GEOGRAPHY 2009 ASSESSMENT
RALPH LENZ, CHAIR

Geography is somewhat unique as a discipline in that it stands at the interface between the natural and social sciences. Most of our courses consider relationships between human patterns and the environment. As such, one could argue that geography could serve as a core discipline in a liberal arts university curriculum more readily than most other disciplines. Consistent with our nature as a bridge between the social and natural sciences, our major and minor sequences both feature environmental and urban planning tracks, which while obviously career oriented, reflect the social and physical emphases of the discipline. Our third major track, GIS, obviously also very career oriented, provides approaches to analysis of either physical or social phenomena, and is unique to our discipline.

In 2008 Wittenberg graduated 12 geography majors. Although this sounds like a modest number, it represents a significant increase from an earlier period of faculty instability. Geography’s ratio of graduates per adjusted faculty FTE was 4.2 in 2007-2008, a figure that is not modest at all; we ranked 6th among university departments. There were seven geography major graduates in 2009, for a ratio of 2.5, which likely put us about 9th among the 23 departments. We anticipate that nine majors will graduate in 2010.

DEPARTMENTAL ALIGNMENT WITH THE STRATEGIC PLAN
Wittenberg’s mission statement emphasizes the role of both the liberal arts and international education. Our department maintains a key role in realizing Wittenberg’s mission as elaborated in the most recent Strategic Plan because of the integrative nature of our discipline and because of our strong international focus. Our main goals are in close alignment with those of the University Mission Statement, and we can contribute strongly to the move to make the Wittenberg experience a unique one.

Geography provides particularly close alignment with goals A (objectives 1-3) and C (objective 1). Goal A (provide distinctive, innovative, and relevant academic programs that challenge and inspire our students) is broken down into several sub-goals. Objective 1 seeks to renew the liberal arts core to ensure it is current to the world in which we live; our integrative nature as a discipline is ideally suited for this, as mentioned above. We have designed twelve of our courses to satisfy general education requirements, and in conjunction with our integrative role in the curriculum, these include social institutions/processes, natural world, and non-Western cultures options. In addition, since the onset of the program in Fall 2004, geography faculty have offered seven Wittsems for incoming freshmen through Fall 2008, all of which have featured an international focus. During the 2007-2008
academic year, the geography department compiled the 2nd highest ratio of student credit hours per faculty FTE in the university. Some data about our gen ed contributions from our 2007 self study are included in the appendix of this assessment.

Goal A’s objective 2 seeks to infuse the curriculum with an international perspective, and is intertwined with our department’s goals. Our 250 series of regional courses is specifically international in content. Among our present 250 set are Russia and Central Eurasia Geography, East Asia Geography, Africa’s Geography, Southeast Asia Geography, and Globalization. We also offer Moscow: Politics and Urban Planning, team-taught with political science, which features a summer trip to Russia. As a result of our Moscow collaboration, new opportunities for international internships may become available, and perhaps student exchanges with some of Russia’s higher education institutions. Several other classes in our curriculum contribute to global understanding as well.

Goal A’s objective 3 seeks to supplement the liberal arts core with experiential learning opportunities for all students. Our students are exposed to many experiential learning opportunities. They are involved with real-life projects helpful for local communities. In our business geographics and GIS (geographical information systems) classes students have done projects for the Springfield Fire Department (location of a new fire station), the Springfield Police Department (crime data analysis), for Springfield City (digital pilot project), for the Center City Organization (data base creation), and for various local businesses (consumer behavior and trade area analysis). Recent GIS class projects have compared Springfield with other rust belt cities and mapped out Springfield housing foreclosures. Our urban geography class has helped create the Center City buildings’ inventory; this data base will benefit existing and newcomer businesses in Springfield. During the spring semester of 2006 our department introduced a new service learning course that was based on our GIS course. In this service learning project students collaborated with The Marriage Savers of Clark County, a non-profit organization that was aware of an alarming level of divorces throughout Clark County and asked for our expertise in geographic data analysis. As described on the Wittenberg web page on December 8, 2006, the agency used our students’ research to procure a $2,700,000 Healthy Marriage Demonstration Grant to be applied over the next five years.

Related to goal A, objective 3 is goal C (transform the undergraduate educational experience by adopting a comprehensive and integrated approach to student learning), objective 1, which is to define and implement a four-year developmental model for student learning that integrates learning inside and outside of the classroom. Olga Medvedkov has been a departmental and university leader in initiatives related to these objectives. Recognition of her
contributions came at the Honors Convocation in 2009, when she became Wittenberg’s first faculty recipient of the Excellence in Community Service Award.

Almost all geography majors do an internship with an organization in Springfield or in a Columbus and Dayton based company. Sometimes they are employed by our alums. During both summer 2008 and summer 2009, two geography majors were accepted for Wittenberg Center for Civic and Urban Engagement’s highly selective internship program to work on projects featuring university/city cooperation. Along with another major, who interned with Nextedge, the 2008 group presented papers based on their research at a Scholarship and Practice of Engagement Conference in Spring 2009.

OTHER FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
The Geography Department recognizes that quality instruction is enhanced by active scholarship. Faculty have published in major professional journals and authored texts or chapters in edited collections. They annually participate in national and regional conferences and are called upon to review manuscripts of texts and articles. One member has been serving on a National Screening Committee to determine recipients of Fulbright awards. Research is an important component of several courses, and students have presented the results of their research at regional and national conferences.

Faculty in geography recognize that their role extends beyond the department. They participate in Wittenberg's environmental studies, urban studies, East Asian studies, and Russian area studies programs. (Individual contributions are summarized in the appendix.) As mentioned above, they have taught more than their share of Wittsems for freshmen, and consequently have carried heavy advising loads. In 2006-2007, the last time period for which we have data, geography ranked 5th among university departments in advisees per faculty member. Wittenberg geography faculty members have served as Association of American Geographers specialty group officers and as an organizer of a regional meeting in Ohio. Members of the department actively participate in university governance, have lent their expertise to community agencies, and answer queries from the media and the general public on geographical topics.

The department's primary job, however, is teaching Wittenberg undergraduates, and teaching is the central concern of this assessment instrument. In this assessment we attempt to set forth goals for our majors and then describe how well these goals have been met, and what remains to be done.

CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE
Six learning goals for our curriculum have been formulated. A
questionnaire has been circulated to all three geography faculty members. Faculty were asked to specify if and how each learning goal is addressed in each particular course, and the degree of emphasis each goal receives. Courses in our curriculum presently include G101S (cultural), G120S (human ecology), G220N (physical), G222B (weather and climate), G230S (urban), G232S (Moscow), G250C (regional; four are Southeast Asia, East Asia, Russia and Central Eurasia, and Africa), G290S (business geographics), G292S (population), G305/380 (map interpretation), G310 (research methods), G330 (advanced urban), G390 (GIS), G490 (independent study), and G491 (internship), which was not surveyed because its subject matter is so variable. A summary of the outcome of this exercise is provided below, followed by the responses for each class surveyed. Then a recent report by an outside consultant, which could be considered more valid than any internal review, is provided as a concluding piece of this assessment package.

LEARNING GOALS FOR GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS
All students taking geography courses should gain an understanding of the nature of the geographical perspective, and the methods and approaches used to study natural and cultural spatial patterns and their interrelationships. We have tried to condense our learning goals to create a shorter list than in previous assessments. These goals incorporate writing, speaking, computing, quantitative reasoning, research, and diversity goals from the general education curriculum currently guiding Wittenberg students.

Goal 1. Understand basic processes and principles associated with human and natural spatial patterns. A major theme in geography, one with an integrative role in a liberal arts curriculum, is an understanding of human-environmental interactions which occur in a spatial context. As part of this goal we expect students to understand how physical and cultural attributes are interrelated to define a region. Spatial processes receive particular emphasis in our 100 and 200 level courses. G230 provides high level treatment of spatial models and location analysis of human activities. Movement models receive high emphasis in G250-Southeast Asia, G250-East Asia, or G250-Africa (diffusion) and G292 (migration) as well as G230. Environmental processes are greatly emphasized in G220 and G222. Economic development is emphasized in G250-Southeast Asia and G250-Africa. Some spatial process emphasis is also found in G330, G290, and G390 (depending on the term project), and knowledge of spatial processes is assumed for G305 and G310, although there is no specific treatment in these classes. We conclude that spatial processes are well covered by our curriculum. One possible problem could be that students in either our urban or our environmental tracks may not be as familiar as they should be with spatial models basic to the other track. Professor Kraly, our outside consultant, has recognized this, and recommends that our 101 class include both
physical and human segments. Because of our small size, we are resistant to adding another introductory class, and one of us (Lenz) is highly dismissive of classes with excessive levels of generalization. Instead we may want to add G220 to our requirements for geog majors, perhaps with a lower 100 level number.

High level emphasis of human-environmental interaction is found in both G101 and G120, and in our G250 courses, especially in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Africa offerings, although this essentially geographic concept is a focus in most of our classes. Majors can get sufficient exposure, though, particularly in a regional G250 class if they have already taken G220 and/or G222. In the past most majors have taken a 250 class because these were the only “W” options among geography classes; as long as G250, G120 and G490 are our only “W” possibilities, we may expect our majors to encounter significant emphasis of human-environmental interaction concepts. Otherwise we may want to rethink our major requirements.

Some emphasis on regional definition occurs in our 100 and 200 level classes, although the criteria mused in this set are usually specifically physical or cultural. One physical criterion, space-distance, is of course necessarily a component of any regionalization process.

Goal 2. An international perspective is a crucial part of our field, providing a critical contribution by geography to a major Wittenberg Strategic Plan goal. Our goal here is for students to understand the diversity and interconnectedness of cultures that interact on the global stage.

An international perspective and treatment of cultural diversity is common in many of our courses, particularly because our faculty has so much international experience to draw upon. Lenz and Medvedkov have extreme familiarity with Southeast Asia and Russia and Central Eurasia respectively, and both have rather thorough coverage of China during three different trips. Olga also has visited Tibet, Mongolia, South Korea, and Japan as part of a Freeman-inspired project to develop expertise in East Asia. All three faculty have spent considerable time in East or South Africa and Europe, and Lenz and Scholl have made long visits to India. One region that is currently conspicuously missing from our departmental resume since the departure of Len Brown and then Keiffer is Middle America. All three of our faculty have made short Latin American visits, but none is qualified to teach courses specifically about the region.

Our G250 series of courses provide an extraordinarily high level of coverage of this goal, and have the potential to be integral components of a university curriculum with an international focus.

Goal 3. Understand how maps and graphs are used to communicate information, understand quantitative reasoning techniques
relevant to our discipline, and develop GIS skills to enable the use of computers to solve spatial problems.

Our geography curriculum is very methods-oriented. One of our courses, G305/380, specifically teaches about map interpretation, and requires enough quantitative reasoning to justify an “M” designation. All of our other courses report heavy emphasis on map and graph interpretation as well. Many of our lab exercises in G220 and G222 require quantitative reasoning, and so does the study of G230’s models. Statistics is a required course for majors, and is usually taken as a MATH or PSYC class. We review several basic statistical techniques in our G310 methods class to provide spatial applications.

An entire track, GIS, entails computer applications for our majors. G230, G290, G390, and usually G330 are all GIS classes, and all of Olga’s courses feature some introductory forays into GIS software. Further GIS work is undertaken by many majors as G490 or G491 projects. There is an introduction to SPSS in G310.

Goal 4. Develop the ability to gather and analyze information about real world problems using appropriate research techniques and technologies.

Widespread data gathering and analysis occurs in our various GIS projects as mentioned above. Fewer majors conduct statistical studies. A sizeable portion of G310 treats questionnaire design and implementation. Less sophisticated projects contributing to this goal occur in our G250 and G120 “W” classes. Data analysis is featured in many more of our courses, but typically in lab classes data is provided.

Goal 5. Develop the ability to prepare written reports and oral presentations on geographic themes involving the interpretation of maps, graphs, imagery, and other geographic information.

Written reports in many of our G250 sections consist of studies of particular sub-regions within the area being studied, and except for some Southeast Asia sections, these are usually presented orally to the class. Some Southeast Asia students have worked on much more sophisticated topics, and considerable writing instruction is available via frequent conferences and multiple drafts. Projects undertaken by majors in their GIS and G490 classes have often been highly sophisticated. The same is true for Olga’s G232 students who have made the summer trip to Russia. Oral reports are a part of most of Olga’s courses, and majors present an oral report of research, possibly from G490 or a GIS project, as their senior comprehensive exam.

Goal 6. Become familiar with career opportunities for graduates with a geography major and opportunities for graduate study in areas related to geography.
Colloquia have been an important mechanism for transmitting information about careers, and alumni career days have made the greatest contribution. We have not put as much emphasis as we should on providing information about graduate geography programs at OSU, Ohio University, Miami University, and other schools that have supported Wittenberg geography graduates. Graduate school possibilities are sometimes mentioned in G310, but in the past we have taken majors for visits to Miami and some other schools. There is major emphasis upon career opportunity in G390, G230, and G290. More emphasis should occur in G222. Some of our students have attained this goal through conferences with their major advisor and other faculty outside class. G491 provides a valuable career-oriented opportunity especially for GIS or urban track majors, but the number of options has been much more limited for our environmental track majors.

RESPONSES FOR EACH CLASS

COURSE/ACTIVITY:  GEOG 101C Cultural Geography  FACULTY: A Scholl

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   
   A major focus of the course is how human activity interacting with the environment produces the built landscape around us, and how different cultural values create different spatial patterns in the built landscape. The course also explores how these spatial patterns are found in economic activity, food production, politics, population patterns and globalization trends.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL

   Since a major aspect of the course is how cultural values influence human activity and spatial patterns, examples and case studies are used from many different cultures around the world. These are often compared with patterns within the United States to help students better understand why different patterns are found.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS

   Maps are used extensively to demonstrate spatial patterns in the course. Since this is an intro level course, many of the students are not Geography majors and have never taken a Geography course before, so time is spent teaching students how to look at information in a spatial context. In addition, maps are used in class exercises to help the students develop the skills necessary to identify and interpret patterns.
4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   Since this is an entry level course, more time is spent on basic concepts, than on research and data analysis. There is some limited analysis required for class exercises that demonstrate concepts, but all the data is supplied to the students.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   There are no oral reports in the course. Write-ups for the exercises are required, but the amount is minimal.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   I include lots of examples throughout the course on how geographers have helped to understand patterns of human activity, but beyond that I don’t focus on career options since it is a gen. ed. course and most of the students are not geography majors.

Please identify IF and HOW this course addresses each learning goal being as specific as is reasonable. You could designate whether the goal is met through readings, a written assignment, exercise, or whatever. Please also highlight items that are especially emphasized in a particular course. It is not assumed that every course will address each learning goal.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 120S Human Ecology  FACULTY: A. Scholl

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   The primary focus of the course is the inter-relationship between humans and the environment. Both how the environment influences human activities and choices, and how human actions influence and alter the environment. In addition to learning about basic environmental concepts, the course makes connections between different lifestyle choices in different regions and the resulting impacts on the environment. Spatial patterns also play a central role in the course since natural resources and human population are unevenly distributed across the landscape.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Case studies from regions around the world are used to demonstrate the interactions between peoples lifestyles and the environment. These case studies are often then compared with examples in the United States so student can better understand the impact of different choices in different environments.
3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
   Maps are used extensively to demonstrate the uneven distribution of natural resources and the human population. Since this is a gen. ed. course most of the students are not Geography majors, therefore I also spend some time teaching the students how to read and interpret information presented on maps, and how to identify spatial patterns. GIS is not used in the course since it is an entry level course.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   There is no collecting or analysis of primary data in the course. However, the students are engaged in a semester long research project where they have to research a controversial environmental issue. The students are required to find information to understand all of the different aspects of the controversy and also identify the potential impacts of the different solutions. This project helps them to understand the complexity of human environment interactions in the world and also to help them develop the skills necessary to analyze these kinds of issues.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   The result of the research project is a research paper that the students work on over the semester. Since the course is also a W course, the paper is broken into sections to help the student put together a thorough and complete paper by the end of the semester. There are no oral presentations in the course.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   Since this is a gen. ed. course and most of the students are not geography majors very little time is spent on career options.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 220N Physical Geography FACULTY: A Scholl

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   The course is taught from a systems perspective and how climatic and geologic systems influence global patterns of vegetation and climate. The course is primarily focused on the processes that influence climate and landforms patterns and how their interaction produces the global distribution of climate, landforms and vegetation patterns. Human connections are implied and suggested when discussing different systems and also potential concerns/ impacts they present to people.
2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
While the course focuses on global patterns for climate, landforms, and vegetation, human aspects are only mentioned in passing, since the course is primarily concerned with the physical components of the environment. Examples are taken from around the world, and human aspects are sometimes suggested and mentioned in the context of different locations.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
   Maps are used repeatedly throughout the course to demonstrate global and regional patterns of physical aspects of environment. Time is spent teaching students how to read and interpret maps. Exercises often require the analysis of patterns presented on maps, and also the reading of tables and graphs. GIS is not used in the course except by me to present maps information in lectures. Since the course is an entry level course most of the students do not have skills with GIS yet and there is not time to teach them.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   For the majority of exercises the students are given the data required for the analysis. One exercise requires the students to collect climate data for a particular location and interpret the possible processes behind the patterns.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   Limited write-ups for the exercises are required. There are no oral presentations in the course.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   Since the course is gen. ed. and most of the students are not geography majors, there is very limited discussion of career options.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 220N PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY  FACULTY: R LENZ

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   Big emphasis on processes governing behavior of the atmosphere and their effect on spatial aspects of climate and vegetation patterns, processes governing rock weathering and soil formation, and processes governing the creation of landforms.
Environmental science is the main focus of this course, but there are frequent references to impacts on human occupation patterns.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Global climate classification and its correlation with biome and soil classifications are covered. Implications for varied cultural adaptations are implied and sometimes offered as examples, but do not receive major emphasis. Students learn about limits imposed by weather and climate and soil patterns in different parts of the world as well as the natural vegetation and, to some extent, crop patterns which result.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
Extensive use of maps and graphs. Map interpretative techniques are constantly required in class, especially those classes with hands-on lab activities. Interpretation of data presented on graphs is emphasized as well. Various simple computational techniques are required. There is no GIS/computer use, although this is not terribly problematic for an intro level course emphasizing concepts. Because the Carnegie 105 lab is not wired to Hollenbeck standards we cannot even make use of daily weather data from the weather channel in this room. Animations from a CD provided with the text are enormously useful for class demonstrations, but these also cannot be projected in room 105. Whenever possible we reserve two rooms for this class to compensate for this deficiency.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Data are generally supplied to students for classes with lab exercises; there is some data analysis, but no research paper.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Lab reports require interpretation of maps and graphs. But the amount of writing is minimal and there are no oral reports.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
Since this is a gen ed course, and most of the students are there to fulfill their science requirement, we try to discuss careers with our majors in other classes and on an individual basis.
GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   Big emphasis on processes governing behavior of the atmosphere, and their effect on spatial aspects of weather patterns. Environmental science is the main focus of this course; although there are frequent references to impacts on human occupation patterns, human-environmental interactions are not emphasized.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Approaches involving the use data to create global climate categories are covered. Students are able to learn how and why weather and climate patterns vary in different parts of the world, an important contribution to their knowledge of global diversity since climate imposes fundamental limits for human activity systems. Applications of the scientific method are featured in G222B; implications for varied cultural adaptations are implied and sometimes offered as examples, but do not receive major emphasis.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
   Extensive use is made of maps and graphs. Map interpretative techniques are constantly required in class and lab components, and maps and graphs are created in labs. Various computational techniques are also required. This course would qualify as an "M" course if there were a need in the Witt curriculum. There is very little computer use. Because the Carnegie 105 lab is not wired to Hollenbeck standards we cannot even make use of daily weather data from the weather channel or other data sources. Our weather lab is also extremely outdated, although some data is available from the new weather station on top of the Science Building.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   Every lab requires analysis of data, which are generally supplied to students for their lab exercises. We do make some use of our outmoded weather data collection system, but not much.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   Lab reports require interpretation of maps, graphs, and imagery. But the amount of writing is not nearly comparable to that
required for a research paper. There are no oral reports, but students must discuss their interpretations with lab partners.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
There is some discussion of careers with students who express an interest, but this is a gen ed course, and most of the students are there to fulfill their science lab requirement. We try to discuss careers with our majors in other classes and on an individual basis. I generally mention Bob Balling, a Witt grad who is a nationally prominent climatologist.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: Urban Geography, Geog 230
FACULTY: Olga Medvedkov

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
IN REGIONS
Build-up and natural environment; core and periphery; urban land use; urban evolution and changing transportation/ technology; changing urban structure/functions

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Variations of urban processes across the U.S. and comparisons with other World regions

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
QUANTITATIVE
GIS
Mapping techniques reflecting changes in urban environment
Location quotient in city specialization
Rank-and-Size rule in city hierarchy; Central Place theory;
economic base theories
Intro GIS

4. RESEARCH
GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Field assignments for gathering and analyzing data

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Essays, presentations/discussions
6. CAREER OPTIONS
Urban planning

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
IN REGIONS
Urban processes and development in Russia, focus on Moscow
Moscow urban growth and physical environment; social and spatial polarization

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Comparing urban planning in the U.S., Europe and Russia

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
QUANTITATIVE
GIS
Introduction of GIS elements; mapping geo-demographics of Moscow
Data classification

4. RESEARCH
GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
During optional field trip to Moscow, gathering data/ data analysis

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Final paper, oral reports

6. CAREER OPTIONS

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 250C SOUTHEAST ASIA FACULTY: R LENZ
GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
IN REGIONS
Big emphasis on processes and principles that determine cultural spatial patterns in the region, environmental impacts on these patterns, and on cultural diffusion and other globalization and movement processes. A disadvantage of our 250 classes’ status as gen ed offerings is that many students do not bring optimal understanding of physical environmental processes to class. Interrelationships among physical and cultural attributes are a major focus; our regional courses are a major venue for student learning about human-environment concepts, and can be especially effective for majors.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Major emphasis is given to cultural diversity within the region, and differences between general cultural characteristics within Southeast Asia and cultures especially in the neighboring regions of South Asia and East Asia are a recurrent theme. Globalization, which brings diverse cultures into contact with one another, is emphasized. Diversity is a major theme in all of our “C” regional courses.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE GIS
Extensive use is made of maps and graphs, but the class does not require quantitative work or GIS expertise.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Data must be gathered to enable the writing of a research paper.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
A 15-20 page research paper is required, with liberal use of maps and graphs to present data that has been gathered. Help is given as the students design their research and one or more drafts are critiqued. Exams also include essay questions.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
GEOG 250 has somewhat less relevance to career opportunities for geography majors. They do realize that geographers often do regional research based on activities of the instructor.

COURSE/ACTIVITY:    GEOG 250C EAST ASIA    FACULTY: R LENZ
Team-taught with Olga Medvedkov; comments here apply to my China section, and to a three credit class on China I plan to offer when Olga is on sabbatical. But my China class will not be a “W” class.

GOAL
1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   Big emphasis on processes and principles that determine cultural spatial patterns in the region, environmental impacts on these patterns, and on cultural diffusion and other globalization and movement processes. A disadvantage of our 250 classes’ status as gen ed offerings is that many students do not bring optimal understanding of physical environmental processes to class. Interrelationships among physical and cultural attributes are a major focus; our regional courses are a major venue for student learning about human-environment concepts, and can be especially effective for majors.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Major emphasis is given to cultural diversity within the region; ethnic minorities within China are covered more thoroughly here than in any other East Asian Studies course. Differences between Chinese cultural characteristics and those of other countries are a recurrent theme. Globalization, which brings diverse cultures into contact with one another, is emphasized. Diversity is a major theme in all of our “C” regional courses.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
   Extensive use is made of maps and graphs, but the class does not require quantitative work or GIS expertise.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   Data must be gathered to enable the writing of a research paper.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   A 15-20 page research paper is required, with liberal use of maps and graphs to present data that has been gathered. Help is given as the students design their research and a draft is critiqued. Writing is also required for a minorities portfolio, and there is some writing on my exams. Students give oral reports on their research.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   GEOG 250 has somewhat less relevance to career opportunities for geography majors. They do realize that geographers often do regional research based on activities of the instructors.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: Russia and Central Eurasia, Geog 250
FACULTY:
GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   **Territorial buildup and fall of Russian empire**
   **Physical features and human habitat**
   **Natural zones and human activity**

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL

   **Diversity of peoples and cultures inside Russia and post-Soviet realm**

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   **QUANTITATIVE**
   **GIS**

   Limited number of maps; simplistic GIS tools

4. RESEARCH
   **GATHER/ANALYZE DATA**

   Research for one of the regions inside the realm

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP

   **Final paper and PPT oral presentation**

6. CAREER OPTIONS

   **COURSE/ACTIVITY:** GEOG 250C AFRICA (2 CREDITS)  
   **FACULTY:** R LENZ

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS

   **Big emphasis on processes and principles that determine cultural spatial patterns in the region, environmental impacts on these patterns, and on cultural diffusion and other globalization and movement processes.** A disadvantage of our 250 classes’ status as gen ed offerings is that many students do not bring optimal
understanding of physical environmental processes to class. Interrelationships among physical and cultural attributes are a major focus; our regional courses are a major venue for student learning about human-environment concepts, and can be especially effective for majors.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Major emphasis is given to cultural diversity within the region, and differences between African cultural characteristics and those of other regions are a recurrent theme. Globalization, which brings diverse cultures into contact with one another, and development problems are emphasized. Diversity is a major theme in all of our “C” regional courses.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
Extensive use is made of maps and graphs, but the class does not require quantitative work or GIS expertise.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Data about a particular country’s physical, social and economic characteristics must be gathered for a short paper.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Students are asked to produce a written and oral report on an African country, with liberal use of maps and graphs to present data that has been gathered. Exams also include some writing. But this two credit class is not a “W” class.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
GEOG 250 has somewhat less relevance to career opportunities for geography majors. They do realize that geographers often do regional research based on activities of the instructor.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 280N Topics: Biogeography  FACULTY: A Scholl
GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
The main focus is the uneven distribution of plants and animals around the world, and trying to understand that distribution. Most of the course deals with physical factors such as climate variation, landforms, and also migration and interaction of organisms and how they influence distributions. Human impacts
on plant and animal distributions are discussed briefly at end of course.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   While many of the examples from the course are taken from regions around the world, it primarily deals with the physical aspects. Limited time is spent with different cultures and biogeography. The end of the course briefly covers the impact of globalization on plant and animal distributions.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE GIS
   Time series of maps are used extensively to demonstrate how patterns have developed over long time periods due to changing environmental conditions. Maps are also used to help students understand the relative impacts of different factors on distributions. Students are required to learn basic map interpretive skills in order to analyze patterns of course exercises.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   Students are required to research the distribution of a specific organism over the course of the semester in an attempt to identify specific variables that influence the distribution of that organism. No primary data is involved.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   Students prepare several written reports over the course of the semester on the particular organism that they are researching. Course exercises require limited write-up. No oral presentations are required in the course.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   Since the course is a gen. ed. course and most of the students are not geography majors only limited time is spent discussing career options. I do occasional bring up examples of how geographers have contributed to the understanding of material for the course.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: Business Geographics, Geog 290S
FACULTY: Olga Medvedkov

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
Locational analysis, consumer behavior, neighborhood classification, spatial marketing

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL

Diversity of American neighborhoods and related markets

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
   Data classification and analysis, mapping techniques, graphs, intro to GIS

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA

Building data base and analyzing data

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP

Power Point Presentation for a final project

6. CAREER OPTIONS

Intro to GIS

COURSE/ACTIVITY: Population Geography, geog 292S
FACULTY: Olga Medvedkov
GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   Population concentration and distribution
   Innovation/diffusion
   Migration
   Heath and environment
   Human-environmental interaction

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Variations of demographic processes in different cultures
3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
Mapping population
Calculation TRF, population pyramids
Some elements of GIS

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Research paper on population problems in different countries

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Final paper, PPT oral presentation

6. CAREER OPTIONS

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 305/380 MAP INTERPRETATION   FACULTY: R LENZ

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
Quantitative approaches to measuring spatial processes in map patterns are covered in a segment on point pattern analysis. The points could represent human or natural phenomena.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Not an emphasis, although map projections do illustrate how we often maintain a distorted view of spatial relationships between places.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
This class is entirely about how maps are used to communicate information. Projections, map grid systems, and direction, distance, area, and elevation measurement techniques are studied. Map interpretative techniques are taught in this class mainly through hands-on lab activities; the lab to lecture ratio is roughly 3:1. Quantitative work is basic, so much so that it could be considered an "M" class. Computer use comes with our
290 and 390 GIS classes; this class emphasizes concepts, and is a precursor for GIS.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   This class is about techniques for using maps in data analysis.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   Lab reports require some written explanations. There are no oral reports, but students must constantly discuss lab problems with their lab partner.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
   Mostly majors take this class, and there may be some discussion of careers. But our GIS classes make career options much more obvious.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GEOG 310 RESEARCH METHODS

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   This class is about acquiring data and reviews several basic methods of statistical analysis of spatial data; students are to have taken other geography classes before this one. Human-environment interactions are not covered.

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
   Not an emphasis.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE GIS
   Strong emphasis! Questionnaire design is undertaken with some notion of how quantitative analysis will proceed unless all of the questions are open-ended. We also review statistical applications for spatial problems, and basic SPSS programs are covered. Maps are used in the spatial sampling segment of the class; the emphasis is on maps as a tool in data acquisition rather than as communicative tools.

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
   Questionnaire design and implementation, some field data acquisition techniques, and concepts of rudimentary statistical analysis of spatial patterns are covered in this two credit class. Students may apply their research skills to the analysis
of a geographical problem and write a paper in another two credit class offered in an adjacent time slot.

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Research papers may be produced in the other class mentioned above. Oral presentations of the papers will be made at the end of the term, ideally as the student’s senior comprehensive experience.

6. CAREER OPTIONS
Mostly majors take this class, and there is some discussion of careers.

COURSE/ACTIVITY: Applied Urban, Geog 330
FACULTY: Olga medvedkov

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS
   Geo-demographics variations by neighborhoods, differences in life style; voting patterns in relation to geo-demographics; geo-demographics of central city and suburbs

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Lifestyle diversity in the U.S. by neighborhoods

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS
Data classification, mapping, graphs, GIS techniques

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA
Combining and analyzing census and field data

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
Final paper
6. CAREER OPTIONS

Urban planning/GIS

COURSE/ACTIVITY: GIS, Geog 390
FACULTY: Olga Medvedkov

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS

   Changing land use patterns; changing neighborhoods and networks;
   changing relations between human, man-made and natural
   environments; relations between geo-demographics and spatial
   population distribution by life styles

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL

Variation of geo-demographics in different neighborhoods in the
U.S.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS

   Mastering GIS techniques, creating complex maps, graphs; data
   classification techniques, quantitative data analysis

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA

   Building data base, collecting field data using GPS devices;
   advanced data analysis

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP

   Final project PPT presentation

6. CAREER OPTIONS

   GIS field
COURSE/ACTIVITY: Research Paper, geog. 490
FACULTY: Olga Medvedkov

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
   HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
   IN REGIONS

Major geographical concepts about human-environmental interaction

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL

Geographical thoughts and schools around the World

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS

Many research papers require creation of maps/graphs; some using GIS techniques

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA

Each research paper requires gathering data and data analysis

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP
   Half of the semester students working on their capstone paper that should be written in accordance to APA style

Final research paper is presented to the department

6. CAREER OPTIONS

COURSE/ACTIVITY: COLLOQUIA
FACULTY:
Recent colloquia have included presentations by Professor Emeritus Leonard Brown about his ongoing development-oriented projects in Honduras and Professor Khani Mohsen of Wright State University and Sinclair Community College about “Iran, Islam, and the World” as well as alumni careers day meetings.

GOAL

1. SPATIAL PROCESSES
HUMAN-ENV INTERACTIONS
IN REGIONS

2. DIVERSITY/INTERNATIONAL
Brown and Mohsen both brought international and diversity perspectives.

3. MAPS/GRAPHS
   QUANTITATIVE
   GIS

4. RESEARCH
   GATHER/ANALYZE DATA

5. WRITTEN/ORAL REP

6. CAREER OPTIONS
Alumni career days have been our main method of presenting career options for geography majors and minors. As the university moved away from department-centered career days in 2008, we did not have visitors last time. Before that we brought grad students from OSU and Ohio University and several other alums mostly with jobs utilizing their GIS skills.

NEED FOR CURRICULUM CHANGES
Our department sent an initial proposal for curriculum changes to EPC in Winter 2006. By that time we had already ceased offering our GEOG 305 air photo and map interpretation five credit course required for majors. We have instead been substituting a three credit map interpretation class under our G380 topics option as a requirement for our majors. At that time our idea was to divide off the remote sensing part of G305 as a separate two credit elective class; our proposal was to simply divide our G305 syllabus into two parts. We also wanted to provide a research capstone experience for our majors, but a syllabus for that class had not yet been developed. EPC was busy in 2006, and suggested that we postpone our curriculum proposal. Instability in our faculty roster since then has altered our plans and prolonged the delay. In the meantime, we have been offering a research capstone type of experience as a two credit G490 class during the same semester as our two credit G310 research methods class. So we have implemented part of our plan without adjusting the catalogue.

Our present plan is to add four credit biogeography and remote sensing classes to our curriculum in addition to the changes we have already implemented. Andy Scholl will soon begin work on a
sylabus for remote sensing. We also expect to shift the numbers and change the names for several of our present courses.

As we prepared to search for a replacement for Artimus Keiffer in Winter 2007, an outside consultant was brought to Wittenberg to assess our curriculum and suggest changes. Although we may not follow all of her suggestions in our upcoming curriculum proposal, her comments were highly useful. Her assessment also provides a much more objective product than could ever be produced internally. We are therefore including her report as a culminating contribution to this assessment, even though it was produced at the middle of our four year assessment cycle.

OUTSIDE ASSESSMENT BY ELLEN PERCY KRALY, COLGATE UNIVERSITY

Colgate University’s geography department is somewhat comparable to Wittenberg’s. Both serve only undergraduates, and both are located in private liberal arts universities. Both emphasize geography’s role in bridging the natural and social sciences, and Colgate, like Wittenberg offers more than one geography track for majors. Colgate offers social and physical processes tracks, not totally dissimilar from our urban and environmental tracks, but although they teach GIS, there is no third track focusing on methods.

Colgate is considerably bigger than Wittenberg with 2750 students; they ranked 18th among liberal arts colleges according to a recent US News and World Report, while Wittenberg apparently ranked 118th. Colgate’s geography department has 11 faculty members and 70 majors.

Ellen Percy Kraly, a professor at Colgate, is a geographer with some background in sociology; her specialties include migration and refugees, population and medical geography, and aboriginal history. She is also Director of Colgate’s Upstate Institute, an innovative program which, like Witt’s Center for Civic and Urban Engagement, seeks to connect university research capabilities of faculty and students to problems facing surrounding communities. Her PhD is from Fordham University.

Report on
The Department of Geography
Wittenberg University

Prepared by
Ellen Percy Kraly, Ph.D.
William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Geography
Department of Geography
Colgate University
I. Introduction: The Place of Geography at Wittenberg University

The strategic plan presented in “Distinctively Wittenberg: A Vision for Excellence” embodies a comprehensive rationale for critical and essential place of geography and geographers within the academic programs and community partnerships of Wittenberg University. Each of the four objectives of the goal (A) to provide strong academic programs point to the signature characteristics of geography as a scientific discipline: (1) the origins of geography are in intellectual integration and cross-disciplinary thinking; (2) globalization provides the context for considering geographic dimensions of social and environmental change at the local, regional and national scale; (3) geographic inquiry requires the reading of landscape and landscape change, and hence field studies; geographic inquiry does not shrink from relevance and thus seeks to serve the well being of communities, both human and nonhuman; and (4) finally, for each of these previous characteristics – analytic integration, global perspective, relevance--geography provides an attractive and distinctive academic home for students of this century who seek to participate in intellectual inquiry that is creative, collaborative, and community-based.

Wittenberg’s strategic plan underscores in more detail each of these signatures of geography as an academic discipline. Goal C, Objective 1, identifies the value and relationship of student learning and development that occur both inside and beyond the classroom. Service and experiential learning, off-campus study, community involvement, and international travel each represent opportunities for teaching and hence student development. Each of these pedagogies resonates with effective geographic inquiry. Goal F expresses the goal to ‘extend’ the Wittenberg community by partnering with communities and organizations in the Springfield and the surrounding Miami Valley region. Geographic perspectives on regional and community change, particularly represented in the geographic information systems (GIS) analysis, provide community partners with critical information on social and environmental history, current patterns of landscape, land use and social change, and emerging community dynamics.

The discipline of geography can play a key role in meeting the excellent and distinguishing challenges that Wittenberg University has set for itself through the vision of the strategic plan. Accordingly, the University is indeed fortunate to have a geography department, a curriculum of geography, and geographers to contribute to the strategic success of the institution. Wittenberg is distinctive thin this regard. In a brief review of the academic programs of the colleges and universities who are members of the North Coast Athletic Conference (which admittedly may not be the appropriate group of peer institutions), I find only one department of Geography and Geology at Ohio Wesleyan. Denison University has a Department of Geosciences that includes with geologists one physical geographer (and is searching for a tenure stream faculty member skilled in GIS). Earlham has a Department of Geosciences composed of geologists. Allegheny College and Oberlin College each have one geographer on staff within programs of environmental studies or science. It does not appear that Kenyon, Wooster, Wabash or Hiram have geographers among their faculty.

Colgate University, my home institution, stands in a similar position among several of the institutions for which comparisons are drawn. Compared to other universities in the (nonmilitary\textsuperscript{1}) Patriot League, Colgate has a large community of geographers, six tenure stream faculty and a GIS technical assistant. Our department has grown from three faculty in the mid-1980s to the current size. It is also worth noting that our Admissions Office has reported to us that prospective students identify geography as one of the reasons they are interested in applying to Colgate. Bucknell’s geography department has similarly grown in size in just the past few years from three to five tenure stream faculty. Although not in Patriot League but a comparison institution none the less, Middlebury College, with 1000 fewer students than Colgate, has a geography department of five tenure stream faculty and also a GIS specialist.

In advancing geography and geographic inquiry within the curriculum and in supporting its Department of Geography Wittenberg thus has a competitive advantage among its peer institutions within the region. More importantly,

\textsuperscript{1} The U.S. Military Academy at West Point has a large department of Geography and Environmental Engineering with approximately 13 geographers, not including faculty in the GIS program).
the university and the broader Wittenberg community will benefit from a discipline that embodies analytic integration in the study of regions and places, works across geographic scale from the global to the local, and through service learning and field studies, connects the classroom to the community.

In this report to the Provost, I will identify how the current configuration of the Department of Geography at Wittenberg University can and might meet these challenges and opportunities to play a strong role in supporting the mission and vision of the institution. As I have sought in this introduction to specify the analytic strengths of the discipline of geography in relation to the vision for Wittenberg, I will describe the many strengths of the faculty, curricula and pedagogies of the Department of Geography. I will also reflect on the ways in which I believe the department and its programs might be changed in order to more effectively serve the students and faculty within the department as well as in other academic programs, and also advance the ambitious goals the university has set for itself. I will couple recommendations for change, with modest ideas of strategies to implement or introduce change in programs and staffing. While I have attempted to group my reflections and recommendations in logical manner, readers of the review will find me moving back and forth between issues relating to faculty and curricula, reflecting the essential and obvious interconnections.

The conversations with the many people with whom I met during my visit to Wittenberg have been essential in forming this review. I wish thank members of the Wittenberg faculty, staff and academic administration and of course the geography students, for the reflective time they shared with me. Also critical to preparing this review have been the written materials that have been provided to me by the members of the department, faculty in other departments and interdisciplinary programs, staff and administrators, as well as publicly available documents. I apologize in advance for inaccuracies and misunderstanding of the policies, protocols and programs at Wittenberg, as well as for repeating information that is commonly known and understood to members of the Wittenberg community.

II. Geography and the Geography Department at Wittenberg

The discipline of geography is analytically broad, ranging from physical processes of spatial change (climatology, geomorphology, biogeography, etc.) to socio-spatial processes (population geography, economic, political and cultural geographies). Held in common among the subdisciplines is the focus on the dynamics and implications of spatial, both social and environmental, processes for places and landscapes. Methods of spatial analysis provide an important common theme, with multi-method approaches to data collection and analysis, exemplified in geographic information systems (GIS) analysis, being shared among geographers trained in three broad domains of the discipline concerning physical, human, and nature-society processes.

Faculty colleagues in departments and programs to which the geography department and curriculum connect recognize the contributions both of the scope and methods of geography and of Wittenberg geographers to broader academic community. Many of the courses taught by Professors Lenz and Medvedkov form essential contributions to the curricular programs of interdisciplinary programs including Russian Studies, Urban Studies, East Asian Studies and Environment Studies. Faculty at Wittenberg have a greater understanding of the ways in geographic is integrative and thus consistent with interdisciplinarity. The value of the geographic perspective for understanding the regional local implications of globalization is also well appreciated by faculty across the university. The methodological heft of GIS is similarly valued. Faculty also express their admiration of members of the geography department as good colleagues who have engaged in curricular innovation that has advanced interdisciplinary academic programs and has yielded stronger relations between Wittenberg and the wider community.

A. Faculty and Staff

The Department of Geography is composed of three tenure stream faculty positions. Two members of the department, Ralph Lenz, current chair, and Olga Medvedkov, are full professors of geography. The third position is occupied by Artimus Keiffer, assistant professor, who has recently been denied continuous lifetime tenure at Wittenberg. The department is supported administratively by Ms. Peggy Hanna, who also supports the Department of Sociology and occupies an office separate from the department suite on the basement floor of Carnegie Hall.
The expertise within geography contributed by the three faculty members within the department has sought to mirror the breadth of the discipline. Professor Lenz is broadly trained as an environmental geographer and teaches a wide range of courses within the geography curriculum including physical geography, climatology, urban geography, research methods, map interpretation, and several regional courses (Africa, Southeast Asia, East Asia). His teaching contributions in geography also connect to several interdisciplinary studies at Wittenberg including Environmental Studies, Urban Studies, Global Studies, and East Asian Studies. Professor Lenz has collaborated in team teaching with Professor Ankrom, economics, courses in Urban Studies that address issues of urban sprawl, transportation and public schools. Professors Lenz and Medvedkov have also engaged in faculty development travel in East Asia in order to develop and then implement a new regional geography course devoted to East Asia.

Professor Medvedkov is a population and urban geographer with strong regional expertise in Russian studies and the Central Eurasian region. She has integrated population geography and urban analysis to address geographic issues related to business and urban planning. She also teaches the GIS course as well as incorporating GIS applications within the context of her other courses within the department. Several of her geography courses form essential contributions to several interdisciplinary programs including Russian Studies, Urban Studies, East Asian Studies, and Global Studies. Professor Hudson of Russian Studies noted that a geographic perspective which Professor Medvedkov brings to the curriculum serves to deepen the study of Russia and Central Eurasia beyond a study of a geographic area and to engage students in rigorous methods of social and environmental inquiry. Professor Copeland noted the fact that Professor Medvedkov is a practicing urban geographer represents a tremendous asset for the minor in Urban Studies. Professor Oldstone-Moore noted that Professor Medvedkov’s role in East Asian Studies may actually expand should the program expand to include central Asia and also to emphasize Mongolia. Finally, Professor Medvedkov’s dedication to service learning pedagogy has resulted in community partnerships and research that have made significant contributions to the welfare and capacity of the region and demonstrate through real outcomes the value of the liberal arts to enhancing community capacity.

Assistant Professor Artimus Keiffer is a cultural geographer who has taught a wide range of courses within the geography curriculum including courses relating to the nature-society interface (cultural geography, human ecology, the geography of wine) as well as regional studies (Ohio, Middle America).

In some sense, the department has sought to represent the full domain of geographic inquiry in the bodies of three faculty members: physical geography (to a certain degree); nature-society; and human. This has the result of stretching each individual faculty member very broadly in the range of courses that they teach, and in working with individual students through the many independent studies that each faculty member comes to supervise. Rather than to fully represent each domain of the discipline within the context of a faculty of three geographers, the goal might more appropriately be to build a department in which members interconnect with and complement the analytic strengths of one another, and through which geography faculty connect and contribute to other academic programs at Wittenberg.

B. Students

The data on enrollments presented in various forms in the self study report prepared for the Educational Studies Committee (I believe) suggest to me that enrollments in geography courses are quite healthy. As will be discussed below, the department curriculum is organized to fulfill general education requirements in many courses at the 100- and 200-levels, and at these levels healthy proportions of geography classes are composed of non-geography majors. Several geography students with whom I spoke noted that their exposure to geography through meeting a general education requirement resulted in continuing within the discipline as a major or minor.

The number of students majoring in geography has increased rather dramatically in recent years. Geography students with whom I spoke are aware of the growth of student interest in the Department of Geography and relate the recent trend to the quality of teaching in the department. To be sure, my initial conversation with students presented an opportunity for them to express their dismay about the tenure denial of Professor Keiffer, clearly a very popular teacher in the department. But I was able to redirect the discussion to learn the several other ways in which their interest in
geography as a major had formed. I was very impressed with the well conceptualized comments of the students about the discipline, the curriculum and the pedagogy.

For example, students articulated the analytic power of geography to integrate physical and social spatial processes. They also appreciate deeply the relevance of the discipline to understanding contemporary social and environmental issues and problems. They recognize the value of laboratories both for their engagement in hands-on problem-solving as well as the demand for rigor. They welcome opportunities for independent studies that allow the pursuit of individual projects and interests. Students also articulated some very interesting and useful ideas about ways in which their academic experience in geography might be improved. Several critical themes emerged from their comments that I will discuss below in the context of the current curriculum. The thoughtful, astute and critical statements expressed by the students, however, convince me that students are being drawn to the Department of Geography for (the right) reasons beyond the draw of a popular teacher: integration and problem-solving, challenge and rigor; engagement, relevance and application; and opportunities for individual and independent study.

C. Facilities

The hub of departmental activity occurs in the suite of faculty offices and teaching space on the ground level of Carnegie Hall. Ms. Hanna’s office is one floor up in the building, although this arrangement was not described as a problematic issue by members of the department. The primary teaching spaces used by the department are in Carnegie Hall, proximate to faculty offices. Computer facilities for GIS instruction are both limited and awkwardly designed for effective and efficient teaching. Students in the department articulate the limitations of the facilities for GIS and information technology in very clear terms.

D. Curriculum

I characterize the current curriculum and courses in geography at Wittenberg in the following ways: (i) the curriculum is strongly linked to the general education requirements of the university; (ii) the program is directed more to the introductory levels rather than to more advanced courses; (iii) the structure of the curriculum reflects well the teaching and research interests of the current faculty; (iv) a relatively large share of teaching and curricular resources are devoted to research and skill development in students; (v) there is uneveness in depth of geographic analysis and inquiry within courses in each level of the curriculum; and (vi) course titles are limited descriptions of course content and relevance to other interdisciplinary programs. Each of these characteristics represents different sets of benefits and costs to department, and each raises questions for consideration at the department moves forward.

(i) With the exception of GEOG290 *Business Geographics*, each of the geography courses at the 100- and 200 levels (excluding the topics course, 280) contributes to fulfilling a general education requirement. I state this cautiously, because I am assuming the various offerings of GEOG250 *Regional Geography* will also fulfill the non-Western cultures requirement when the course focuses on Africa, East Asia, and Russian and Central Eurasian geography. These connections to the general education program serve the university well and also serve to introduce Wittenberg students to geography as a discipline and therefore as a potential area of major study. These are important benefits to both the university and the department. The high proportion of students fulfilling general education requirements in these courses may introduce some pedagogical challenges for supporting the progression of students majoring geography who are also enrolled in this courses, particularly at the 200-level. Geography faculty are also active participants in the WittSem program, a further demonstration of the contribution of the department to all-university programs.

(ii) Related to the department’s participation in the general education program, the geography curriculum is heavily weighted toward the introductory levels of geographic instruction, which I interpret as courses at the 100 and 200-levels. Moreover, there does not seem to be a senior level or advanced seminar in geography other than opportunities for independents study (490), internship (491) or an honors thesis (499). The self study does describe an honors seminar at the 300-level (HONORS300S-W *Architectural Geography*, taught by Assistant Professor Keiffer) linked to the university honors program, but this is, as I understand the program, is distinct from honors in geography.

In lieu of an advanced seminar in geography, faculty in the department appear to supervise large numbers of independent studies students (GEOG490). Again drawing from the chair’s narrative from the self study, geography faculty have supervised 66 independent studies at the advanced (490) level during what I think are the past five
academic years. Professor Lenz notes that independent studies projects provide away for geography students to achieve depth in their majors and also for the department to avoid small enrollment, upper level courses related to specific domains of the discipline. While I have not reviewed in detail the topics addressed in the many independent studies, I do know that the number of 490 courses seem relatively large for three faculty, and given the breadth of the curriculum at the 100 and 200 levels as well as the sharp increase in the number of students majoring in geography, we can anticipate the demand for opportunities for advanced work in the discipline.

Only in the urban planning track are geography majors required to complete a 400-level course, in this case an internship. It is evident, however, that most students majoring in geography elect to undertake independent research or other projects at an advanced level. This election of GEOG490 courses alerts us to the fact that students are seeking to deepen their academic program in geography, a fact that reflects well on the faculty and which should be reflected in expectations, hence requirements for the major.

(iii) I will admit my bias that the most effective teaching and hence the most effective learning environment occurs when faculty are able to teach what they love. However, given the breadth of the discipline of geography and limit of three faculty members, there must be careful choice and crafting of a curricular program to yield a progression of geographic concepts and skills at the completion of the undergraduate program. My review of the current course offerings in the department and the structure of the three tracks available within the geography major suggests to me that the department would benefit from a fresh consideration of the requirements for the major (and also minor) in geography and hence, the courses which are offered by current and future faculty.

Criteria for curricular review and perhaps restructuring are rather quietly embedded in the Geography Self Study. About mid-way through the report, Professor Lenz describes several of the principles of the geography major:

Students contemplating graduate work in geography should be exposed to both human and physical geography and to the methods we sue, especially those related to the use of maps and geographic information systems (GIS). On the human side, cultural geography and urban geography have traditionally been important in our discipline. On the physical side, students should understand processes affecting the atmosphere, biomes’, soils and landforms. Although not always required for graduate study, we believe that undergraduate liberal arts geo majors should also be exposed to the regional approach to understanding other cultures in different parts of the worlds and how they are being impacted by the process of globalization.

From this statement I identify, by paraphrasing, five themes that the geography major at Wittenberg should embody: grounding in introductory human and physical geography; engagement in geographic methods and analysis; exercise of a regional perspective; international understanding and comparison; and appreciation of the geographic implications of globalization. These five themes represent well the signatures of the discipline and also, and very significantly, match up exceedingly well with several objectives within Wittenberg’s strategic plan. However, these curricular themes or goals are not well expressed within the current array of departmental courses. Relatedly, and consistent with this interpretation, students in the geography program comment that they feel they lack a conceptual vocabulary in which to express the geographic perspective. By incorporating common geographic themes or domain such as those well identified above throughout the curriculum and particularly at the introductory levels, the students in the department will have developed a more robust conceptual framework for geographic analysis when they undertake more advanced work in the discipline.

There are two points of entry for incorporating these geographic themes or domains in the geography curriculum at the introductory level. The first resides in the 100-level courses in the curriculum. The transition in personnel in the department provides an opportunity to rethink the two courses at the 100-introductory sequence of geography courses for which Assistant Professor Keiffer has been responsible. It is also an opportunity to consider how the 100-level courses in human geography relate to GEOG220 Physical Geography which also seems to me an introduction to the discipline. The department might consider combining these three courses into a broad introduction to geography. I realize such a reorganization might limit the capacity of the introductory course to count toward one or both of the “S” and “N” general education designations at each of three courses now do, but I believe the change would benefit the department in several ways.
One, the introductory course could be designed to give students a broad background in social, nature-society, and physical geography. A pedagogy of team or tag-team teaching might be considered, or experimented with in the introductory course. This might also be an inviting way to introduce students to other faculty in the department. Two, the department can introduce the systematic themes in geography that are available at higher levels within the curriculum. For example, a student who finds population processes of particular interest can follow up in GEOG292 (what I suggest below should be a 300-level course); students interested in physical processes could take GEOG222 Weather and Climate (or related courses in geology and field biology). Three, by using a globalizing world as a context for social and environmental change occurring at the regional and local levels, the department can connect to the strategic plan through a global perspective that demonstrates the necessity of integrating across intellectual domains to understand the geography of regions and places. A title for a new introductory course in geography might be something on the order of -- GEOG120 Peoples, Places and Environment: Geographies of Global Change. This form of an introductory course might also serve as a foundations course, perhaps the foundations course for the (proposed?) minor in Global Studies.

The second entry point to introduce key geographic themes is through the 200-level regional courses that currently exist in the geography curriculum. These 250 courses largely fulfill the non-Western culture general education requirement. In each regional case, faculty could address social and physical geographic, and nature-society characteristics, issues of globalization, and the use of spatial analysis. These domains are certainly present in the regional geography courses are currently configured. I am suggesting only that the three geography faculty members review and reflect upon the GEOG250 courses not only as regional analyses but also as introductory courses to the discipline.

Moreover, these five or other curricular themes should be more clearly expressed and evident in the structure of the three streams within the geography major, environmental, GIS and urban planning, as specified in the university catalogue (and website). For example, the ‘environmental’ track in geography requires among the 32 semester hours including the following courses:

- 101 Cultural Geography
- 120 Human Ecology
- 220 Physical Geography
- 222 Weather and Climate
- 310 Research Methods
  and either
- 304 Cartography, or
- 305 Air Photo and Map Interpretation

Several courses in biology and geology are also recommended as cognate courses for the environmental emphasis in geography. While students will elect additional geography courses for the major program, students majoring in environmental geography are not required to take GIS or courses in regional geography, each a seemingly odd omission from major requirements. A similar critique of the structure of the GIS track can be made regarding engaging students in regional analysis and perspectives on globalization. The urban planning track lines up more directly with the components of a geography major articulated in the self study. For example, ‘urban geography’ students are required to take GIS and are encouraged to pursue a selected international regional emphasis within their program. An omission in this program, however, is a necessary engagement in environmental issues emergent in urban and metropolitan areas.

(iv) Four courses are offered at the 300-level that provide students with skills in social and environmental data collection, analysis and interpretation. These are:

- GEOG304 Cartography
- GEOG305 Air Photo and Map Interpretation
- GEOG310 Research Methods
- GEOG390 Geographical Information Systems

As noted above, students within the environmental geography track are required to take GEOG305 Air Photo and Map Interpretation, and are also required to take a statistics course. Students in the GIS track in geography are
required to take three of the four methods courses (304, 305 and 390) and also statistics. Students in the urban planning track are required to take two of the methods courses (305, 390) and also a statistics course. The department is to be commended for this emphasis on skill and analytic development. Students graduating with a degree in geography from Wittenberg will have a variety of analytic skills that will serve them in graduate studies, environmental consulting and research, urban and public policy, business, and beyond.

There may be ways, however, to further strengthen and make more efficient the curriculum in geographic methods, analysis and interpretation. First, Professors Lenz might consider how to integrate 304 and 305, perhaps by combining map-making (cartography) and map interpretation. Given changes in spatial and aerial information technology, I would then suggest replacing the subject of air photo interpretation (305) with a course on remote sensing, perhaps a course that is shared among the departments of geography, geology and biology (forestry and conservation biology) and the Environmental Studies Program. Students in geography noted in particular the absence of remote sensing in the curriculum.

Second, the faculty might consider strengthening relationships between 304 (possibly reconfigured as ‘Cartography and Spatial Interpretation’) and 390 Geographic Information Systems. For example, students in the program raise the question of how some principles of cartography and map interpretation might be incorporated into the 390 GIS course, and perhaps in courses such as GEOG290 Business Geographics that also incorporate GIS analysis. Third, given the stated recognition by the geography faculty of the salience of GIS analysis to geographic inquiry, I would recommend adopting GEOG390 GIS as a requirement for each of the environmental geography major. Of course, this recommendation reconnects to issues of facilities for computing and information technology.

And fourth, the department should reconsider GEOG310 Research Methods. This course is not required for any of the three tracks within the geography major, and has been enrolled by relatively small numbers of students in the past few times that the course has been offered by Professor Lenz in recent semesters. While the subject matter of 310 represents an important body of knowledge for social scientists, I might suggest that this course be dropped from the geography curriculum. Students interest in social survey research might look to POLI260 Methodology or SOCI307 Research Methods.

(v) A review of course syllabi made available to me raises issues of consistency within the department in expectations for student workload and assessment among courses at each level of the curriculum. Standardization of course format and requirements is not my point. But general consistency in what is expected in student performance and intellectual development at the 200-level versus 300-level would provide students, and also new and visiting faculty, guidance for setting and achieving goals for learning, and teaching, respectively. For example, the suite of systematic geography courses (as opposed to regional geographies, GEOG250 or GEOG280S The Geography of Ohio) currently at the 200-level, including GEOG222 Weather and Climate, GEOG230 Urban Geography, GEOG240 Economic Geography, GEOG292 Population Geography, and GEOG290 Business Geographics, might more appropriately be offered at the 300-level given the theoretical and methodological depth of these courses. More regional courses (232, 250 and 280 when appropriate) could serve a wider range of student interests in general education and also serve as case studies of integrative geographical analysis. From these at the 200-level, students whose geographic imagination is piqued could move to systematic geography at the 300-level, without the need for an introductory course in geography (see discussion above). Finally, and as a sort of footnote to this discussion, each of the current courses at the 100-level, (GEOG101 and GEOG120) seems rather light in terms of requirements for reading and writing and opportunities for assessment given the caliber of student enrolled at Wittenberg.

(v) The titles for many of the courses in the geography curriculum might reconsidered in relationship to course content, and also to convey the role of the course in the broader university curriculum. The acronym “GEOG” will identify the course as geography on the student transcript and within the course catalogue. It is thus not necessary to 2

2 On the other hand, the department might consider developing a course on spatial statistics, or incorporating a unit of spatial statistics within GIS or other courses in which GIS is included. We are considering this change in our department at Colgate. But even with six geographers on staff we may not have the luxury in teaching power to offer such a course on spatial statistics distinct from GIS or advanced GIS.
repeat ‘geography’ for each course in systematic geography. For example, the course description GEOG230 *Urban Geography* describes significant changes in internal urban structure and urban environments within the context of trends in urbanization and international migration. This is exciting and relevant subject matter! The course might be re-titled as *Global Cities and Urban Environments* to convey these global dynamics of urban change. GEOG330 *Applied Urban* might be more appropriately titled *City and Urban Planning and Analysis*.

### E. Pedagogies

The geography curriculum is implemented by faculty through a mixture of pedagogies. Professor Lenz is masterful at using field studies and trips to engage students in landscape analysis in both urban and rural environments and to adopt a geographic lens for regional and place-based analysis. Professor Medvedkov has had great success in service learning pedagogy in her teaching in geography. Her success in engaged teaching and public scholarship has benefited Wittenberg students and the broader Wittenberg community in meaningful ways. Students recognize and appreciate the variety of teaching strategies implemented by faculty. Opportunities for engagement in community based learning and research are highly valued by current students. Students in the program articulate well the benefit of service learning and outreach for their intellectual development as geographers, and they would like to see engaged pedagogy and public scholarship by geography students expanded.

### III. Opportunities for the Department of Geography

In the previous paragraphs I have offered observations about the ways in which geography, geographers, and the geography curriculum at Wittenberg contribute to the mission of the University and its strategic plan. In making several specific suggestions, I have offered my individual thoughts about how the department might revise the curriculum according to evolving themes in the discipline and thereby deepen the ways in which geography serves current and future students at Wittenberg.

The suggestions for the geography curriculum sprinkled throughout the analysis above are summarized in general terms here:

- Reorganize introductory geography courses to allow two forms of introduction to geography;
  - Develop a new introductory course (GEOG120 *Peoples, Places and Environment: Geographies of Global Change* (?!)) that combines GEOG101, 120 and 220;
  - Offer a selective group of regional courses (connected to interdisciplinary programs including Russian Studies and East Asian Studies) at the 200-level level which are organized to also introduce students to the scope and methods of human and physical geography;
- Shift systematic geography courses to the 300-level to provide majors and minors in geography and minors in interdisciplinary programs opportunities for deeper engagement in the analytic strengths of selected subdisciplines (urban, population, climatology, business) of primarily human and nature-society geography;
- Reconfigure suite of methods courses around at two required themes: GIS and cartography and map interpretation;
  - Review the methods requirements for each track within the geography major;
- Develop more opportunities for a senior seminar or senior experience in geography that integrates across the three tracks in the major. (A possible theme for the seminar would be urban environmental issues that merges environmental, GIS and urban planning).

To repeat my statements from the introduction to this report, the transition of personnel in the department of geography provides the opportunity for the department to consider these, and other avenues for strengthening the geography curriculum in order to better meet its own goals: provide students a broad background in geography; engage students in global and international analyses of societal and environmental change; demonstrate regional analysis; and equip students with sound skills in spatial analysis. Meeting these curricular goals will also serve the wider academic community at Wittenberg by amplifying interdisciplinary study, community-based teaching and research and international awareness.
How then to effectively accomplish these goals within the context of three faculty members in geography? I suggest that the department hire a geographer whose expertise would have the following two effects: (1) complement the analytic strengths of Lenz and Medvedkov within the Department of Geography; and (2) provide additional bridges to interdisciplinary programs in the university. Lenz brings a broad geographic perspective that straddles human and physical geography and through this teaching Lenz engages students in regional analysis and reading of place. Medvedkov brings exquisite skills in urban geography, urban planning and GIS analysis, and a deep and abiding commitment to engaging students, faculty and staff in public teaching and scholarship.

The geography faculty, and thus the department will benefit from a human geographer who can work with Lenz and Medvedkov to implement the geography curriculum organized around themes of environmental and urban geography, and who can also engage students in spatial analysis, including GIS, visualization and/or remote sensing. The distinctive expertise – to distinctively complement the interests of Lenz and Medvedkov – should include, in my opinion, an emphasis on human dimensions of global change that have implications for regional and local environments, for example, urban or agricultural land use change. These professional qualities would also contribute to the academic programs and faculties of Urban Studies, Environmental Studies, and Global Studies. Within Environmental Studies, this geographer might provide additional leadership in the area of urban or international environmental issues and policy. Down the road, one might also envision an interdisciplinary research or teaching project that would involve the newly hired geographer working in collaboration with faculty in the Departments of Geology and Biology, respectively, on the analysis and mitigation of environmental hazards within metropolitan communities.

Depending on applicant pool and competing job opportunities in geography, the position description that has been developed by the department may yield a human geographer who could contribute to the geography curriculum in ways that I have suggest above as well as the academic programs of other interdisciplinary programs at Wittenberg:

**Wittenberg University. Department of Geography invites applicants for a tenure-track position (pending approval) at the Assistant Professor rank to begin August, 2007. PhD required. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a firm commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarly activity in the context of the liberal arts. Cultural or physical geographer with a broad background in geography to contribute expertise in development issues, preferably in Latin America, and to teach courses in introductory cultural (human) geography, a regional course, preferably on Latin America or middle American, and either Third World Development or a field related physical geography courses. Capability with remote sensing technology would be helpful, but not a necessity. Wittenberg is a selective, residential liberal arts college with about 1950 students and is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We have an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, actively seeking women and minority applicants.**

Send a letter of application with curriculum vitae by 15 March, 2007 to Ralph Lenz, Department of Geography, Wittenberg University, Springfield, OHIO, 45501-0720. Fax 937-327-6340. E-mail rlenz@wittenberg.edu

This announcement, however, specifies a remarkable range of possible areas of expertise, inviting applicants who might be cultural or physical geographers, regional interests in Latin or Middle America, development expertise, and possibly capabilities in remote sensing. In my opinion, this announcement does not communicate the priority of needs in the department curriculum.

Should colleagues in the department (and the university) choose to consider the suggestions for an emphasis on human dimensions of environmental change, then I might suggest a position announcement that, as in the job description shown above, would also invite applications from broadly trained geographers dedicated to teaching within the liberal arts, but that more directly signals an emphasis on human dimensions of global environmental change:

**OHIO, SPRINGFIELD 45501-0720**

**Wittenberg University. Department of Geography invites applicants for a tenure-track position (pending approval) at the Assistant Professor rank to begin August, 2007. PhD required. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a firm commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarly activity in the context of the liberal arts. Human or nature-society geographer with interests in the human dimensions of environmental change and issues of globalization. Capability with GIS or remote sensing technology highly desirable.**
Wittenberg is a selective, residential liberal arts college with about 1950 students and is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We have an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, actively seeking women and minority applicants.

Send a letter of application with curriculum vitae by 15 March, 2007 to Ralph Lenz, Department of Geography, Wittenberg University, Springfield, OHIO, 45501-0720. Fax 937-327-6340. E-mail rlenz@wittenberg.edu

In my view, regional specialty should be omitted from the position description in order to encourage applications from geographers interested in human environmental issues generally. In fact, given the scale of human environmental impacts in east and south Asian, applicants with regional specialties that overlap with those of current Wittenberg faculty might contribute to furthering a ‘center of excellence’ in Asian studies within the university. The successful candidate would be expected to contribute to teaching at the 100-level, and develop a systematic course at the 300-level within his or her specialty within geography (for example, urban environmental issues, or advanced course on geographic perspectives on global change).

Finally, regardless of the wording of the position announcement, the successful candidate for a tenure stream position in geography at Wittenberg must also demonstrate an keen interest participating in discussions about the curriculum and curricular planning. He or she must also demonstrate the ability to effectively teach at the introductory level in geography and thus help to build a more critical foundation for the training of undergraduate students in geographic inquiry and analysis.

IV. Opportunities for the University

As there are recommendations for the Department of Geography introduced throughout this analysis, so there are ideas which I hope will be appreciated by the academic administration at Wittenberg. The most fundamental message that I hope to have conveyed is that of the value of the discipline of geography and the geographers and geography program at Wittenberg, to the mission and vision of the university for the liberal arts in the 21st century. With geography, Wittenberg has an advantage and a distinction that should be supported and celebrated.

Support must take the form of resources dedicated to teaching geography, first and foremost, the continuation of the third tenure stream faculty line in the department. Second, support must take the form of resources for faculty and curricular development. The Freeman Foundation award for faculty development in East Asian studies has shown benefit for both the geography curriculum and further institutionalizing the strong program in Asian studies at Wittenberg. Resources should similarly be made available for Professors Lenz and Medvedkov to work with their newly hired colleague to think through the structure of the geography curriculum in relationship to both the elements of the discipline as well as the mission and plan for the college. Support for a faculty retreat for curricular planning and discussions of teaching pedagogy is appropriate. Faculty might also consider ways of expanding community-based teaching and research in the department, building upon the model of service and engaged learning developed by Professor Medvedkov. Third, the department must have support to more efficiently implement its curriculum in GIS. Students in the department identify the limitations on their intellectual development imposed by inadequate facilities in Carnegie Hall for computing and information technology generally. These issues of technology and architectural design pose real constraints on opportunities for academic excellence among Wittenberg students.

I realize that this last recommendation entails capital projects and expenditures. This should not be defined, however, as unrealistic proposition. Threaded through my conversations with faculty involved with interdisciplinary programs at Wittenberg was the recognition of the importance of GIS for interdisciplinary analysis. Also expressed was the clear expectation for increasing demand for institutional capacities to support GIS analysis for teaching and student and faculty research. Given the prominence of interdisciplinarity in the strategic plan for the university, I suggest that the improvement of GIS and information technology facilities be afforded a high priority in university projects and fundraising. Given the demonstrated success of geographers in using GIS to benefit both students and the wider community, the first place in which to infuse these resources at Wittenberg is the Department of Geography.
## APPENDIX

### Fill Rates for Department Courses, 2001-2007 (Six Years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Seats Used</th>
<th>Seats Used</th>
<th>Fill Rate</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 101S</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>Cultural Geog</td>
<td>Keiffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 120S</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>Human Ecology</td>
<td>Keiffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 220N</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>Physical Geog</td>
<td>Lenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 222B</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Weather and Climate</td>
<td>Lenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 230S</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>Urban Geog</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 250C</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Regional Geog, various topics</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 280S</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>Geog of Ohio</td>
<td>Keiffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 280S</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 290S</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Business Geographics</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 292S</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>Population Geog</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 305</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Air Photo &amp; Map Int</td>
<td>Lenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 310</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>Lenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 380</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Map Interpretation</td>
<td>Lenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 390</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Medvedkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 490*</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 491</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 499</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Honors Thesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 2548 seats used, 2089 seats used, 82% fill rate.  
*one registered as GEOG 230

### General Education Contributions, 2001-2007

With only three faculty members, we are not able to set up sequences with multiple prerequisites because we do not offer our courses frequently enough. Our goal has been to give our majors a broad background in geography. Many of our majors have gone on to do graduate work, and the feedback we get is that they are very well prepared, so our strategy does seem to be effective. Also, as a result, we are able to designate a large proportion of our courses as Gen Ed classes.

### Seats Available, Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Seats Available</th>
<th>Seats Used</th>
<th>Fill Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S Classes</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>1221</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Classes</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Classes</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Classes</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 2244 seats available, 1900 seats used, 85% fill rate.

Gen Ed classes made up 88% of our available seats in all GEOG classes (not counting internships or independent studies) and 91% of our used seats. There were 748 Gen Ed seats available per faculty member and 633 seats used per faculty member over the 6 year period.
Classes solely for Gen Ed credit  0  0
Gen Ed classes that count for major  2244  1900  85%
Major classes without Gen Ed credit  304   189  62%
TOTAL                             2548  2089  82%

GEOGRAPHY FACULTY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY
RALPH LENZ serves on the East Asian studies, urban studies and environmental studies committees. He team teaches each fall in the core course URBN 171S “Introduction to the City”, and his GEOG 220N and GEOG 222B classes are earth sciences options for environmental studies minors. His GEOG 250C “Southeast Asia” has been a focus class for the global studies minor and should be useful to our new international studies major. GEOG 250C "Africa” has been an option for Africana studies, and “East Asia” for East Asian studies. He is presently a member of the Faculty Executive Board and of the university’s Strategic Planning Initiative Group.

OLGA MEDVEDKOV serves on the Russian and Central Eurasian studies committee. Her GEOG 250C “Russia and Central Eurasia” class is critical to the major in that area, and her GEOG 232S “Moscow: Politics and Urban Planning” has also made a major contribution as well as attracting many students to the summer field study in Russia that is offered in conjunction with it. Student research from that trip has been presented at professional geography meetings in the Great Lakes area. Her GEOG 230S “Urban Geography” is one of the “basic” courses in the Urban Studies minor, and her GEOG 330 “Applied Urban” and GEOG 390 “GIS” are listed as “urban interest” classes for that minor. Her GEOG 292S “Population Geog” has been a foundation courses in the global studies minor. Her GEOG 230, 292, 330, and 390 are all policy and management options for the environmental studies minor.

ANDREW SCHOLL is director of the environmental studies committee, and his “biogeography” and 220N “physical geography” are important parts of the environmental curriculum. His GEOG 120S “human ecology” is fundamental to the environmental studies minor. Andy also serves on Witt’s Sustainability Task Force.

Several of our introductory classes, especially 101S, 220N, and 222B provide critical material for professional preparation for elementary education majors. We believe that these classes should be required for education majors specializing in social studies.