



ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS IN GEOSCIENCES

Summer Student Newsletter

Newsletter #28

Summer 2011



Inside this
issue:

August Graduates

If you are taking courses elsewhere this summer in order to graduate in August, A&M must receive your transcript by **5pm on August 11th** if you want your diploma in your tube at graduation. Otherwise, you will still be able to walk, but will have an empty tube. To technically graduate in August, your transcript must be received by **5pm on September 2nd**, or you will have to reapply for December graduation.

Make sure to come by Emily's office before graduation to complete the Graduate Exit Survey. If you would like to have it sent electronically for you to print out then turn in, let Emily know. Otherwise, Emily will have you fill it out at graduation...which you don't want to have to do.



Keep an eye out in your email for a "What to do at Graduation" email from Emily. It will have everything you need to know...but if there is any question not covered, please ask!

August Grads	1
December Grads	1
New Student Conferences	1
Summer Courses	1
Geosciences Grad Reception	2
May 2011 Graduates	2
Distinguished Student & Dean's List Criteria	3
Career Fair Contacts	3
Sustainability Pledge	3
Study Abroad Show and Tell	3
Gig 'Em Week	3
Faculty Spotlight	4
Res Hall Move-In	5
Fall 2011 Courses	5
EPAC Student Corner	6
Upcoming Events	6

December Graduates

Students planning to graduate in Fall 2011 may begin filing applications for degrees August 17th. The deadline for students completing degree requirements during the fall is **September 9th** without a late fee. Before you apply for December graduation, check to make sure any minors you were wanting to declare are showing up on your degree plan. Minors cannot be added once you apply for graduation. Also, **come see Emily the first week of class during add/drop time to verify your fall schedule will fulfill your degree requirements** and to fill out any adjustment forms that need to be made.

New Student Conferences

Over the summer, the College of Geosciences has participated in one Transfer Conference and three Freshmen Conferences so far, giving us 2 transfers and 24 freshmen. After another Freshmen and Transfer Conference in August, our total new students at the start of the school year will be approximately 34! We'd like to welcome the new Environmental Programs students!

Summer Courses

Did you take courses this summer somewhere other than Texas A&M? If so, then once the courses are complete, request that a transcript be sent to A&M's Office of Admissions and Records. Once they are applied to your record, come see Emily if any substitutions need to be done.



Geosciences Graduation Reception

The College of Geosciences held a reception for our graduating students on May 12th in the Halbouty building. The College recognized graduating seniors and graduate students and one of the awards for excellence went to **Maxwell Lukenbach** and **Jeffrey Supak**, who received the Environmental Programs in Geosciences' Outstanding Graduating Senior Awards for academics and campus involvement. (Pictured bottom left with Emily and Dr. Collins). **Emily Dykes**, Environmental Programs in Geosciences Academic Advisor, received the Robert C. Runnels Excellence in Advising Award. (Pictured bottom right with Victor Garcia, the student who nominated her)



May 2011 Graduates

Congratulations May graduates!

Environmental Studies (top right): (top row) Evangeline Williams, Alvaro Hinojosa Benavides, Lacey Terrette, Ryan Gahring, Josh DeAtley, Kristy Crawford, Loni Cantu, Rachel Bauer, (bottom row) Danielle Bunny Steele, Kristin McNabb, Stephanie Hendrickson, Bianca Garcia, Kate Wilkerson, and Katie Harvey. Not pictured: Jeff Supak, Claire S. Brown



Environmental Geosciences (bottom right): (top row) Kevin Mercy, Justin Maness, Max Lukenbach, Cody Keese, Nathan Kaufman, Aaron Hope, Victor Garcia, Jessica Gamboa, Daniel Barb, (bottom row) Andrew Nalundasan, Courtney Thomas, Cynthia Wright, Melanie Thornton, Brittany Jauch, Angelica Fowler, Claire W. Brown, Rebecca Aden. Not pictured: Chris Chastain



Distinguished Student and Dean's List Criteria

If you have the goal of being on the Distinguished Student or Dean's List, you must meet all of the criteria as stated on the student-rules.tamu.edu website: *An undergraduate student who completes a semester schedule of at least **15 hours** or a summer session schedule of at least 12 hours with **no grade lower than C** and with a **grade point ratio of not less than 3.5 for the semester** or for a summer session shall be designated "**distinguished student.**" A student who, under the same circumstances, achieves a grade point ratio of at least **3.75 also shall be designated as a member of the "dean's honor roll."** First semester freshmen must complete a semester schedule of at least 15 hours with no grade lower than a "C," no Q-drops and with a grade point ratio of not less than 3.5 for "distinguished student" designation and a 3.75 for "dean's honor roll." The hours earned with a grade of S shall not be included in determining minimum hours required for the designation of "distinguished student" or "dean's honor roll." A grade of I or U disqualifies a student from being considered as a "distinguished student" or for the "dean's honor roll."*

Career Fair Contacts

The College of Geosciences will be participating in the A&M Career Center's Sciences Career Fair on September 15, 2011. In order to have a strong representation from the environmental sector, we are gathering contact information. If there are any companies in particular you would like to see at the Career Fair, please send Emily names and/or contact information ASAP.

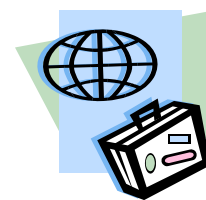
Keep an eye out for Career Fair and Networking Events that will take place before and after the Career Fair, such as resume writing workshops and Geosciences Mixer.

Sustainability Pledge

Texas A&M's Office of Sustainability would like students to participate in a Sustainability Pledge. The pledge is designed to encourage individuals to start thinking in terms of sustainability and making changes in their own lives. The pledge is not anonymous, it does require your email and name for tracking purposes. However, your information is not used for anything by their office other than to send a follow-up email with the steps you pledged to commit to. Your information will not be released to anyone else. The pledge and some more information about it can be found here: <http://sustainability.tamu.edu/sustainability-pledge.aspx>.

Study Abroad Show and Tell

Are you studying abroad this summer or in the fall? If so, bring back a souvenir! The Environmental Programs Office wants to showcase where our students have gone and what better way to do that than with neat stuff! Do not feel obligated to bring something back, and definitely do not spend a lot of money if you do buy something. *Also, please send Emily a picture of you on your study abroad for the special study abroad edition of the newsletter in the fall.*



Gig 'Em Week

Gig 'Em Week provides students an opportunity to learn more about the campus, each other, and college life in general through a series of educational and social events sponsored by university departments, colleges, student organizations, residence halls, and community members. **Gig 'Em Week 2011 will take place August 21st—August 28th.** Currently enrolled students who participate become eligible for prizes, free food, and gain valuable knowledge, insight, and connections. For more information, visit: <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/nsp/GEW.html>.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Bednarz is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the College of Geosciences.

Name: Sarah Witham Bednarz

Birthday: June 2, 1951

Family: I have a 13 year old border terrier named Badger and a husband, Bob Bednarz.

Education: My A.B. (that is the way the degree is offered in Latin) is in geography from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. It was the first college established for women (1836). I received an M.A.T in geography from the University of Chicago and my PhD in Educational Curriculum and Instruction here at Texas A&M. My research specialty was geography education so I took both geography and education courses—and lots of statistics!

How long have you taught A&M? I began teaching at A&M in 1989 as a lecturer while I worked on my PhD. I was a visiting assistant professor after 1992 and was appointed to a tenure track position in 1995. It is surprising to me but that makes it 22 years.

What courses are you teaching this semester/what courses are you teaching in the upcoming semester? Because I am associate dean for academic affairs for the College, I will not be teaching this coming year. However, I am offering a “first year” seminar for transfer students this fall.

Why do you think studying the environment is important? One of my service positions while I was a professor in geography was to serve as the advisor for Environmental Studies. That’s right—BE (before Emily) faculty were the advisors for Environmental Programs. I always told potential students that there was nothing more important than studying the environment from the perspective of a geoscientist. Just open a newspaper and scan the headlines—drought, floods, oil spills, wild fires, sea level change, earthquakes, tsunamis, changes in animal habitats—all serious topics that face us everyday. Our society and our planet need educated, thoughtful professionals to address these issues. As a geographer I know that human-environment interaction is the centerpiece of these topics and it takes a special person to understand both human and physical systems and how they interact.

What do you find most annoying about college students? What I find most annoying these days about some students I encounter is that they do not seem to know what they want to do “when they grow up.” They seem to be drifting through college—and life—without a clear sense of purpose. They are not committed to learning or really to anything. I find that very disconcerting. Such students are wasting their time and ours by being at Texas A&M.

What is the funniest/craziest thing that you’ve seen/been asked while at A&M? I have many stories about things I have been asked here at Texas A&M but am reluctant to share them. One semester as I was teaching the Geography of Texas class, a young man in crisp blue jeans, boots and a large belt buckle sidled up after class and asked me, with an accusing tone, “Where are you from anyway?” I guess he did not like the way I was presenting aspects of the geography and economic development of the state. I replied politely that I had been here at least as long as he had, since I arrived in 1978 and he had been born some time after that.

What was your first job you ever had? The first real job I had was teaching English to Japanese business men working for Mobil in Tokyo. I was 20 years old. My father was a chemical engineer with the company but I applied and got the job totally on my own. I learned to sing the company song which we did standing by our desk every morning after our group calisthenics. The young men I taught worked very hard to learn English. At the end of the summer, as I was getting ready to return to college, one of my pupils told me he very much admired my husband. At first I thought he had chosen the wrong word, mistaking *father* for husband. But no, he had thought that I was Witham-san’s wife, not daughter. He did explain though that Japanese had a hard time telling gaijin apart and telling our ages. I guess so!!



Faculty Spotlight Continued...

What did you want to be when you grew up? I think I have always wanted to be a geographer. I went through phases of interest in archaeology and anthropology but my whole life I have been curious about why places are the way they are—that's pretty much a summary of geography. I have always been fascinated by people, places, and environments.

If you could have any super hero power, what would you have? I already have a super hero power—the ability to see the world spatially and geographically!

Resident Hall Move-In Assistance Team

Residence Hall Move-In Assistance Day is scheduled for Sunday, August 21, and the Department of Residence Life is seeking volunteers! As a volunteer, you will assist students and parents in moving their personal belongings into the residence halls which reduces unloading time at the designated unloading zones and keeps traffic moving. You will be provided with free parking in the Southside Parking Garage and a distinctive Residence Hall Move-In Day T-shirt so incoming students and parents will easily recognize you. A brief orientation session will be held for all volunteers who choose to participate. For more information and to sign up, visit: <http://reslife.tamu.edu/housing/moveinassistance/>.

Fall Courses

Below are some courses with seats still available that you may be interested in for the Fall 2011. Make sure to check in the catalog for any prerequisites and email Emily if you have any questions.

AGEC 350 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics-Honors and non-honors section. Environmental Policy elective.

ATMO 324 Physical and Regional Climatology. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS theme elective.

ATMO 363 Atmospheric Chemistry and Air Pollution. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS theme elective.

GEOG 332 Thematic Cartography. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS technical elective.

GEOG 434 Hydrology and the Environment. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS theme elective.

GEOL 305 Palaeobiology. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS theme elective.

GEOL 330 Coastal, Death Valley, and Big Bend Field Trips (three different options, 1-3hrs). ENST geosciences elective. ENGS technical elective.

GEOS 410 Global Change. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS theme elective.

GEOS 442 Past Climates. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS climate or human theme elective.

GEOS 470 Data Analysis Methods. ENST geosciences elective. ENGS technical elective.

RLEM 305 Watershed Analysis & Planning. ENGS water theme elective.

RLEM 420 Wetland Ecological Restoration. ENGS water theme elective.

URSC 460 Sustainable Communities-now a non-majors section. ENST/ENGS Environmental Policy elective. ENGS human theme elective.

WFSC 489 Ecotoxicology. ENST free elective. ENGS human or water theme elective.

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Texas A&M University
O&M 105

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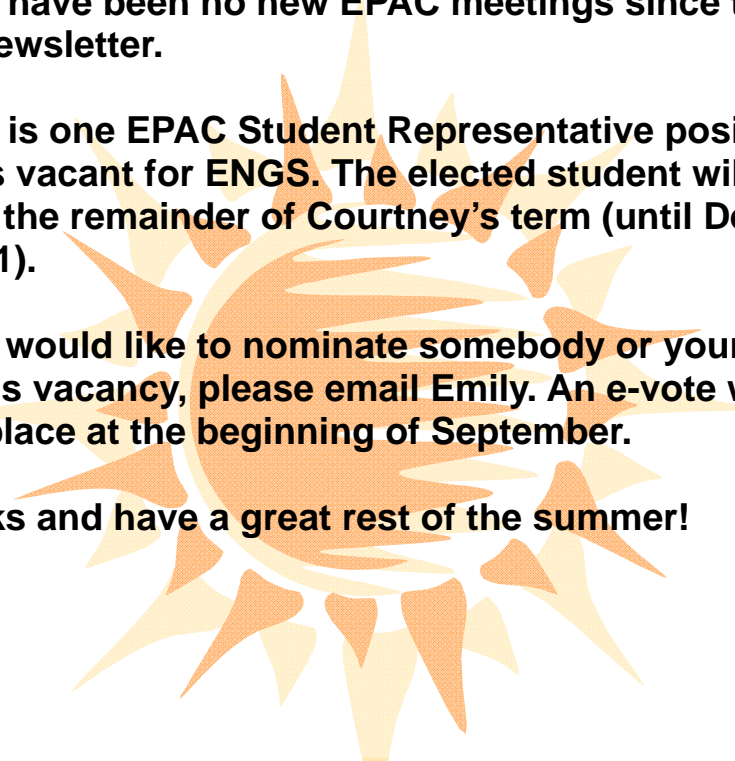
EPAC Student Representative Corner

There have been no new EPAC meetings since the last newsletter.

There is one EPAC Student Representative position that is vacant for ENGS. The elected student will serve the remainder of Courtney's term (until December '11).

If you would like to nominate somebody or yourself for this vacancy, please email Emily. An e-vote will take place at the beginning of September.

Thanks and have a great rest of the summer!



Upcoming Events in July and August

July 8th—5 p.m. Last day for adding/dropping courses for Summer II.
Last day to apply for August graduation.

July 20th—5 p.m. Last day to Q-drop courses for the 10-week semester. Last day to withdraw from the University for the 10-week semester

July 26th—5 p.m. Last day to Q-drop for Summer II. Last day to withdraw from the University for Summer II

August 1st-September 2nd—Open registration available online.

August 8th—Last day of Summer II and 10-week classes

August 9-10th—Summer II and 10-week final exams

August 11th—Noon. Grades for degree candidates due in the Office of the Registrar

August 12th—Commencement and Commissioning

August 15th—Noon. Final grades due for Summer II and 10-week semester

August 26th—Last day to register for fall semester classes and pay fees

August 28th—Freshman Convocation

August 29th—First day of fall semester classes

