



DRAFT Department of Geography's Fall 2010 Electronic Newsletter DRAFT

Latest Geography News



Our Department was the 2nd highest-rated Geography department in the nation, the highest ranking of any CU-Boulder department, in the just-released study by the National Research Council.



Roger Barry will be retiring December 2010 after (1967) 43 years of service to the Department. Please join us for a reception in the CIRES Atrium starting at 4:30 pm, December 3, 2010.



Holly Barnard (left; hydrology) and Seth Spielman (right; urban and spatial statistics) were welcomed as new faculty members.

Doing More with Less...



The economic recession that stubbornly refuses to go away has had an impact on the Department. A recent article in the Denver Post reports that Colorado ranks 48th in the nation for public university in-state funding per resident student, and that since July 2009, the state has cut higher education funding by nearly 60% (Tom McGhee, Denver Post, October 7, 2010). As a department, we have had to dramatically increase class sizes, reduce the number of Teaching Assistantship offers to new students, even eliminate some courses, and not replace broken/missing field equipment and computers. Like a drought, financial constraints are slow to develop and detect, but have long-lasting impacts.

Using data collected up to 2006, prior to the recent economic downturn, the just-released National Research Council (NRC) Study ranked Geography with the highest ranking of any program on campus. We received a best overall ranking of 2nd, and a best overall percentile ranking of "top 4%" compared to 49 geography programs in the nation. All of our alumni played a key role in this honor, since the NRC study is based on data that includes doctoral education research activity, student support and outcomes, and graduation rates.

Although it may appear that we are doing more with less, it is important to note that the NRC study is based on data that was collected during healthy economic times. We have yet to see how the recent financial constraints will impact the next NRC rating five years from now.

P. Blanken, Chair, Geography

