to provide graduate training, mainly in the field of science education but also including continuing professional instruction. The Department seeks to strengthen its educational roles by supporting individual scholarship and creative exploration undertaken by faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students, and by striving for the optimal use of student, faculty, and material resources. Within the University, we provide general education for all students and service courses for those in the School of Education. In the larger community, we serve as resource people in our respective fields for local government, schools, and industries. Within these constituencies, we further seek to contribute our unique perspectives as astronomers and geoscientists to decision-making processes. Our program is unique to the area by virtue of the recognized excellence of our teaching, the personalized attention we give to our students, the breadth and quality of our equipment base, and the flexibility and adaptability of our curricula to students with disparate backgrounds both with and without prior scientific training.

In keeping with this mission, we aspire to maintain and strengthen our roles as:

1. broad and thorough educators in the sciences of geology and astronomy at both the undergraduate and post baccalaureate levels.
2. providers of training and retraining (including teacher certification) for educators in the fields of earth and space sciences, ranging from elementary and secondary education to graduate training of future faculty.
3. contributors to scholarly advancements in the areas of basic research, application, and pedagogy within the geosciences and astronomy.
4. leaders in the applications of advanced technologies to earth sciences, by providing students with training in the use of tools they will need to succeed in their chosen fields.
5. a leading program in environmental education, with application to students working or teaching in the environmental field.
6. providers of expertise and facilities for use by the local business community.
7. a program with the flexibility to expand to other areas of geoscience which provide employment for our graduates in response to the unique and cyclical nature of geoscience employment opportunities.
8. resources for state and local problems of geological and astronomical importance, bringing the unique perspectives of the earth and space sciences to bear on the decision-making processes within our communities.