

Subject Centre Activities, Developments & Projects

Good Assessment Ideas Swap Shop in Environmental Sciences

23 February 2001

University of Kingston

The purpose of the Good Ideas Swap Shop is to provide a supportive forum for members of the Environmental Sciences academic community to share, develop and enhance their learning & teaching ideas and practices. The swap shop held on 23rd February 2001 was organised by the Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences (CHES), in association with the LTSN National Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences. Members of the CHES Learning & Teaching Sub-Committee and Subject Centre staff also made active contributions on the day.

Theme for the swap shop was Good Assessment Ideas and participants spent an enjoyable and productive day in the splendid surroundings of Dorich House, University of Kingston. After brief introductory talks by Subject Centre staff, the 25 swap shop participants split into 3 small groups to hear and discuss a selection of the 19 presentations submitted. During a plenary session at the end of the afternoon, the rapporteurs from each group summarised the key ideas that had emerged from the small group discussions which provided all groups with a flavour of each other's discussions. The scale of the swap shop approach (usually between 25 and 35 participants) is considered to be one of its strengths, as it allows a personal and supportive atmosphere to be established. On this occasion feedback suggested that the size of the event was about right and participants enjoyed the opportunity to meet other "like-minded people" and people "enthusiastic about teaching and learning developments and exchanging ideas". The 'shop' offered a range of ideas to develop formative and reflective assessment practice (through individual, peer and group exercises, case studies, role play situations and computer based resources) and gave participants "lots of good ideas that are doable". Details about each of the assessment ideas is available from the website given at the end of this article.

Key points resulting from small group discussions:

Dealing with a diverse student population

The diversity of students and skills requires a similar diversity of learning & teaching practices. Swap Shop examples included:

- Self and peer assessment opportunities;
- Creating and communicating assessment criteria;
- Formative assessment exercises (for example a 'dry run' for a field-based assessment and mini Multiple Choice Question tests);
- Learning in a 'real-world' context through teamwork and case studies.

Assessing key skills

An emphasis on assessment of key skills was apparent. On this occasion, teamwork was recognized as being well served in terms of ideas on assessment methods but practical ideas on how to help students perform well during their teamwork are less conspicuous.

Assessing reflective thinking

There is an emerging emphasis on employing the 'art of reflection' as an assessment tool. Issues were identified such as:

- How is reflective thinking currently assessed?;
- What constitutes 'Grade A' reflection?;
- Is assessment reflection consistent?;
- How is it being taught and by whom?

C&IT in formative assessment

The use of C&IT to build formative assessment exercises into course modules (for example Questionmark) is increasing, but a perennial problem for HE is that the communication industry develops much faster than institutions can respond – will WAP technology be obsolete by the time HE has accommodated it?

Assessment for learning

A great deal of energy and effort is put into the assessment and feedback process but its potential effect on improving learning was not being fully captured by students, especially those who most needed to improve.

Appropriate timing and staging of assessment and feedback was acknowledged to be crucial.

Curriculum design

Assessment needs to be tightly integrated with modules. An outcomes-based approach necessitates close alignment of intended learning outcomes and assessment strategies.

Staff development

Staff development is required on two fronts:

- to develop practical/technical knowledge of new techniques;
- to encourage a willingness to engage in learning and assessment teaching development

There was general agreement that a good assessment strategy would include, amongst others, the following features:

- Opportunities for student teamwork/groupwork (and a sense of ownership in a project);
- The use of case studies providing simulated or real-world situations (enhances student motivation);
- Peer assessment & self reflection;
- Giving students the opportunity to understand the criteria against which they are assessed;
- Diversity of assignments and assessment.

The Swap Shop experience confirmed for some participants that learning and teaching issues were "worth addressing" and for others it provided an opportunity to "learn from each other" and "review my own practice".

There was substantial support for holding another Swap Shop so if you would like the event to be held at your institution next year or if you have any ideas for a learning & teaching theme, please contact Marianne Hall. The Swap Shop format has become well established in Environmental Sciences; there may now be a case for extending this approach to the Geography and Earth Sciences Communities.

Abstracts for all the Kingston Swap Shop ideas are available as pdf versions from the website below.

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This summary, and further details about CHES can be found at:

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/natsci/Env/ches/newches/whatsnew/ContNew.htm>

Putting Careers into the Academic Curriculum Conference

March 12 2001

The Geological Society, London

This event, which was hosted in the excellent surrounds of the Geological Society in London, highlighted the practical ways in which academics can integrate careers education and graduate skills within the curriculum of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences degree programmes. The day was organised by Pauline Kneale and Steve Gaskin (Leeds University) and emphasised many good practice examples of career activities that are taking place at various HE institutions around the country.

About 50 delegates were in attendance on the day and there were 14 oral presentations, and about 10 posters on display, which proved to be an ambitious programme! Oral presentations included: how to raise student awareness of the skills that they are learning/have learnt during a degree programme (Sue Hawksworth, Leeds), the need to embed business skills, professional skills and professional ethics in the curricula (Ian Penn, BGS), and how to use employer links to enhance careers development in the curriculum (Sarah Maguire, Ulster). In addition, Andrew Bottomley from PricewaterhouseCoopers gave a presentation that highlighted how 'desirable' GEES graduates are at PwC, largely due to the range of key skills that our graduates are equipped with on graduation. This was obviously encouraging to hear!

The day was well timed given the recent publication of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Code of Practice on Career Education, Information and Guidance and various policy issues were discussed both formally and informally.

Several key issues emerged from the event and the following points may help those of you who are engaged in planning for Academic Review, and all curriculum managers in general.

- Many employers are using assessment centres to support the recruitment process. Undergraduates need to be made aware of the nature of such centres and have experience of the types of exercise covered in them.
- Graduates need to demonstrate high level competence in Key Skills during the application/interview process. However, employers felt that academic rigour is more important than a skills-based curriculum. The key skills can (and should) easily be made explicit in a curriculum which has academic rigour.
- Many graduates have weak communication skills, particularly in the ability to present written reports in a business format. A greater understanding is needed of communication appropriate to the circumstance.
- Recent graduates are very good at personal networking and relating with people at face value (i.e. being able to approach personnel higher up the hierarchy).
- Graduates' IT skills are still very variable. Sometimes graduates think they are competent but only in particular pieces of software. The competence does not transfer to other applications.
- There is a generally very low level of business awareness.
- Team skills tend to be limited to non-work-based scenarios. It was suggested that the use of 'real life' projects, where the team simulates a business project would be of value here (NB there are examples available from the Centre of such projects from Earth Science.) This might be done in liaison with businesses so that the students might work on real, not artificial, projects.
- Interestingly, it was noted that employers do not necessarily prefer graduates with work experience. Very few graduates have no experience nowadays anyway. The benefit of work experience and work-based learning lies in their ability to provide evidence of students' competencies.
- Project and time management skills (which are formally taught in some curricula, e.g. engineering) are crucial.
- We may be able to learn something from PGCE courses which include career management.
- Skills need to be made explicit in the curriculum, as does formalising personal profiling or recording of skills development. Although employers may not read portfolios, the student is much more aware of their skills achievements and needs through producing them, and this can be an invaluable support to life-long learning.
- In order to fully support students' skills development, academics should also 'walk the talk'. Professionalism in teaching is essential.
- The disciplines need to consider what they offer graduates compared to other disciplines. What is our market niche? What makes a GEES graduate a better employee? The QAA benchmarking statements may go some way towards identifying these issues.
- We need to keep alert to changes in the business world, for example the increasing use of geographical information systems (in its broadest possible sense).

Steve Gaskin

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Excerpts from evaluation forms from the event:

'The best thing about the event was the collaboration between academic staff, careers advisors and employers'

'One thing I will take away from the event is the reinforcement of the importance of reflective learning'

'The event could have been improved by raising the profile of the employer role; the employers' presentations were exceptional in this sense.'

'I think we should meet up again to review progress!'

'A similar event for postgraduates'

As far as we are aware, our conference at the Geological Society was the first LTSN event to focus on careers education. Perhaps the days' principal achievement was bringing together academics, employers, careers advisors and graduates for an exchange of ideas and information. In this respect, we were breaking new ground. Certainly, those who attended seemed to welcome this opportunity for dialogue and for learning about innovating practice in this field.

CHES Conference

2nd and 3rd April

University of Plymouth



The Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences (CHES) held a successful Annual Conference and General Meeting at the University of Plymouth on 2nd and 3rd April 2001. The conference theme was 'Preparing for Academic Review' and Environmental Sciences (ES) academics received up-to-the-minute information and advice from a number of speakers which helped delegates to feel "better prepared" and even "relaxed" about Academic Review. Jennifer Blumhof, the Centre's Senior Subject Advisor for Environmental Sciences, talked about student skills development as it relates to Academic Review and guest speaker Peter Milton, from the Quality Assurance Agency, explained the new quality assurance system and recent developments and offered useful advice for preparation of the Self Evaluation Documents on which the Academic Review process is strongly focused. This was followed by an interactive session, concerned with reporting the recent experience of Academic Review in Environmental Sciences at a number of Scottish Universities, in which both the 'reviewed' and the 'reviewers' gave their individual perspectives on the process.

Academic Review was not the only topic to exercise delegates' minds since there were also stimulating talks heard on 'Careers for Environmental Scientists', 'Distance learning', 'Patterns and Trends in Student Recruitment', 'The Sustainable Development Professional' Environmental Education in Russian Universities' and 'The ESSENCE European Assessment Report'. In addition, staff from the LTSN Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) explained how the Subject Centre, and particularly the ES team, aimed to support future learning and teaching developments in ES.

Overall, delegates seemed to appreciate the variety, relevance and currency of the topics addressed during the conference. Plymouth's National Marine Aquarium was the unusual venue for the conference dinner where, after a guided tour, dinner was served near the Shark Theatre.

CHES Chairman, David Eastwood, observed in his concluding remarks that the format of the conference had noticeably improved, particularly since it now had a stronger focus on learning and teaching issues. He also considered that the establishment of the Subject Centre meant that developments in learning and teaching practice could now be taken forward by CHES.

You can find details of the conference programme and presentation slides by visiting the What's New page of the CHES website at

<http://www.herts.ac.uk/natsci/Env/ches/newches/home.htm>

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Answers on a Postcard...

During a very enjoyable Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences (CHES) conference dinner at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth, in front of the deep reef tank, delegates were asked by Brain Chalkley (Subject Centre Director) to think of a slogan which encapsulates the Subject Centre. The following are some of the slogans that are publishable!

'GEES, let's all flap together!'

'Don't be a lame duck, make use of GEES!'

'If I wanted to do slogans, I would have done Media Studies!'

'Chalkley, King, Gaskin: Solicitors'

'What did the Subject Centre ever do for us?'

However, despite these admirable efforts, the winner of the competition, judged by a panel of professional imbibers was:

'GE'ES a job!' (apparently to be pronounced in a Scouse accent).

Thanks to everyone who took part in what proved to be a very entertaining evening. The sharks seemed to enjoy our company!

We need YOU!

The LTSN National Subject Centre for GEES recognises that there is a great deal of good practice and innovation in learning, teaching and assessment that already exists across our disciplines. We are here to support, develop and disseminate such examples to a wider audience within HE. So, if you think that someone else could **benefit** from **your experiences**, then let us know. We will do our best to promote your work through our database of good practice. In addition, if you would like to disseminate your experiences through PLANET by writing a short article, then please get in touch with the editor (Steve Gaskin: sgaskin@plymouth.ac.uk). Contact details can be found at the end of this edition. We hope to hear from you!

LTSN-GEES: FAQs

Q: Do you have any funding available to support curriculum developments?

A: Yes. We will be funding small scale learning and teaching projects on an annual basis. Details of this year's projects can be found in this issue of PLANET (this page and the next page). A further round of funding will be announced in the autumn.

Q: Are you an opportunity or a threat to my department?

A: 'Yes' to opportunity and 'No' to threat. We provide opportunities (most of them free) for departments and individuals to enrich the quality of their courses. We are not part of the QAA.

Q: Can I have any say in the themes or types of services you provide?

A: Yes. This is YOUR Subject Centre. Our purpose is to promote and support high quality learning and teaching across the disciplines. We do this through identifying the changing learning and teaching needs of the disciplines and providing strategies for meeting them efficiently and effectively. We always welcome both feedback on our current services and suggestions for future topics or activities. To submit your ideas, email us at info@gees.ac.uk, complete the form on the web-site (<http://www.gees.ac.uk/feedback.htm>), or drop us a letter, fax or phone call.

If you have any questions regarding LTSN-GEES and its activities please feel free to contact us at any time on info@gees.ac.uk or 01752 233530

Project Tellus: The Information Gateway for Learning and Teaching in Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences

What is Tellus?

Currently there are numerous places on the web where a lecturer can search for learning and teaching materials on our subjects. Tellus will be a single place where this kind of information can be found, a "portal" or "information gateway" if you like. Tellus could be viewed, in simple terms, as a website where web-based learning and teaching material for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences is presented in a searchable directory structure. This will make searching the web for relevant resources much less time consuming. Links to resources will be categorised with annotations and reviews to assist lecturers in finding exactly what they need rapidly.

Progress

The Tellus project is not completed yet but work is progressing well. One of the challenges that the project faces at the moment is ensuring Tellus is able to work with other information gateways in the LTSN (interoperability). How would this benefit you as a lecturer? Well, for instance, the interdisciplinary nature of the GEES subjects means that you may wish to search other subject centre databases for materials on biology, law or engineering. If Tellus is interoperable you will be able to search these other databases without going through the process of another search at another subject centre site.

If anyone would like further information on the project, e-mail geoaje@leeds.ac.uk, or access the project Tellus web-site: (<http://www.tellus.ac.uk>) where further information will be placed as and when it becomes available.

Mike Sanders

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Departmental Workshops

The programme of departmental workshops is in full swing. About 30 are to be run this academic year with a further 20 or so being organised for next year.

Small Scale Projects

LTSN-GEES is committed to supporting curriculum developments both within individual departments and nationally. Each year a selection of small-scale learning and teaching projects will be funded in the three disciplines. The projects resourced by the first round of this programme are outlined below. An invitation to bid for funding from the second round (2001 / 2002) will be announced in the autumn. All projects will be expected to present their outcomes at a Subject Centre workshop or conference and to contribute to a Subject Centre publication. Additionally, the project deliverables will be made freely available to the HE community through LTSN-GEES.

The overall aims of this programme are as follows:

- To support curriculum developments and other innovations which will enhance the quality of the students' learning experience.
- To harness existing staff expertise, and identify and encourage fresh talent.
- To offer opportunities for continuing professional development of teaching and support staff in the three disciplines.
- To disseminate good practice to the wider communities.
- To encourage collaboration and sharing of good practice between the three disciplines
- To widen participation in the Subject Centre's work



Projects Funded This Year

Atmosphere, lithosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere: Cross-disciplinary virtual fieldwork

Roger Suthren, Geology (BMS), Oxford Brookes University

The project will develop virtual fieldwork (VFW) across the disciplines of geography, geology and environmental sciences, by active collaboration between staff in all these areas. We shall focus on field courses to remote areas or dangerous phenomena in which we have expertise, including two or more of: arctic environments, major storms, volcanoes, and tropical marine environments. The VFW will initially be developed to support and enhance existing courses at Oxford Brookes, particularly those modules which cross boundaries between disciplines. It will be revised by the end of project funding for use by staff and students in all degree courses in HE, through the GEES web site. Through VFW, students will be exposed to environments and processes which they would not normally experience firsthand. Resources will be interactive, using web technology, CAA, and software tools developed by the national Virtual Field Course project (VFC), for which Geology at Brookes is an evaluation site. Where possible, good existing resources will be converted to electronic form. As is our

current practice, students will be actively involved in producing, testing and evaluating course materials. The staff involved range from those who have used the web for teaching for several years, to those who are investigating C & IT in learning for the first time, and will be provided with guidance on using and adapting the software. The project is supported by our academic schools, with technical and pedagogic collaboration from appropriate support departments.



Team-based Learning in Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences

Kenneth Lynch, School of Earth Science & Geography, Kingston University

Team based learning is a key skill in which the 'field sciences' are widely perceived to excel. Much has been written about the importance of team skills to graduates and employers. However, much of the educational research is based on analysis of individual team-based learning projects. Little work has been done to integrate these skills into the relevant curricula ensuring appropriate progression at each level.

This project intends to develop a framework for achieving this. Being carried out in a School which covers the three Subject Centre disciplines, it is well placed to benefit the Centre's target population. The project will develop work currently completed, including a skills audit, a published team-based learning research project and the on-going integration of the Geography and Geological Sciences course management.

The project will analyse a recent skills audit, together with the range of research and guides on team-based learning. It will organise a workshop in the School involving a professional team skills developer with the aim of identifying a strategy for developing students' team skills in the curricula. Finally, a staff development guide will be produced giving guidance on a framework for ensuring teaching, embedding and development of team skills at appropriate levels in the curricula. This guide will provide indications where possible on how this method may be adapted to suit other key skills in the curricula.



POPWEB

Jeff Blackford, Department of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London

Many Geography, Environmental Science and Geology departments in UK institutions run courses in palaeoecology, biogeography and Quaternary science. This project aims to develop an existing internal web-site used in teaching these subjects, improve it, and make it nationally available by December 2001. The outcome will be a web-site with detailed information and numerous illustrations covering at least the 40 most common plant types and families in NW Europe. For each species, there will be a photograph of the plant and diagnostic features for recognition, photomicrographs of the pollen grain and of diagnostic features, with accompanying text pages for each. A description of the habitat, distribution, history and indicator value of each type (species or family) will be included, and then links to reading lists and other relevant sites.

We currently run an internal-only web site with 20 plant types and some of the relevant data. We have the equipment and expertise already in place to rapidly produce an enhanced site. The success of

POPWEB will be evaluated by monitoring its use, student feedback, and by obtaining feedback from students and lecturers in other institutions via the web-site itself. The framework in place will be expandable over future years to provide more comprehensive spatial and species coverage.

Direct benefit will come from the site itself, which will enhance student learning in palaeoecology, pollen studies and biogeography. Indirect benefits will be the development of expertise in running this type of facility.



Reflective Learning in Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Margaret Harrison, School of Environment, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of HE

Reflective learning, a fast developing area in education, is the ability to reflect on action or observation and respond accordingly. Learning through reflection is an important skill, which enables students to progress and improve the quality of their learning experience. This project aims to investigate the appropriateness and application of reflective learning in Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences in HE institutions in the UK. A review of education literature will provide a context for the project and expert advisors in reflective learning will inform the production of all the project material.

There are two sections to the project: a survey of UK departments to obtain information about the knowledge, use and practice of reflective learning, and a trial test of a range of reflective learning approaches in an interdisciplinary module at C&GCHE. Analysis of the survey will establish the amount and form of reflective learning undertaken within the disciplines. The C&GCHE experiment will document the experience and response of students in the three disciplines to reflective learning exercises.

Outcomes from the project will be an on-line guide on reflective learning including the findings of the department survey, an account of the C&GCHE experience, and examples of reflective learning exercises. C&GCHE will also host a reflective learning workshop for the Subject Centre. The proceedings of the workshop will be incorporated into the on-line guide. Other anticipated outcomes are journal articles and conference presentations.

This project will incorporate fresh talent, investigate the application of reflective learning in all three disciplines and disseminate good practice to the disciplines.

Keep in Touch with YOUR Subject Centre

Here's how you can keep up-to-date with Subject Centre activities and with learning and teaching developments/issues across the three discipline communities.

Departmental Contacts

The Subject Centre has a contact person in every UK HE department that offers Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences programmes, alone or in combination. These contact persons have been established to act as an effective voice for the department on any learning and teaching issue which you consider to be important. The departmental contact person is also the Subject Centre's first port of call for

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disseminating information. For example, this issue of PLANET was distributed via your departmental representative. If you do not know who your contact person is, why not send an email around your department, or contact us direct to find out? Email: sgaskin@plymouth.ac.uk.

GEES Headline News (serving all three subject communities)

This is an e-mail distribution list maintained by the Subject Centre. This service specifically provides short e-mails keeping all who subscribe informed of Subject Centre activities, developments and projects. No general pedagogic material is sent to this list. If you would like to be added to this mailing list then please e-mail: info@gees.ac.uk

ESac-LTSN (serving Environmental Science)

This service is maintained by the Subject Centre's Environmental Science Satellite at the University of Hertfordshire. The list is intended for the Environmental Sciences academic community (ESac) and is used as a forum for discussions about learning and teaching issues and good practice in Environmental Science. It is also used as a list to post Subject Centre announcements and requests for information.


To join ESac-LTSN visit the JISCMail homepage at: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/>

CAL-laborate


A collaborative publication on the use of Computer Aided Learning for tertiary level physical sciences and geosciences

October 2000


If you would like to receive your own copy of this free publication, then please contact the LTSN-GEES Subject Centre:
info@gees.ac.uk



Uniserve Science
Australia



LTSN
Learning and Teaching
Support Network
United Kingdom



Council for Renewal of
Higher Education
Sweden

The Times Higher Education Supplement/Learning and Teaching Support Network

eTutor of the Year 2001


Are you using a virtual learning environment?
Are you using it as more than just a web site?

You can win £1,000 cash.


We are looking for examples of the innovative and effective use of a virtual learning environment to support student learning.

The closing date is 31st July 2001 and the prize will be awarded in September at the ALT-C Conference in Edinburgh.

Please send entries to: eTutor of the year
c/o Andrew Booth, LTSN Generic Centre,
Genesis 3, Innovation Way, York Science
Park, Heslington, York YO10 5DQ



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THE TIMES
HIGHER
EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

The purpose of this competition is to identify, recognise and disseminate innovative and effective use of virtual learning environments to support student learning. It is not intended to be a competition to identify the best learning environment, nor to find the best content delivered through one.

For the purposes of this competition, a virtual learning environment is defined as an integrated software system which combines within a single package facilities for the delivery of learning materials, communication (synchronous or asynchronous), assessment and student feedback. It may be on-line, off-line or a hybrid system. It may be commercially-produced or developed in-house.

Conditions of Entry

1. The competition is open to all teachers and teaching teams using virtual learning environments to support student learning at levels up to and including undergraduate first degree level. Postgraduate courses are excluded. The language of delivery must be English.
2. Entrants must provide evidence of innovative and effective support of student learning via a virtual learning environment, negotiating all necessary permissions, usernames and passwords for the judges to have the necessary access. The entry must represent substantive (i.e. neither trivial nor optional) learning and teaching activities carried out in the 1999/2000 or 2000/2001 academic years.
3. Although entrants will probably be provided access to archived examples drawn from a single course, the learning environment used must be deployed to support at least one other course within the institution.
4. Entrants must agree to co-operate with the Learning and Teaching Support Network in dissemination events.

Entry form

Please attach a description of the entry (1000 words maximum), together with information that will allow the judges access to the material being judged (URL, username, password etc)

Name(s)

Position(s)

Institution

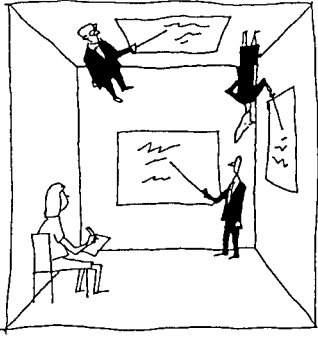
Telephone

Email address(es)

Virtual Learning Environment used

Title of course form which entry is derived

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P L A N E T

Geo-Network (serving Earth Sciences)

This service is maintained by the Subject Centre. Geo-Network is used as a platform for discussion on the provision of key skills, careers guidance and general pedagogic issues within Earth Science degree courses. It is also used as a medium for the dissemination of information relating to the activities of the Subject Centre in the area of Earth Sciences.

To join Geo-Network visit the JISMAIL homepage at: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/>

Geog-Net (serving Geography)

Geog-Net is a moderated e-mail discussion list, primarily used for the discussion of issues associated with learning and teaching in UK Geography Higher Education. It too includes information about the Subject Centre.

To join Geog-Net e-mail: GEOGNET@northampton.ac.uk

Register of Expertise

If you have a question or query on any learning and teaching issue, then please contact the Subject Centre and use our register of expertise. This register currently has over 50 names and contact details of individuals who have expertise in various learning and teaching areas, ranging from computer-aided assessment to problem-solving, or from the adoption of C&IT in fieldwork to benchmarking. Alternatively, if you have an area of expertise that you think others could benefit from, why not contact the Subject Centre and add your name to the register? Please email: sgaskin@plymouth.ac.uk if you would like to use and/or be added to the list.

(Please note that the register is NOT published on the web).

ACROSS

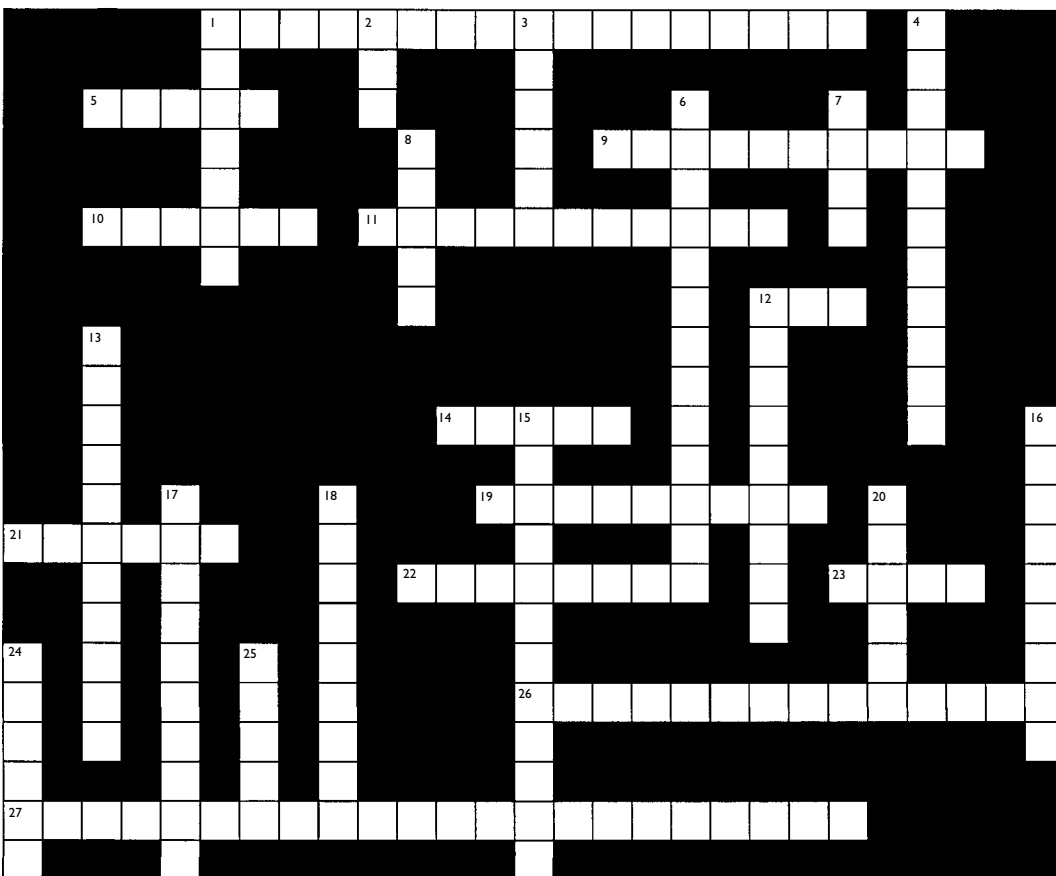
- 1 They used to be NRA (17)
- 5 Problem? Learning (5)
- 9 Syllabus (10)
- 10 Severely leached soil (6)
- 11 Capital of Trinidad (11)
- 12? Subject Review, Academic Review (3)
- 14 They hold the English purse strings (5)
- 19 Black mineral found in Dartmoor granite (9)
- 21 State of the (this publication) (6)

- 22 The Science of Teaching (8)
- 23 A Subject Centre Gaggle? (4)
- 26 Pilgrim Fathers Staircase (14)
- 27 Geography, ES3 (22)

DOWN

- 1 A peak with limestone topping (7)
- 2 Five-star? (3)
- 3 Off the coast of Peru I can cause havoc (6)
- 4 Tory leader's climatic meeting (11)
- 6 Subject Centre Director (13)
- 7 A kind of plant that gives off CO2 (Whitehouse?) (4)

- 8 A 'hole' lot worse without it (5)
- 12 Crusty dynamic geology (9)
- 13 Student Centred Learning (!) and a recent box office hit (11)
- 15 Fieldwork cancelled because of this (12)
- 16 Volcanic bomb (9)
- 17 Study of population (10)
- 18 Surveying, sampling, monitoring, measuring (8)
- 20 Metamorphic rock which is lovely! (6)
- 24 They won the lottery (6)
- 25 They used to be UCoSDA (5)



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Reviews

Remote sensing and image interpretation

Lillesand, T.M., and Kiefer, R.W. 2000 Remote sensing and image interpretation.

John Wiley & Sons, New York, 724pp. ISBN 0-471-25515-7 (h/back)
Price: ca. £26

Remote sensing involves the use of aircraft or satellites to collect photographs or scanned images of the Earth's surface. Remotely sensed imagery is just one of many types of geographically-referenced datasets that can be processed by Geographical Information Systems (GIS): these are key tools in the emerging science of geo-informatics. Remote sensing has enabled us to understand many aspects of Earth systems in recent years, from daily weather forecasts through to the destructive paths of El Niño events. Monitoring by satellites highlighted the depletion of the ozone layer and the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. Natural resources in remote regions can now be mapped relatively rapidly and cheaply, whilst environmental managers have a means of monitoring the habitat loss or pollution events that may result from the exploitation of those resources.

This is the fourth edition of what is, by general consensus, the remote sensing 'bible'. In the 25 years since the first edition there have been major advances in remote sensing and image processing. The dominance of photographic images on paper or film has given way to an array of digital sensing techniques, such as multi-spectral scanners, microwave radar and commercially available 'spy satellite' images. The book provides a sound introduction to aerial photography, airphoto interpretation and photogrammetry. It also has comprehensive coverage of digital remote sensing, with details of both airborne and satellite systems. Digital image processing techniques, from relatively simple contrast enhancement, through to multivariate statistical approaches, are covered in a remarkably easy-to-follow way for such complex topics. New developments, such as digital cameras, hyper-spectral sensors, micro-satellites, radar interferometry, laser altimetry, image compression, sub-pixel classification and the use of artificial neural networks are included in this edition. Related geo-spatial systems, such as GIS and GPS, are also featured.

This is both a text book, forming the basis of many remote sensing courses around the world, and a comprehensive reference book for remote sensing practitioners. Illustrations - some 65 of which are in colour - are used to great effect to convey often complex concepts: lecturers should note that a complementary collection of the book's line diagrams is available from the publishers. In terms of its overall content, no comparable text book matches it. The only area where it has been out-done by a few of its rivals is with regard to the provision of a CD-ROM containing the book's illustrations, or a website from where those images could be downloaded. All in all though, this is an excellent book: very informative and great value for money.

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Human Geography Package: an American Perspective

Book 1:

Human Geography: culture, society and space, by H. J. de Blij and A. B. Murphy, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Sixth edition 1999, £51.95, ISBN 0 471 24208 X.

Book 2:

Student Companion to accompany Human Geography: culture, society and space, H. J. de Blij, and B. A. Murphy, by A. S. Becker and J. V. Becker, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1999, £21.50, ISBN 0 471 32024 2.

Transparencies:

Transparency Acetates to accompany Human Geography: culture, society and space, by H. J. de Blij and A. B. Murphy, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Sixth edition 1999, £324.30, ISBN 0 471 32023 4.

This American geography text and accompanying student companion and transparency acetates represents a complete human geography course, although the authors do point out that 'there is more to this part of the discipline than one book or course could convey (p. v)'. This colourful, well-illustrated text is similar in presentation to many English A-Level Geography texts but written at a higher level, making it a suitable reference for undergraduates.

The content reflects an American curriculum with chapters on the geography of language, the geography of religion and spatial patterns of health and disease as well as chapters on culture, environment, land use, economic change, politics, social geographies and a final section on the geography of change.

The book is clearly structured with useful additional information including selected bibliographies, a section on maps and mapping, a table showing area and demographic data for World states and a comprehensive glossary.

The student companion is designed to guide the learner through the content of the main text. Each chapter is summarised and key points are highlighted with cross-references made to pages and illustrations. This is followed by a series of multiple choice questions that are designed to test content knowledge, with the answers supplied in the back of the companion. Following the multiple-choice questions are a series of longer study questions that are designed to make students 'think conceptually about the entire chapter' (p. 3).

The 'take note - art note book' section of the student companion provides students with a black and white copy of the main illustrations and diagrams from the text book. They have been included to encourage students to take notes from lectures and to annotate diagrams as appropriate.

The third section of the student companion is a virtual field guide with a series of activities. Each activity is linked to the main text and includes references to Web sites with instructions on selecting information. Additional Web sites and references are also suggested and supported by the publishers at:
<http://www.wiley.com/college/human>

The third item, and the most expensive, is a set of colour transparencies taken from illustrations, maps and tables from the text. The transparencies do provide lecturers with the opportunity to use the illustrations in the book within their own delivery. Students will also have a black and white copy of these transparencies in the 'take note' section of the student companion. The transparencies are high quality reproductions utilising a range of bright colours but unless the book has been adopted as the main course text it is unlikely that they would appeal to the casual user.

Overall, I am impressed by the approach taken by this publication in supplying a main text, student guide, transparencies and a virtual field guide. The whole package may suggest ideas as to how undergraduates approach their studies in the future. The text book will provide undergraduate students studying human geography with an introductory source of reference but although it is unlikely that the whole package will be widely used on this side of the Atlantic.

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Geography for the New Undergraduate (GNU)

The Geography for the New Undergraduate (GNU) project was funded under the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE's) Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL). Run by Liverpool Hope University, the GNU project aimed to produce an undergraduate first-year seminar programme that developed personal, interpersonal and transferable skills. The GNU project ended in September 1999, but the learning and teaching resource outputs are still freely available. Resources include a CD-ROM with the entire GNU resource on it, a full paper-based version, and a web-site (<http://www.hope.ac.uk/gnu>). The CD-ROM and paper-based versions

were disseminated to all Geography and Environmental Sciences departments in the UK at the end of the project. The website is still accessible and functional and all of the GNU material can be downloaded free of charge from the site. For any other departments wishing to obtain hard copies of the material, a limited supply are still available from the School of Sciences and Social Sciences at Liverpool Hope University (0151 291 3439).

The GNU project takes the form of a seminar programme, which is comprised of 28 sessions, themselves categorised into 5 different skills themes. The skills themes are:

- (1) Introducing group-working skills;
- (2) Study Skills;
- (3) Critical Thinking and Discussion;
- (4) Group presentations - physical processes; and
- (5) Group presentations - perceptual Geography.

The seminar programme is structured so that other institutions can select either the complete seminar programme (the 28 sessions), a set of seminars within one of the five skills themes above, or individual 'stand-alone' seminars. Each of the seminars has a set of notes for both the tutor and the student, and is structured under the following headings: (1) learning outcomes (from each session), (2) skills (that the students can be expected to develop in each session), (3) session overview, (4) student preparation work, and (5) assessment (to reflect upon the learning outcomes of the seminar). A separate tutors guide is also available which provides detailed support and instructions on how to use the whole resource package.

The GNU seminar series is an excellent resource for anyone looking for original ideas in teaching new undergraduates. Much of the material could also be used to teach undergraduates in more advanced stages of their university careers (for example, in particular, the referencing and presentation seminars!).

The design of the CD-ROM, paper-based and website resources is to a very high standard, with clarity and ease of use being particular hallmarks. Both enable the practitioner to navigate easily through the material in order to get an overview of the seminar structure.

One particular strength of the GNU resource is that most of the seminars have a student self-assessment exercise, which enables students to reflect upon the sessions and to identify what they have learnt. This often takes the form of a short, easy to understand and easy to use questionnaire, and I have started to use these in my first year tutorials, with much success.

Individual seminars include ice-breakers, critical reading, referencing, time-management, essay writing, exam preparation, note-taking, critical data evaluation, group presentations, and giving presentation feedback.

I found the seminar on critical reading, which takes students through examples of notes taken from 'surface' and 'deep' learners/readers to be particularly useful. This session clearly highlights the differences in reading styles and demonstrates the added benefits in adopting the deep approach to learning.

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Other strengths of the series include the seminar programmes on presentations (themes 4 and 5 above). These sessions provide detailed notes on the logistics and organisation of assigning a presentation to a large or small group of students. The tutors resource provides comprehensive marking schedules and recording forms for tutors to use, as well as guidance on giving group feedback. However, themes 4 and 5 are designed to run over 5 seminars, which may be over optimistic, as 5 weeks is likely to be a considerable portion of any tutorial or seminar course.

In conclusion, the GNU resource is a commendable, easy to use, and easy to adopt/adapt resource that can be employed in a variety of Geography courses and/or tutorial environments. Much of the generic material (e.g. referencing, essay writing, reading skills) is also highly appropriate for use in the Environmental and Earth Sciences, and it would not take much for the discipline-specific material to be customised for other subjects. In short, I would highly recommend the GNU seminar series and I have certainly found it to be a valuable resource for my own undergraduate teaching.

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Notice to Publishers

Learning and teaching books and/or software for review should be sent to the editor at the address given at the back of this edition of PLANET.

YOU to Review!

The National Subject Centre holds an archive of new learning and teaching software and texts, in part supplied by John Wiley & Sons. If you are interested in reviewing any of this material then please contact the Subject Centre on 01752 233530 (info@gees.ac.uk). We will then commission a review that will be published in a future issue of PLANET and on the Subject Centre's website.

The GEES Guide to... Higher Education Acronyms

We have all read articles, documents and reports that are awash with acronyms. They sometimes make life easier. On the other hand, they can confuse us, astound us and even amuse us. Which is worse; the acronym itself (which can be meaningless), or the full text version (which can take ages to read)! In this section of PLANET, you can be the judge! From FLAP to SPAT, and from GEES to JANET, this glossary of commonly used Higher Education acronyms will hopefully provide you with a useful reference source. Oh, and remember, PLANET is NOT an acronym!

ALT	Association for Learning Technology http://www.csv.warwick.ac.uk/alt-E/
BIDS	Bath Information and Data Services http://www.bids.ac.uk
CAA	Computer Aided Assessment
CAI	Computer Assisted Instruction
CAL	Computer Assisted Learning
CASTLE	Computer Assisted Teaching and Learning http://www.le.ac.uk/cc/ltg/castle/
CBA	Computer Based Assessment
CBL	Computer Based Learning
CBT	Computer Based Training
CD-ROM	Compact Disc – Read Only Memory
CEBE	Centre for Education in the Built Environment http://www.cebe.cf.ac.uk
CHES	Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences http://www.herts.ac.uk/
CHEST	Combined Higher Education Software Team http://www.chest.ac.uk/
C&IT	Communications and Information Technology
CLUES	Centre for Computer Based Learning in Land Use and Environmental Sciences http://www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CTI	Computers in Teaching Initiative http://www.cti.ac.uk/
CVCP	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals http://www.cvcp.ac.uk/
DENI	Department for Education in Northern Ireland http://www.deni.gov.uk/
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment http://www.dfee.gov.uk
EDINA	Edinburgh Data and Information Access http://www.edina.ac.uk
ESCALATE	Education Subject Centre Advancing Learning and Teaching in Education http://www.escalate.ac.uk
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council http://www.esrc.ac.uk
ESTA	Earth Science Teachers Association (based in UK) http://www.soton.ac.uk/~ukgec/ESTA/
FDTL	Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (a HEFCE programme) http://www.ncteam.ac.uk/fdtl.html
FE	Further Education
FLAP	Flexible Learning Approach to Physics (a TLTP project) http://physics.open.ac.uk/flap/
GA	Geographical Association http://www.geography.org.uk/
GEES	Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (the Subject Centre's discipline remit) http://www.gees.ac.uk
GC	Generic Centre (part of the LTSN) http://www.ilt.ac.uk/ltsn/main/about.html

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GDN	Geography Discipline Network http://www.chelt.ac.uk/gdn/	NCT	National Co-ordination Team (for FDTL and TLTP) http://www.ncteam.ac.uk/
GIS	Geographical Information System	NERC	Natural Environment Research Council http://www.nerc.ac.uk
GNU	Geography for the New Undergraduate (an FDTL project) http://www.hope.ac.uk/gnu/	NISS	National Information Services and Systems (for UK education and research) http://www.niss.ac.uk/
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/	NTFS	National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) http://www.ilt.ac.uk/news/n20000414.html
GPS	Global Positioning System	OCSLD	Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/
GS	The Geological Society (of London) http://www.geolsoc.org	PADSHE	Personal & Academic Development for Students in Higher Education (an FDTL project) http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/padshe/
HE	Higher Education	PBL	Problem Based Learning
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England http://www.hefce.ac.uk	QAA	Quality Assurance Agency (for Higher Education) http://www.qaa.ac.uk
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales http://www.niss.ac.uk/education/hefcw/	QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority http://www.qca.org.uk
HEI	Higher Education Institution	RAE	Research Assessment Exercise http://www.rae.ac.uk/
HEQC	The Higher Education Quality Council (now replaced by QAA) http://www.niss.ac.uk/education/heqc/index.html	RDN	Resource Discovery Network http://www.rdn.ac.uk
HERDSA	Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia http://www.herdsa.org.au	RGS-IBG	Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British Geographers) http://www.rgs.org
HESDA	Higher Education Staff Development Agency http://www.hesda.org.uk	RBL	Resource Based Learning
HILP	Hertfordshire Integrated Learning Project (an FDTL project) http://www.herts.ac.uk/envstrat/HILP/index.htm	SAPHE	Self Assessment in Professional and Higher Education (an FDTL project) http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Education/saphe.htm
html	hypertext markup language	SC	Subject Centre
http	hypertext transfer protocol	SCET	Scottish Council for Educational Technology http://www.ltscotland.com/
IGEO	International Geoscience Education Organisation http://www.cosm.sc.edu/~csemgr/igeo.html	SCL	Student Centred Learning
ILT	Institute for Learning and Teaching http://www.ilt.ac.uk	SEDA	Staff and Education Development Association http://www.seda.demon.co.uk
IMAGE	Interactive Mathematics and Geoscience Education (an FDTL project) http://www.ucl.ac.uk/geosci/edu/ugrads/image.htm	SEED	Science Education Enhancement and Development (an FDTL project) http://www.science.plym.ac.uk/departments/seed/
INLT	International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education http://www.chelt.ac.uk/el/philtg/gdn/inlt/index.htm	SHEFC	Scottish Higher Education Funding Council http://www.shefc.ac.uk/
JANET	The Joint Academic Network http://www.ja.net/	SOSIG	Social Science Information Gateway http://www.sosig.ac.uk/
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee http://www.jisc.ac.uk/	SRHE	Society for Research into Higher Education http://www.srhe.ac.uk/
JTAP	JISC Technology Applications Programme http://www.jtap.ac.uk/	StoMP	Software Teaching of Modular Physics http://www.ph.surrey.ac.uk/stomp/
LTS	Learning and Teaching Scotland http://www.ltscotland.com/	TALESSI	Teaching and Learning at the Environment-Science- Society Interface (an FDTL project) http://www.greenwich.ac.uk/~bj6l/talessi/
LTSN	Learning and Teaching Support Network (funded by the HE funding councils) http://www.ilt.ac.uk/ltsn/index.htm	TC	Technology Centre (part of the LTSN) http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/
MIDAS	Manchester Information Datasets and Associated Services	TecDis	Technology for Disabilities Information Service http://www.techdis.ac.uk
NAGT	National Association of Geoscience Teachers (based in USA) http://www.nagt.org/	TLTP	Teaching and Learning Technology Programme http://www.ncteam.ac.uk/tltp.html

P L A N E T

TQA	Teaching Quality Assessment. (The previous title for Subject Review, which is now called Academic Review).
TRIADS	Tripartite Assessment Delivery System (an FDTL project) http://www.pcweb.liv.ac.uk/apboyle/triads/index.html
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service http://www.ucas.ac.uk
UCoSDA	Universities' and Colleges' Staff Development Agency (now HESDA) http://www2.shef.ac.uk/uni/services/ucosda/
UKESCC	UK Earth Science Courseware Consortium (an ex-TLTP project) http://www.man.ac.uk/Geology/CAL/
URL	Uniform Resource Locator (i.e. Web-site address)
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
WWW	World Wide Web

electronic note taking equipment will be included in the National Internet Accessibility Database (NIAD) which will become part of the TechDis service.

Unfortunately, rather than breaking down barriers, some methods of providing e-education can actually be obstructive to some types of disability. Web-sites have now become a familiar element in course provision, but a multitude of styles, colours and graphical interfaces can prevent access to visually impaired students using screen readers, as well as students with dyslexia. TechDis will promote good and innovative practice in this area using well-established guidelines.

Within higher education, in addition to legislative drivers for change, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Code of Practice on Students with Disabilities has set out 24 'precepts' or standards that institutions are expected to meet. The precepts cover all areas of an institution's relationship with students, including all aspects of learning and teaching. The code expects institutions to treat disabled students as an integral part of the academic community and to provide for them as part of their core activities.

The Learning and Teaching Support Network Executive is also committed to advancing the provision of support for learners with disabilities and is working actively with the new service to ensure information is disseminated to all of the 24 subject centres. Richard Townend, the LTSN Programme Manager, said "Having TechDis co-located with the LTSN provides an essential link into the academic staff in higher education and we will be working closely with TechDis to help ensure it's success."



ARTICLES WANTED!

Would you like to contribute to a future issue of this publication? If so, we would be pleased to receive your articles, case studies or news items. Alternatively, you may like to comment on a previously published article, or suggest ideas for future editions. Whatever you decide to contribute, we would be pleased to hear from you. Contact Steve Gaskin on 01752 233535 or sgaskin@plymouth.ac.uk

Have you seen this?

Creating a level playing field for all students

New legislation and policy initiatives are changing the way in which learners with disabilities are being treated in UK education. Proposed changes to the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) will mean that education is no longer excluded and provision for disabilities will need to be addressed, not just at a strategic level but also operationally. This may mean that individual lecturers will have to take responsibility for ensuring that their course materials are accessible to all students. Additionally, the Human Rights Act (1998), will undoubtedly have far reaching implications for all staff involved in the sector.

Communication and Information Technologies are growth areas in education. Advances in this field have the potential to ensure access to education by everyone, regardless of any disability or impairment. Responding to the needs of the HE and FE community, the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has set up a new service; TechDis (see inset). The service will address the issues of technology and disabilities by recognising the complexity and diversity of learners and providing information for staff. One of the services TechDis aims to provide is a database of technologies that can be used to assist student learning in situations which have been previously inaccessible. Technologies such as adaptive keyboards, text to speech software or

TechDis

Technology for Disabilities Information Service

TechDis is a new service established by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC): the service will be building on the work of the DISinHE project but with a wider and deeper remit. TechDis will provide information and advice to the HE and FE sectors on the use of new and existing Communication and Information Technologies, to enhance, research and administrate activities for students and staff with disabilities.

The service will be managed by Lawrie Phipps, former C&IT manager at the GEES Subject Centre. Lawrie will be continuing the research interests in learning technology he developed whilst at GEES and is particularly interested in how virtual resources are used to support students with disabilities in the more practical aspects of undergraduate curricula.

The new service can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.techdis.ac.uk> or e-mail: techdis@ltsn.ac.uk

Lawrie Phipps
TechDis Manager
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Disabled students undertaking fieldwork

Over 60 field scientists and disability advisers met at the Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British Geographers) on May 8th to discuss effective ways of providing learning support for disabled students undertaking fieldwork in HE. The day seminar was organised by the Geography Discipline Network, based at Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, to discuss the outcomes of their HEFCE-funded project on this topic. The project consortium involves a team of 20 geographers, earth and environmental scientists and disability advisers from 9 different HEIs.

Mike Adams, Principal Coordinator of the National Disability Team at Coventry University, began the seminar by relating his delight in participating in fieldwork at 16. However, on changing schools he was prevented from taking Geography A-level because of the perception of the head of department of the difficulties of taking a disabled student on fieldwork. He welcomed the project for the innovative ways in which it was adopting a discipline-based approach to helping lecturers provide learning support to disabled students. Most of the day was spent in workshops and plenaries discussing the project's six guides and survey report and the way forward. The seminar participants welcomed the way in which discipline specialists were working alongside disability advisers and thought this was a model others should be encouraged to follow.

The guides are available at <http://www.chelt.ac.uk/gdn/disabil/index.htm>. The LTSN National Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences is committed to continue to promote effective practices in providing learning support for disabled students and to advise departments on how this might be achieved.

The January 2002 edition of PLANET will include a feature article on this topic.

Mick Healey

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Journal of Geography in Higher Education (JGHE)

Biennial Award for Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* is now seeking nominations for the above award. The award will be presented to the author(s) of the peer-reviewed journal article considered to represent the most outstanding contribution to teaching and learning in Geography at higher education level.

Eligibility

- Nominated papers must have been published between 1 January 1999 and 31 December 2000
- Papers must have been peer-reviewed prior to publication
- Papers from any appropriate journal may be nominated
- The subject of the paper should promote excellence in teaching and learning Geography or closely allied subjects

- Papers should focus on teaching and learning at higher education level

- Nominations and papers must be received by **30th June 2001**

Nominations should be made in writing to:

Prof. Hugh Matthews, Journal of Geography in Higher Education, University College Northampton, Boughton Green Road, Northampton NN2 7AH UK.

Authors may not nominate their own work. English language copies of journal articles not previously published in JGHE should be included with the nomination or, if the article is freely available via the web, nominations should include a URL address. Mick Healey

Jo Bullard

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CASWEB Progressing in Leaps and Boundaries

CASWEB provides registered users from the UK Higher and Further Education sectors with a FREE, user-friendly web interface to the most widely used data from the 1991 Census (the 1991 LBS and SAS). This data provides academics, researchers and students with an unrivalled resource of demographic and socio-economic information.

GIS-ready integrated census data and boundaries now available

A new version of CASWEB has just been released that gives users the option of downloading digital boundary data along with the existing textual/numeric data output in integrated, GIS-ready formats (MapInfo and ArcView at present with more to follow). Boundary data is available in ungeneralised (highly detailed) and highly generalised (much less detailed) options, with further levels of generalisation envisaged.

CASWEB has been developed at the Census Dissemination Unit within Manchester Information and Associated Services (MIMAS) at The University of Manchester with funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Its main aim is to increase the use that is made of census data within academia, particularly in learning and teaching environments, by reducing the technical barriers that existed in accessing the data. This new development will further this aim by making it easier for users to map and undertake spatial analysis of census data.

The new service is currently available from a link on the existing CASWEB login page at <http://census.ac.uk/CASWEB/>. It is free of charge, but users must be registered for both the 1991 SAS and 1991 Digital Boundary Datasets to make full use of the service. Details of registration procedures can be found at <http://census.ac.uk/cdu/registration/>.

Please try out the new service and send any comments to info@mimas.ac.uk. For more information on CASWEB including a simple guide to its use select the 'on-line help' button on the CASWEB front page. It is hoped that further improvements currently under development will be released in the near future. These will include interface refurbishments and the addition of Small Area Statistics data from the 1981 Census, and 1991 Census data for Northern Ireland.

The range of GIS output formats will be expanded to include all those commonly used, and possibly other more esoteric formats according to demand. It is anticipated that ATHENS user authentication will be introduced for CASWEB in the New Year.

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Another promising development involves the integration of CASWEB with Descartes, an innovative interactive data visualisation and exploration tool, as part of the JISC-funded Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census Data and Related Materials project.

Census Courses

The Census Dissemination Unit runs two free introductory courses, 'Introduction to Census Data' and 'Mapping Census Data' (in collaboration with UKBORDERS at EDINA) for those interested in learning more about accessing, using and mapping census data. Details and online booking are available on the MIMAS website at: <http://www.mimas.ac.uk/courses/>

Useful URLs

For further information about the wide range of census-related data and services available from the Census Dissemination Unit please visit the CDU website at <http://census.ac.uk/cdu/>

For details of other data and information services provided by MIMAS please visit <http://www.mimas.ac.uk>
Further information from: info@mimas.ac.uk

Keith Cole
University of Manchester
k.cole@mna.ac.uk

Planet

Consider Yourself an Expert?



The LTSN National Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) is looking for people who have expertise in any area of **learning** and **teaching** in these disciplines (e.g.) problem-based learning, integrating C&IT into the curriculum, developing key skills, promoting employer links etc. If you consider yourself to be an **expert** in any area of learning and teaching, or if you have **experience** in any learning and teaching field, then we would like to hear from you! We are currently developing a **register of expertise** database. This will enable us to efficiently and effectively put individuals who approach the Centre with any learning and teaching question, in-touch with relevant experts in our disciplines. If you would like to find out more about this service, or if you would like to be added to this database, then please contact the Subject Centre on: 01752 233530 or email: info@gees.ac.uk.

(Please note that any personal information provided to the Subject Centre will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.)

The CHCC Project : Developing the Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census Data and Related Materials (CHCC) into a Major Learning and Teaching Resource

Through a number of strategic investments by both the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) and the ESRC, the UK academic community has access to a Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census data and related resources (CHCC) which are available in digital format. These include the contemporary Census Area Statistics, Individual Level Data (the Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs)) as well as the Historical Census Collection (the 1881 Census, the 1851 Census Sample and the Great Britain Historical Database). The data sets in the CHCC have potential use across a large range of disciplines and subject areas in the social sciences and will be of interest to human geographers. However, whilst these data sets are used extensively in research, they are significantly under-used in learning and teaching programmes within Higher Education, despite the fact that there is clear evidence that they could be used more widely. For example, introducing a web-based interface which gives access to the Census Area Statistics has resulted in a significant increase in the use of these data sets in teaching.

An exciting three-year project (October 2000 to September 2003) that aims to develop the Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census data and related materials (CHCC) into a major learning and teaching resource is now underway. The CHCC project is funded by the JISC as part of its initiative to enhance JISC services for learning and teaching.

The key deliverables of the project will be:

1. A range of supporting learning and teaching resources for teachers and students (e.g. tutorials, exercises, case studies).
2. A portal to facilitate resource discovery of Census data and associated learning and teaching materials.
3. Improved web-based data extraction and data exploration/visualisation interfaces to the CHCC suitable for student use.
4. Enhancement of the CHCC through adding and linking other information

Consultation will be a key element in ensuring the project's success. A user workshop, held in London in January, attracted a wide audience including sociologists, town planners, historians, geographers and statisticians. This event provided a valuable input into the development of the learning and teaching materials, and enabled the project to explore in detail issues such as: barriers facing teachers in the use of available materials; support of materials for specific topics; useful formats for data delivery; and the integration of the learning and teaching materials into existing courses. A considerable number of those who attended expressed an interest in piloting the materials in courses that they currently teach. The consultation element will persist throughout the project with key sites being asked to help pilot and evaluate materials. A user needs survey will also be undertaken in subject areas amongst both current and non-users of the census

material. The summative information will be used to ensure that the project is able to meet the requirements of non-users and hence increase the use of census material for learning and teaching in new communities.

To find out more about the CHCC project, and learn how you can become involved in evaluating or piloting the materials, please visit the website at <http://www.chcc.ac.uk/> or email the Project Manager below. A mailing list, census-learning-and-teaching@jiscmail.ac.uk, has also been established to support the project. Details of how to join the list can be found at the following location: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/census-learning-and-teaching.html>

Jackie Carter

Project Manager CHCC Project
j.carter@man.ac.uk



How can we achieve sustainability in a National Park environment? Answers on a post card please? Not quite! Sustainability is one of those words with as many definitions as there are people – most of them very long and very good at helping us to get off to sleep. Not so with SusDale.

SusDale is a fictional case activity (not strictly a case study) – activity being the key word - set in “AnyDale” (modelled on Upper Wensleydale). SusDale is based on the work of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (NPA) and draws on a variety of points of view from a number of interest groups.

During the case, players must represent an interest group and formally present a point of view (not necessarily their own), within a series of structured meetings. In meetings, the groups negotiate with each other, each attempting to “sell” their own point of view, while knowing that a successful outcome can only be achieved by reaching a consensus decision. In order to present a point of view, individuals are required to clarify and develop personal views on the sustainability concept as well as on the process of attempting to achieve sustainability in practice.

Initially, the group is introduced to the NPA and the “limitations” of its annual budget. Seeing the value of accessing additional funding, to achieve broader sustainability aims, the NPA has (in fiction) secured £0.5m of extra funding for the coming year. The SusDale Development Trust (SDT) has been established (in fiction) to identify suitable projects and oversee spending of the funds. After consulting groups with interests in the area, £2m worth of projects have been proposed. Clearly, the Trust can't action every project.

During SusDale, players represent one of the interest groups at a meeting to identify projects to put forward to the SDT. These groups include farmers, the business association, the local community forum and ramblers for example. Each group has proposed its own projects, prepared a short costed summary, and is very keen to have them chosen for approval!

P L A N E T

Among the conditions of the SDT are that projects may only be chosen if they clearly contribute to the overall sustainability of the Dale and that funds may only be spent on projects approved by a demonstrated consensus of all interest groups involved. If these conditions are not met, then the bid will fail and everyone will lose out.

During an initial community meeting, attended by a representative from each of the interest groups, positions are stated and favoured projects are identified. Participants then have a short break – to negotiate informally or just to have a cup of tea! At the final bid meeting the community group must submit their choice of projects, satisfying the conditions of the SDT of course.

Real life? True sustainability? SusDale has the questions. The decisions are all yours!

The case study is designed for Further and Higher Education groups and business training programmes (and is also suitable for A-level). There is potential for use in community development - but this is as yet untested!

Academically, the case is very well suited to many subject areas, principally geography, but equally in environmental studies, agriculture and planning. Alternatively, it can be used purely to develop team working and communication skills and SusDale is produced in two versions: a half day (3 hours) activity; and a framework for a longer (say 10 week) course. Both have been successfully trialed.

For more information contact:

Bill Wood

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
education@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Planet



Got a Question or Query?

The LTSN National Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) is developing a **register of expertise** database. This enables us to efficiently and effectively put individuals who approach the Centre with a learning and teaching **question**, in-touch with relevant experts in our disciplines. So, if you would like to know more about computer-based assessment, integrating C&IT in fieldwork, subject benchmarking, running overseas field trips etc., or if you have any other question or query, then please contact Judith Gill at the Subject Centre on: 01752 233530 or email: info@gees.ac.uk. We **guarantee** a response time of no more than **48 hours**.

Software for Earth Science Teaching and Learning

Twenty-one fully indexed CAL modules developed in UK Universities with TLTP funding covering most aspects of *Geology* and several aspects of *Environmental Science* and *Physical Geography*.

Web and application based versions available for Macintosh and Windows, also free demo CD-ROM and low-cost scheme for students to buy all the modules on one CD-ROM.

See the website for details
www.man.ac.uk/~ukescc

UK Earth Science Courseware Consortium
Department of Earth Sciences
University of Manchester
Manchester M13 9PL, UK

ukescc@man.ac.uk
Tel: 01625 612896
Fax: 01625 613997

Project LANDMAP

A Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the British Isles at 1" (~30m) has been created, (see Figure 1), and a set of orthorectified satellite image data products (from 0.3" to 1") is being created by the LANDMAP project using a multi-processor Solaris machine with some 0.65TB of on-line disk-space. This unique DEM was created from multiple passes of ascending and descending tandem ERS Synthetic Aperture Radar.

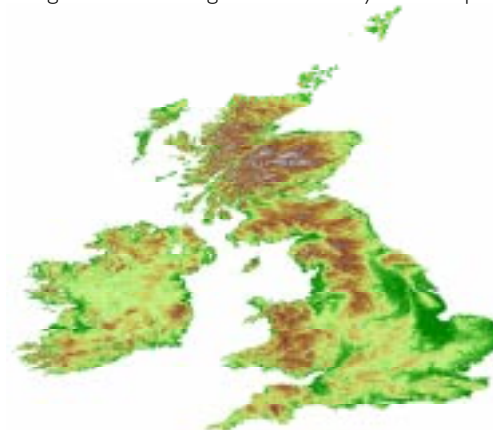


Figure 1 Digital Elevation Model of the British Isles at 1" (~30m)
© The LANDMAP Project

The 1" DEM is being validated using a kinematic GPS profiles created by this project. Comparisons with the Ordnance Survey® PANORAMA 50m are also being conducted.

Dead reckoning is used with precise orbital elements (PRCs) together with the DTED Level 0 global DEM to provide very accurate DEMs for individual strips without any need for Ground Control Points. These strips have then been manually checked for planimetric errors against digital map data-sets such as the Ordnance Survey® OSCAR® road data-set. No significant shifts were detected. A consensus algorithm is being developed to minimise artefacts due to atmospheric effects, phase noise errors and phase unwrapping errors.

P L A N E T

The 1" DEM is being used to orthorectify all ERS data products (amplitudes and phase coherence) and these are then being mosaiced together into seamless image map products. These orthorectified SAR data will then be employed to register SPOT, LANDSAT-5 and LANDSAT-7 images. The resultant set of orthorectified images will then be mosaiced into final image map products.

The resultant products (including all data produced at individual stages) will be available to anyone in the British academic community at no royalty fee cost for any purpose related to learning, teaching and/or research. The software developed for the LANDMAP project will also be made freely available at Manchester University/MIMAS to anyone in the UK academic community who is interested in mapping large areas using this approach. Web data delivery will be employed to provide access the LANDMAP products to the UK academic community.

The LANDMAP approach heralds a new age for remote sensing research where by geocoded and orthorectified image maps can be produced for anywhere on the planet WITHOUT the need for any expensive and time-consuming Ground Control Point acquisition.

The project is scheduled to finish by the end of August 2001. Data will be released to the academic community in mid-September to coincide with the Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society conference in London.

Visit <http://www.landmap.ac.uk> for more information on the LANDMAP Project and/or join <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/landmap.html> for announcements on availability of data.

Kamie Kitmitto
 Manchester Computing
gis@mcc.ac.uk

Special Editions of PLANET

Three special editions of PLANET will be delivered to your departments throughout the summer of 2001. The special editions will cover:

- Putting Careers into the Academic Curriculum;
- Integrating C&IT in Fieldwork;
- Problem-based Learning.

These issues will give examples of the recent innovative discipline-specific developments in these three key areas of learning and teaching. Each PLANET edition will also be available to download from the Subject Centre's website at: <http://www.gees.ac.uk>

If you would like to receive your own copy of any of the above publications, please contact the Subject Centre on info@gees.ac.uk who will then mail a copy out to you.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

WITH THE INSTITUTE OF BRITISH GEOGRAPHERS

UNLOCKING THE ARCHIVES – a major learning and teaching development of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in February of this year announced new plans to open its archives for educational development for the first time. A new project *Unlocking the Archives* has been awarded £4.5m by the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve learning and teaching opportunities and widen public access.

The heritage archives are in excess of 500,000 items, and include maps, photographs, books, artefacts and manuscripts, extending back over six centuries. They illuminate not only the history and the development of geographical knowledge, but also hold within them exceptional and valuable material on the shared cultural histories of modern Britain. Other particular strengths are the material on Central and South Asia, the Polar regions, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean.

The educational value of the archives will be greatly enhanced through the provision of on-line learning resources.



A fully accessible and welcoming new entrance will be built on Exhibition Road

Unlocking the Archives will open the Society intellectually, physically and visually. It will involve both electronic cataloguing and construction work at the Society's headquarters in London. New premises will create purpose-built facilities for education and public access. Educational access to the archives will use state-of-the-art technology, through:

- fully electronic catalogues and Internet searching;
- on-line, digital and fully interpreted educational resources;
- upgrades to the Society's website and increased Internet availability;
- over 10,000 digital images from the historic photographic library.

The LTSN National Subject Centre for GEES, would like to congratulate the RGS-IBG on the success of their lottery bid and the teaching and learning opportunities it will unlock.

News on Geographers into Teaching News



This joint initiative run by the Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British geographers) (RGS-IBG) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) aims to raise the profile of teaching as a career and encourage more undergraduates to think about teaching geography. There is a need to fill the increasing number of training places every year (approximately 1050 for entry in Sept 2001) and address the shortage of teachers within the discipline.

The quality of teaching at school is one of the most important elements in maintaining the health of the subject in HE. However, with the skills that Geography graduates possess, they are highly employable. As a result of a buoyant labour market, teaching has been faced with strong competition. There has been a steady fall in recruitment for postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) courses in Geography in England and Wales. In 1999, the percentage of Geography entrants to initial teacher training was 85% of the DfEE target, while in 2000 this had fallen to 83%.

On 30 March 2000, in recognition of the general problem in teacher recruitment, the Secretary of State for Education announced that training salaries of £6,000 would be paid to all students entering PGCE initial teacher training courses in England, as from September 2000. This was followed in October when the TTA launched a new £7M advertising campaign to attract new graduates into the profession ('Those that can, teach').

In addition to this, the RGS-IBG / TTA 'Geographers into Teaching' project has established a number of initiatives addressing recommendations in the report *Understanding the Teacher Supply in Geography*, which was published following a conference in April 1999.

What is the Project Doing?

- Liaison between the Geography community and the TTA – a Steering Group meets every quarter. A database has been created with the names of HEI Heads of Geography Departments and key contacts at initial teacher training institutions providing PGCE Geography courses.
- Publicity about teacher recruitment issues - Editorials have been published (Journal for Geography for Higher Education, RGS-IBG newsletter, GAP year literature). Flyers and posters have been sent to university Geography departments for distribution to undergraduates across England to raise their awareness about teaching. Careers leaflets are being produced to inform a wider audience (e.g. earth and environmental scientists), as you don't necessarily need a Geography degree to be Geography teacher.
- Presentations have been held for Geography departments at Liverpool University, John Moores University and Cheltenham and Gloucester College. Visits to the Universities of Leeds and Leicester have also been carried out.

- Felicity Thorne, the project development officer, has been present at the RGS-IBG annual conference (January 2001), the Teaching In London Event (TILE) (January 2001) and the Geographical Association annual conference (April 2001). In March the project was promoted at a one-day national conference 'Putting Careers into the Academic Curriculum' organised by the LTSN National Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences.
- Promotion of teaching through pilot projects – a schedule has been drawn up of partnerships already in place between universities, schools and teacher-training institutions to encourage students to consider teaching as a career. This will be used to inform a work programme to build on current initiatives in some regions and to encourage development in others.
- A London Focus Group convened in December 2000 to address the particular problems in the metropolitan region.
- Approval of funding for three universities to introduce projects aimed at promoting teaching as a career. This followed invitations to all university Geography departments in England to submit proposals for small projects in Spring 2001.

The next round of funding under this programme will be announced soon – keep an eye on the website below for details

- Dissemination of success stories – this is taking place through email bulletins to HEIs heads of Geography and those interested in teaching links.
- A summary of the project is on the RGS-IBG website: (<http://www.rgs.org/education/teachinggeography>)

Some good news has already resulted from this work, and other efforts to promote teaching; applications for PGCEs in Geography are up when compared with last year. Although it is recognised that longer-term data are needed before the success of the project can be fully established, the recent up-turn is an encouraging sign.

We welcome your comments on this project. Further information can be obtained by contacting myself below.

Felicity Thorne

Project Development Officer
RGS-IBG / TTA
tta@rgs.org

DOWNLOAD Planet TO YOUR DESKTOP

PLANET is also freely available to download as a .pdf file from the Subject Centre's website at <http://www.gees.ac.uk>. The website also provides general Subject Centre information and specific links to other learning and teaching sites. Pay us a visit.

The Talessi Project

Teaching and Learning at the Environment-Science-Society Interface

Based at the University of Greenwich, the TALESSI project aims to promote active learning for interdisciplinarity, critical thinking and values awareness in higher education.

The project is supported by the HEFCE, under its Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) initiative.

Teaching and Learning Resources

TALESSI have developed a portfolio of 46 on-line Teaching and Learning Resources (TLRs) in support of the above aim. TLRs are self-contained teaching packages, variable in scale but written to a standard format (which includes learning outcomes, learning activities, stimulus materials etc).

Most TLRs have a distinctive *environmental* focus - for example, on themes such as:

- environmental risk
- environmental ethics and values
- environment and the mass media

Some users' comments on the TLRs are shown in the inset:

"I am very much in favour of the critical approach the TALESSI project has been developing. I am pleased to see the students developing this skill."

"At a departmental and institutional level we are in the process of putting together a teaching and learning strategy and I am confident that my experience in piloting the TLRs will form a valuable contribution to the discussions taking place institutionally. At a discipline-wide level ... there is a pressing need for new models of teaching and learning and ... many of the TLRs 'fit the bill' or are at least on the way to doing so."

"The overall aim - to position all knowledge as provisional - is challenging for second year Geography undergraduates." "I like the way the TLRs address the philosophy of science and the way we think about environmental science."

"The fear of alienating 'hard' science staff could be a problem with some TLRs."

"All TLRs have to be integrated into course programmes; they don't stand alone."

Outreach and user support

We also undertake workshops, departmental visits, and a programme of TLR piloting and user evaluation. We can pay up to £100 for each TLR that is evaluated, with our prior agreement. Find out more about TALESSI at: <http://www.gre.ac.uk/~bj61/talessi>

Email: fdtl38@gre.ac.uk • Telephone 020 8331 8967



ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
(WITH THE INSTITUTE OF BRITISH GEOGRAPHERS)



Directory of University Geography Courses 2001

The essential reference for anyone interested in studying geography at undergraduate and postgraduate level in UK universities and colleges.

Who is listed?

All university and college geography departments within the UK are listed as well as some other departments that offer closely related courses e.g. environmental science, GIS.

Users

The directory is of use to the following:

- school geography departments
- prospective *undergraduates* and *postgraduates*
- school and university *careers advisors*
- department, university and public *libraries*
- university geography *department offices*
- geography academic staff

Content

The main part of the directory comprises entries from universities and colleges of higher education giving details of undergraduate and postgraduate courses and research opportunities. Research activities of the department and interests of the academic staff are also listed.

Other sections give guidance on choice of university and course, taking a gap year and details of key geographical organisations in the UK. An alphabetical index of staff gives university affiliations and an index of staff interests is provided.

RGS-IBG Directory of University Geography Courses 2001 (4th Ed) L.E. Craig & J. Best (Eds)
RGS-IBG, London, 2000. c.270 pp. ISBN. 0907649866

Price £13.00 including p&p.

To obtain a copy, please email: rhed@rgs.org or telephone: 020 8 591 3023 or write to: Jo Best, RHED, RGS-IBG, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR

Diary Dates - June 2001 to June 2002

This section lists some conferences and workshops specifically on learning and teaching plus other conferences which include learning and teaching sessions. For further information and registration, visit the website addresses provided or email the listed contacts. In addition, please photocopy these pages and place it on a **noticeboard** in your staffroom. The list can also be downloaded at <http://www.gees.ac.uk>

June

UK June 5

A workshop to discuss the educational effectiveness of fieldwork.
Organisers: Geography Discipline Network (GDN)
Location: RGS-IBG, London
e-mail: sgaskin@plymouth.ac.uk

UK June 6

1st Annual joint UK and USA Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
Organisers: various
Location: Kensington Town Hall, London
<http://www.uel.ac.uk/eds/>

UK June 11 – June 12

Management Development Initiatives and Good Practice in HE
The Universities' and Colleges Staff Development Agency (UCoSDA) Mini Conference
Organisers: UCoSDA
Location: University of Sheffield
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/ucosda/pages/services/events/mini2001.html>

UK June 13

Enhancing Continuing Professional Development: for those teaching and supporting learning in HE
Organisers: Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre
Location: London
<http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/news/cpd.asp>

UK June 27

Symposium on Research and Development in Problem-based Learning
Organisers: Economic and Social Research Council, Teaching and Learning Research programme
Location: Middlesex University, London
<http://www.hebes.mdx.ac.uk/teaching/Research/PEPBL/index.htm>

INT June 20 – June 22

8th Annual EDINEV International Conference; Technology, Pedagogy and Innovation
Organisers: Department of Educational Development and Educational Research, University of Maastricht, The Netherlands
Location: University of Maastricht, The Netherlands
<http://www.edineb.net/>

UK June 25 – June 27

6th Annual European Learning Styles Information Network (ELSIN) Conference
Organisers: ELSIN
Location: The University of Glamorgan
<http://www.elsinnet.org.uk/conference2001/>

UK June 26 – June 29

International Conference on communication, problem-solving and learning
Organisers: Centre for Research into Interactive Learning, University of Strathclyde
Location: University of Strathclyde
<http://www.strath.ac.uk/Departments/Psychology/cril.htm>

INT June 27 – June 29

2nd International Conference on Technology in Teaching and Learning in HE
Organisers: National-Louis University, USA
Location: Samos, Greece
<http://www.nlu-ln01.nl.edu/conferences/>

UK June 29 – July 1

Researching Widening Access: International Perspectives
Organisers: Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning
Location: Glasgow Caledonian University
<http://www.led.gcal.ac.uk/crll/>

July

UK July 2 – July 3

5th International Computer Assisted Assessment (CAA) Conference
Organiser: Learning and teaching Development Unit, Loughborough University
Location: Loughborough University
<http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/news/caa.asp>

July 2 – July 4

The 1st Disseminating Innovative Video Educational Resources to Students Everywhere (DIVERSE) International Conference on Video and Videoconferencing in FE and HE
Organisers: University of Derby and the Bolton Institute of Higher Education
<http://www.derby.ac.uk/diverse/conference.htm#2>

UK July 4 – July 6

Professionalism into Practice: Institute for Learning and Teaching 2nd Annual Conference (ILTAC)
Organiser: ILT
Location: University of York
<http://www.ilt.ac.uk/archives/default.htm>

UK July 9 – July 10

Promoting good practice in a changing world: challenge, competition and collaboration
Organisers: The LTSN National Subject Centre for Social Work and Social Policy
http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/news/joint_social_work.asp

INT July 9 – July 11

Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) 24th International Conference
Organiser: HERDSA
Location: Newcastle, Australia
<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/conferences/herdsa2001/>

INT July 9 – July 12

Tertiary Teaching and Learning: Dealing with Diversity
Organisers: Northern Territory University, Darwin, Australia
Location: Northern Territory University, Darwin, Australia
<http://www.ntu.edu.au/tlc>

UK July 11 – July 12

Hertfordshire Integrated Learning Project (HILP) Annual Skills Conference 'Implementing Skills Development in Higher Education: Reviewing the Territory'
Organisers: HILP
Location: University of Hertfordshire
<http://www.gees.ac.uk/events.htm>

UK July 13 – July 15

'Global issues and Local Settings' 2nd Worcester International Conference on Lifelong Learning
Organisers: University College Worcester
Location: University College Worcester
<http://www.worc.ac.uk/illc.index.html>

UK July 16 – July 18

Higher Education Close-Up: An international conference devoted to fine-grained qualitative research into HE
Organisers: Lancaster University
Location: Lancaster University
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/edres/conferences/hecu2>

UK July 16 – July 18

4th International Conference on Vocational Education and Training Research
Organisers: School of Education, University of Wolverhampton
Location: Telford campus, University of Wolverhampton
<http://www.triangle.co.uk/vae/05.htm>

UK July 17 – July 19

Society for the Advancement of Games and Simulations in Education and Training (SAGSET) Annual Conference
'Employability: the role of Games, Simulations and Case Studies'
Organisers: SAGSET and the Context Project
Location: University of Leeds
www.sagset.org

UK July 18 – July 19

Crossing boundaries - making sense of interdisciplinary and intercultural studies
Organisers: LTSN Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies in Collaboration with LTSN-GEES
Location: Dartington, Devon
a.m.dickens@soton.ac.uk

INT July 31 – Aug 2

Improving Vocational Education and Training
Organisers: various
Location: Wyndam Beach Resort, Jamaica
www.ivetajamaica.com

August

INT Aug 6 – Aug 8

International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies (ICALT 2001):
Advanced Learning Technologies - Issues, Achievements and Challenges
Organisers: Massey University, New Zealand
Location: Wisconsin, Canada
<http://ltaf.ieee.org/icalt2001/>

INT Aug 6 – Aug 10

Innovative Practices in Geographical Education
International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Geographical Education 2001 symposium
Organisers: IGU
Location: Helsinki, Finland
<http://www.igu-net.org/cge/sympo/>

INT Aug 8 – Aug 10

17th Annual Distance & Learning Conference
Organisers: University of Wisconsin, Madison
Location: Madison, USA
<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference>

UK Aug 28 – Aug 30

2nd Annual Learning and Teaching Support Network Information and Computer Sciences Subject Centre (LTSN-ICS) Conference
Organisers: LTSN-ICS
<http://www.ics.ltsn.ac.uk/events/conf2001/>

INT Aug 28 – Sept 1

2001 European Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI 2001)
Organisers: EARLI
Location: Freiburg, Switzerland
<http://www.earli2001.ch/>

September

INT Sept 6 – Sept 9

European Conference on Education Research
Organisers: European Educational Research Association
Location: Lille, France
<http://www.eera.ac.uk/>

UK Sept 7 – Sept 9

Earth Science Teachers' Association (ESTA) 34th Annual Conference
Organisers: ESTA
Location: Kingston University
<http://www.esta-uk.org>

Earth Science Teachers' Association (ESTA) HE one day workshop "earth system science - the new paradigm for learning and teaching?"
Organisers: ESTA
Location: Kingston University
<http://www.esta-uk.org>

UK Sept 9 – Sept 11

'9th International Improving Student Learning Symposium'
Organisers: The Oxford Centre for Staff Learning and Development (OCSLD)
Location: Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland
http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/1_ocsls/isl2001.html

UK Sept 11 – Sept 13

Changing Learning Environments; Association of Learning Technologists Conference 2001 (ALT-C)
Organisers: ALT
Location: University of Edinburgh
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/altc2001/>

UK Sept 12

Expanding Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities.
Organisers: Oxford University Department of Educational Studies
Location: Oxford
<http://www.edstud.ox.ac.uk>

UK Sept 12 – Sept 16

British Educational Research Association (BERA) Annual Conference 2001
Organisers: BERA
Location: University of Leeds
<http://www.bera.ac.uk/>

October

INT Oct 29 – Oct 30

International Conference on E-Education (ICEE2001)
Organisers: INTI
Location: Kuala Lumpur
<http://www.intimal.edu.my/conference>

November

UK Nov 20 – Nov 21

Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) Annual Conference
Organisers: SEDA
Location: The Manchester Conference Centre
<http://www.seda.demon.co.uk/manol.html>

December

INT Dec 6 – Dec 8

13th Annual European Association for International Education (EAIE)
Organisers: EAIE
Location: Tampere, Finland
<http://www.eaie.org>

P L A N E T

QUESTIONNAIRE

The LTSN Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) aims to build its activities around the needs of the discipline communities. We would, therefore, be grateful if you could take the time to complete this short questionnaire. On completion, please send it to LTSN-GEES at the address on the reverse.

Many thanks.

1. What area(s) of learning and teaching will be of particular priority for you in the coming year?
(e.g. transition to HE, the implications of the new disability act, academic review)

.....
.....
.....

2. By what means do you think LTSN-GEES could raise awareness of national learning and teaching issues, activities and projects more effectively within your department?

- By providing more publicity posters / fliers (please tick)
- By providing more support and clearer guidance to our department contacts
- By sending out more comprehensive and frequent emails
- Other (Please specify)

3. Enhancing this publication: PLANET

Please suggest any additional features you would like to see in this publication (e.g. information on other LTSN Subject Centres, regular columns from learning & teaching experts).

.....
.....
.....

4. Would you, or any other colleague, be interested in making a contribution to a future edition of PLANET?

Yes/No (please circle)

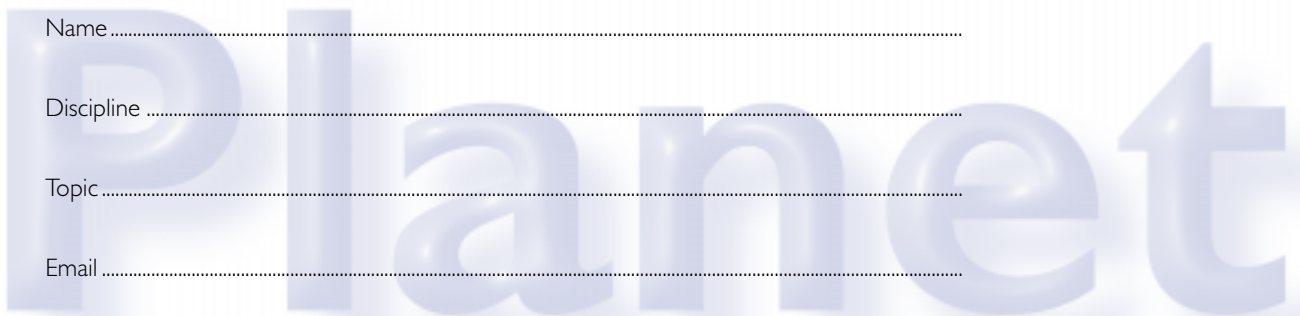
If Yes, please complete the following:

Name

Discipline

Topic

Email



Steve Gaskin
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A Staff Resource Book to Support Earth Sciences Learning & Teaching in Higher Education

Developed from the Earth Science Staff Development Project workshops
1997 - 1999



Devised and edited by
Helen King

If you would like to receive your own copy of this publication, then please contact the
LTSN-GEES Subject Centre: info@gees.ac.uk

Webbed foot

This section contains annotated web-links to general and specific learning and teaching material.

The Virtual Geosciences Professor

<http://www.uh.edu/~jbutler/anon/anonfield.html>

The Virtual Geosciences Professor is a web-site based at the Department of Geosciences, University of Houston, Texas. It focuses on Geology Resources on the World Wide Web and although it has an American bias there is a wealth of links to resources from around the world to be found here.

Some features of the site include:

- The "Directories" link lists Geoscience departments from around the world where you can see what and how resources and materials are being used by various institutions.
- The "Course Resources" link contains many sections under headings such as image collections, data, fieldwork, and resource materials.



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- Under the "About This Site" link there is a link to the "World Lecture Hall" which contains about 20 online Environmental Science courses and around 40 Geography courses. The materials contain example questions and exercises, online discussions etc. If nothing else, browsing through these may give you several ideas on how you could adopt/adapt the materials for your teaching.

These are just a few of the links to be found at this extensive site. When you first go to this site click on the "About This Site" link to find out what the author, John Butler, has tried to do with this web-site. Then have a nose around. This site is not flashy - it is simply a way of concentrating an enormous amount of web-links relating to the Geosciences in one place. In the spirit of "not reinventing the wheel" this web address should be added to your favourites!

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World Commission on Dams
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GLOW Survey – win £250 of travel vouchers

GLOW (Graduate Learning on the Web) is a national HEFCE-funded project that is developing tools and procedures to enable specialist teaching materials to be delivered via the web. The project team comprises representatives from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) and the Universities of Plymouth, Manchester, Salford and Luton.

GLOW needs your help in generating an accurate and informed picture of how academic staff are using the web in their current teaching activities. Please may we have five minutes of your time to complete our survey? You will provide useful and valuable

information that will help us ensure that GLOW meets real needs and provides informed advice and guidance for strategic planning and development in this important area.

You can complete the survey online at <http://www.glow.ac.uk> in five minutes or less, and all surveys completed before 30th June 2001 will be entered into a draw to win £250 of travel vouchers.

Your help in this exercise is much appreciated. Please don't hesitate to contact the project co-ordinators at glow@umist.ac.uk if you want to find out more about the project. We would be delighted to hear from you.

Your Guide to the Other 23 Subject Centres

The LTSN National Subject Centre for GEES, is one of 24 Subject Centres. This list provides you with details of the other 23 Centres located at HE institutions around the UK. The LTSN-GEES Subject Centre collaborates with cognate Subject Centres (e.g. Biosciences, Information and Computer Sciences, The Built Environment and Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies) to support interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary learning and teaching activity. The other Subject Centres are:

Art, Design and Communication

University of Brighton
<http://www.bton.ac.uk/adc-ltsn>

Bioscience

University of Leeds
<http://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/>

Built Environment

Cardiff University
<http://cebe.cf.ac.uk>

Business Management and Accountancy

(BEST) University of East Anglia
<http://www.business.ltsn.ac.uk>

Economics

University of Bristol
<http://www.economics.ltsn.ac.uk>

Education (ESCALATE)

University of Nottingham
<http://www.escalate.ac.uk>

Engineering

Loughborough University
<http://www.ltsneng.ac.uk>

English

Royal Holloway, University of London
<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/ltsn/english>

Health Sciences and Practice

King's College London
<http://www.health.ltsn.ac.uk>

History, Classics and Archaeology

University of Glasgow
<http://www.hca.ltsn.ac.uk>

Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Oxford Brookes University
<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/ltsn>

Information and Computer Sciences

University of Ulster
<http://www.ics.ltsn.ac.uk>

Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies

University of Southampton
<http://www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk>

Law (UK Centre for Legal Education)

University of Warwick
<http://www.ukcle.ac.uk>

Materials

University of Liverpool
<http://www.materials.ac.uk/>

Maths, Stats and OR Network

University of Birmingham
<http://ltsn.mathstore.ac.uk>

Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine

University of Newcastle
<http://www.ltsn-01.ac.uk>

Performing Arts (PALATINE)

Lancaster University
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/palatine>

Philosophical and Religious Studies

University of Leeds
<http://www.prs-ltsn.leeds.ac.uk>

Physical Sciences

University of Hull
<http://www.physsci.ltsn.ac.uk>

Psychology

University of York
<http://www.psychology/ltsn.ac.uk>

Sociology, Anthropology and Politics

University of Birmingham
<http://www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk/>

Social Policy and Social Work (SWAP)

University of Southampton
<http://www.swap.ac.uk>

And, of course, don't forget us at:
<http://www.gees.ac.uk>

Information for Contributors

The Editorial Committee of PLANET welcomes all material of interest to academics and support staff in the fields of teaching and learning across the three disciplines of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences. Generic submissions from other disciplines and submissions with an international dimension are also invited. PLANET also welcomes learning and teaching 'work in progress'.

The audience for PLANET is academics, support staff and educational developers. Therefore, you should write clear, lucid English, avoiding where possible the use of acronyms. Where acronyms are used, a full explanation should be provided the first time that they appear in the text. Articles accepted for publication may be subject to in-house editing.

Types of Contributions

Brief research papers, notes or short communications, case studies of learning and teaching practice, annotated web-links, software and book reviews, forum commentary, and letters to the editor commenting on an article previously published in PLANET.

Main Paper Submissions

General: Manuscripts must be typewritten. The author(s) should provide contact details, including email addresses. All submissions should be in electronic format.

Paper Length: Main papers should normally be in the order of 1000-2000 words, although longer articles may be considered. Notes, or short communications, annotated web-links, book and software reviews, forum commentary and letters to the editor; should be no longer than 400 words.

Referencing:

All publications cited within any text should be presented in accordance with the Harvard Referencing System.

Illustrations:

All illustrations should be provided in a reproducible form (this may include reduction).

All articles with any accompanying figures, tables, diagrams and photographs, should be submitted in electronic format to:

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Forthcoming Articles in the January 2002 issue of PLANET include:

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Keith Tovey
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Katherine Pell
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Martin Hayne
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Rob Tinch
University of East Anglia

Disabled students and fieldwork: towards inclusivity

Mick Healey
Cheltenham and Gloucester College of HE

Fieldwork in the Earth Sciences

Malcolm Hart
University of Plymouth

Further copies of Planet are available in a variety of different formats - if you would like any further information please contact the Subject Centre.

Contact Us!

If you have any questions or queries about this publication, or on any learning and/or teaching issue, then please contact the Subject Centre team at:

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Website: <http://www.gees.ac.uk>

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<http://www.gees.ac.uk>

and find out more about:

- Subject Centre News and Events
- The Information Gateway: 'Project Tellus'
- Learning and Teaching Projects
- Links to other Subject Centres and Learning and Teaching sites