

Information Letter #12

TO: Faculty and Staff of:
Department of Atmospheric Sciences
Department of Geology & Geophysics
Department of Geography
Department of Oceanography
Geochemical and Environmental Research Group
Integrated Ocean Drilling Program
Texas Sea Grant Office

FROM: Björn Kjerfve, Dean
College of Geosciences

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Endowed Chairs and Professorships

The College of Geosciences is fortunate to have a number of generous, capable, and committed benefactors who have made significant gifts to the College. These have allowed the College to establish 10 Endowed Chairs and 9 Endowed Professorships. We are pleased to announce a call for nominations for up to 4 Endowed Chairs and 6 Professorships.

In 1997, Texas A&M University established a Standard Administrative Procedure 12.01.99.M2.01 Appointment, Evaluation, and Reappointment of Faculty to Endowed positions, calling for a review of all holders of endowed positions at least every 5 years. Each College was given the charter to incorporate this policy, and further, to examine or create its own policy to ensure that each and every Chair and Professorship was aligned with the intent of the donor and that the maximum value was being generated from the awarding of these endowed positions. However, it was not until December 2005 that the College of Geosciences established its new [Endowed Chairs and Professorships Administrative Policy](#), which governs the administration of all endowed Chairs and Professorships.

The policy was reviewed and approved by the College Executive Committee, Dean of Faculties, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the Office of General Counsel. The policy established a College Advisory Committee on Endowed Chairs and Professorships, criteria for terms of appointment, and a formal review process for new appointment and re-appointments. The Provost ultimately approves all appointments and reappointments. The policy established uniform appointment periods (Chairs – 5 years; Professorships – 3 years), term limits, and expenditure guidelines. Whereas a Chair holder may use part of the endowment funds to pay for salary (1 month per year), the Professorship funds may not be used for salary. The new policy has been implemented over the course of the last two years. The College Advisory Committee on Endowed Chairs and Professorships is presently chaired by Dr. Joe Newton, Dean of the College of Science. Endowed Chairs and Professorships in the College of Geosciences recognize excellence and are used to retain, recruit, and/or reward deserving faculty members.

Chairs and Professorships are awarded to faculty members ad-locked (administratively located) in the College of Geosciences to outstanding faculty members. Currently, donors must pledge \$1,000,000 to endow a Chair in the College and \$200,000 to endow a Professorship. Whereas some individuals and groups give this amount at one time, others choose to contribute to the endowment over a period of time. This means that it may take several years to fully fund an endowment. The Texas A&M Foundation manages all endowments and charges a 5% one-time development fee on any gift. The interest on the investment is used to provide the funds for the Endowed Chairs and Professorships in perpetuity. A Chair holder in the College of Geosciences receives \$50,000 per year for 5 years, whereas a Professorship receives \$10,000 per year for 3 years, contingent upon availability of funds. The term Endowed Chairs and Professorships in the College can be renewed once for a Chair holder and twice for a Professorship, with renewals being based on a review and the continued productivity and excellence of the appointee.

A summary of the 10 Endowed Chairs and 9 Endowed Professorships that exist in the College of Geosciences is provided below along with information on which are currently open. Nomination packages for Chairs and Professorships are due in the Dean's Office by Friday 1 February 2008.

The 10 existing Endowed Chairs in the College of Geosciences are:

- *Michel T. Halbouty Chair in Geology (potentially 2 holders)*. This Endowment Chair is presently of sufficient magnitude to support two Chair holders. It was established in 1982 by the late Michel T. Halbouty, a 1930 Texas A&M graduate and pioneering wildcatter, who founded Halbouty Energy Co. and was the first recipient of Texas A&M's professional degree in geological engineering. Dr. David Wiltschko, Professor of Geology, is currently one of the Halbouty Chair holders and is in the process of being considered for a second term. A second Chair holder will be appointed to fill the position held by Dr. Steve Dorobek who left Texas A&M during the summer of 2006.
- *Dudley J. Hughes Endowed Chair in Geology and Geophysics*. This Chair was established in 1998 by Dudley J. Hughes, a 1951 Texas A&M graduate with a degree in Geology, to enhance activities in Geology & Geophysics. Dr. Richard Carlson, Professor of Geology & Geophysics, is the current Chair holder until 31 August 2009.
- *Dan A. Hughes '51 Chair in Geosciences*. This Chair was established in 2005 and recently fully funded by Dan Hughes, a 1951 graduate in Geology. The College will appoint the first Dan A. Hughes Chair holder in FY08, and nominations are presently being solicited.
- *David Bullock Harris Chair in Geology*. Established in 1979, this endowed Chair was a bequest from the estate of David Bullock Harris, a 1909 graduate of Texas A&M University. The Harris trust established a Chair in Geology and allowed for the creation of additional Chairs and Professorships in his name. The Chair has most recently supported a number of post-doctoral fellows in G&G. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Chair.
- *David Bullock Harris Chair in Geosciences*. This endowed Chair was initially established in 1981 as a Chair in Geophysics but redirected as a Chair in Geosciences by action of the Texas A&M Board of Regents in 2006, fully consistent with the intent of the will of Mr. D. B. Harris. This Chair was held for at least two full terms by Dr. Phil Rabinowitz through 31 August 2007. Dr. Rabinowitz retains the title for life based on his longevity as the Chair holder. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Chair.
- *Harold J. Haynes Chair in Geosciences*. This Chair was established in 2000 by Harold (Bill) and Reta Haynes. Harold Haynes, a 1946 graduate of Texas A&M University in civil engineering, is the retired CEO and Chairman of the Board of Chevron (now ChevronTexaco) and a longtime Bechtel advisor. Dr. Gerald North, Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, is the current holder of the Harold J Haynes Chair until 31 August 2008.
- *Reta A. Haynes Chair in Geosciences*. This Chair was established in 2000 by Harold and Reta Haynes through the Bright matching program in place at that time. Dr. Daniel Z. Sui, Professor of Geography, is the current holder of the Reta A. Haynes Chair until 31 August 2011.
- *Louis & Elizabeth Scherck Chair in Oceanography*. This Chair was established in 1994 by the late Louis and Elizabeth Scherck, who left an endowment to the Department of Oceanography which supports this Chair and student fellowships and scholarships. Louis Scherck, who was a graduate of Brown University, made a career in the oil and gas industry in Houston. The Schercks established this Chair because of their conviction that the oceans of the world represent the frontier of the future. Dr. John Morse, Professor of Oceanography, is the current holder of this Chair until 31 August 2011.
- *Jane and R. Ken Williams '45 Endowed Chair in Ocean Drilling Science, Technology and Education*. Established in 2001, this Chair was given by Jane and Ken Williams. Ken Williams graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in mechanical engineering in 1947. He is the 2007 recipient of the Michel T. Halbouty Geosciences Medal. Williams has been a generous supporter of the College and a major player in the oil and gas industry throughout his career. Dr. William Sager, Professor of Oceanography, is the current holder of this Chair through 31 August 2008.
- *Michel T. Halbouty '30 Visiting Chair*. This endowed Chair is unique in that its purpose is to bring nationally and internationally acclaimed visiting scholars to campus. The individual Chair term is determined by the availability and length of commitment made by the honoree. The first recipient of this Chair in 1999 was Dr. Fred Mackenzie of the University of Hawaii. Other previous Chair holders include Dr. Jay Melosh from University of Arizona; Dr. Albert Bally, Rice University; Dr. Frank Schwartz, Ohio State University; Dr. Jon Olson, University of Texas, and Dr. Doug

Burbank, UC Santa Barbara. Dr. Renee Heilbronner, Basel University, Switzerland, will be the 2008 Halbouty Visiting Chair in the spring of 2008.

The 9 existing Endowed Professorships in the College of Geosciences are:

- *Robert R. Berg Professorship in Geology.* This Professorship was established in 1986 to honor Dr. Robert R. Berg who was Professor and Head of the Department of Geology from 1967 to 1972. Dr. Berg was also the Associate Dean of the College in 1972, and Director of the Office of University Research from 1972 to 1982. From 1982 until his retirement in 1995, Dr. Berg held the Michel T. Halbouty Chair in Geology. Dr. Luc T. Ikelle, Professor of Geology & Geophysics, is the current holder of the Robert R. Berg Professorship in Geology and is currently under consideration for a second term.
- *E. D. Brockett Professorship in Geosciences.* Established in 1974, this Professorship was established by E. D. Brockett, a Texas A&M graduate who began his career in the oil industry in 1934 when he joined the Gulf Oil Corporation as a roustabout in the oil fields of Texas. He later became President of the British American Oil Company Limited. Dr. Tom Wilheit, Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, was the holder of the Professorship until 31 August 2006. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Professorship.
- *Earl F. Cook Professorship in Geosciences.* This Professorship was established in 1983 by the Ray C. Fish Foundation through the Endowed Faculty Scholars matching program in place at that time. It honors former Dean of the College of Geosciences (1971-1981) and Distinguished Professor of Geology and Geography Earl F. Cook. He was the first non-Aggie to be awarded the Geosciences and Earth Resources Medal for Distinguished Achievement, now the Michel T. Halbouty Medal. He also held the David Bullock Harris Professorship in Geosciences. The Cook Professorship was last occupied by Dr. Anne Raymond until 31 August 2007. Nominations for this Professorship are currently being solicited.
- *Ray C. Fish Professorship in Geology.* Established in 1983 by the Ray C. Fish Foundation, this Professorship honors the late Ray C. Fish. Mr. Fish was the founder of the Fish Engineering Corporation in Houston, TX, overseeing engineering and construction of intercontinental gas pipeline systems, including projects such as the Transcontinental Gas Pipeline System (Transco), the Pacific Northwest Pipeline System, and the Campo-Duran Project in Argentina. Dr. Andreas Kronenberg, Professor and Head of the Department of Geology & Geophysics, is the current holder of this Professorship and is under consideration for a second term.
- *Francesco Paolo di Gangi/Heep Endowed Professorship in Theoretical Geophysics.* This new Professorship was established in 2003 by the Heep Trust through a matching program in place at that time. It honors retired Geology & Geophysics Professor Emeritus Anthony F. Gangi. The gift agreement specifies that this Professorship is to be awarded to an assistant or associate professor working in theoretical geophysics. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Professorship, and the College anticipates appointing its first di Gangi/Heep Professorship in 2008.
- *EOG Teaching Professorship in Geosciences.* This Professorship was established by the Enron Oil and Gas Corporation in 1994 as a teaching Professorship. It is to be awarded to an associate or full professor who excels in mentoring students in the classroom, lab, and through advising. Dr. Bill Bryant, Professor of Oceanography, most recently occupied this Professorship until 31 August 2007. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Professorship.
- *David Bullock Harris Professorship in Geosciences.* This Professorship was established in 1979 from the David B. Harris bequest which established several endowments in his name. This Professorship has for the past ~10 years supported visiting geosciences scholars through departmental seminar programs. Nominations are currently being solicited for this Professorship.
- *Howard Karren Endowed Professorship in Geology and Geophysics.* This Professorship was established in 2007 by Howard Karren, a 1951 graduate of A&M with degrees in petroleum and geological engineering. The College is presently soliciting nominations to fill the first Howard Karren Professorship.
- *Mollie B. & Richard A. Williford Endowed Professorship in Geology.* This Professorship was established in 1991 by Richard Williford and his wife, Mollie. Williford was a 1955 A&M graduate who built successful companies in energy, real estate, and aviation. He served the University in a number of advisory posts over the years, from President of the Association of Former Students to Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation. Dr. Ethan Grossman, Professor of Geology & Geophysics and Acting Executive Associate Dean and Associate Dean for Research, is the current holder of this Professorship until 31 August 2009.

Raising Laboratory Safety Consciousness in Geosciences

The University is ratcheting up its programs in lab safety in response to the CDC problem, risk management issues, and recent federal legislation for Homeland Security. Geosciences will respond to the campus initiatives by bringing your attention to lab safety concerns; installing new signs on lab doors; and cooperating with EHSD with respect to reporting and tracking chemicals. Another measure is to establish a College committee on safety. TAMU has recently created a Fieldwork Safety Committee, and we thank Drs. Doug Biggs (OCNG) and Bob Popp (GEPL) for agreeing to serve as the representatives from the College of Geosciences.

GERG Director Norman Guinasso serves on TAMU's safety committee. It is "working to identify all undergraduate laboratory courses and document that all undergraduate laboratories are conducted with an eye toward safety. All undergraduates will eventually have to sign a statement that they understand the University safety rules and agree to abide by them. This is to try to demonstrate due diligence on the part of the University." In October, the College conducted an informal review of teaching labs in the Halbouty and O&M buildings, which overall were found to be safe and well managed. There were only a few minor infractions.

Immediately, all lab operators should review their space with respect to the most often cited safety infractions: every container labeled as to its contents; all chemicals appropriately stored; all hazardous materials properly contained and accounted for; and up-to-date contact information posted on the lab door. In January, the College will distribute safety brochures published by the American Chemical Society. Arrangements are being made with EHS to have their instructors come to one of our buildings to teach the basic lab safety course required of all lab workers. The College Facilities Coordinator, Maureen Reap, will provide an EHS-approved template for customizing fire safety information to be posted on all laboratory doors.

The area of greatest change on campus is inventorying and tracking chemicals. With exceptions for some classes of materials, only teaching laboratories are now required to post and inventory their chemicals. Indications are that this program will be expanded to include research labs. EHS is currently breaking in web-based software to track chemical inventories. (Engineering already requires its lab operators to track all their chemicals with this software.) Behind this effort are new reporting requirements imposed by state and federal agencies. The end product will be safer labs for students, staff, faculty, and fire and rescue workers.

Facilities Update

Amongst our most daunting and challenging tasks are facilities renovations, which are both desired and required as facilities age, and as faculty, staff, and instruments are added to the College. These costs can be enormous as we deal with asbestos abatement, mold removal, ADA compliance, and malfunctioning electrical, air conditioning, and hydraulic systems. Current and recent facilities projects cost in excess of \$4.5 million. Unfortunately, the funds available through Physical Plant and Facilities Maintenance do not cover these expenses. Physical Plant only covers the principal costs for items related to safety on a prioritized basis. Nevertheless, all construction must be supervised and approved by Facilities at an added cost of 10%, and there are usually substantial delays as a result. Thus, it is necessary that each College seek funds from other sources to deal with facilities issues, whether these issues are new construction, remodeling, or more routine repairs and cosmetic changes. Physical Plant only covers the principal costs for items related to safety on a prioritized basis. Some funds are provided by the Council on the Built Environment (CBE) associated with facilities needs due to Faculty Reinvestment. Some facilities costs are part of faculty start-up packages and are therefore cost-shared by the Department, College, and Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR). Other facilities costs are paid for from operational budgets. An essential source of funds for facilities renovations is private donations. The following summary may help shed light on the myriad of current and recent projects in the College.

- *Halbouty Radiogenic Lab* (Rooms 328-333; \$1,936K): The contractor is ahead of schedule and completion of the lab may be in early March. Accidental damage that occurred in October to an adjacent lab has been repaired. Work will continue throughout the winter holiday with the air conditioning unit for the lab to be lifted into place on the roof, and new water pumps to be connected. Nobody should enter the building during the crane operation on the morning of 28 December. To complete the installation of the air conditioning system, Old Halbouty will have no HVAC and no heat 26-31 December. The new wing of Halbouty is not affected by this construction. Funding of this most expensive of College facilities has been a challenge, with funds coming from many sources, including a designated gift of \$500K from Mr. R. Ken Williams, ODASES funds, College gifts and operating funds, contributions from start-up accounts, and CBE Reinvestment funds.
- *Halbouty Perchloric Hood* (Room 332; \$44K): This project is nearly completed. A final walkthrough is expected in early January. We were able to pay for this expense from CBE allocations because of Reinvestment.

- *Halbouty Coldroom (Rooms 368A) and Research Lab (Room 370) (\$61K)*: The coldroom should be operational by 4 January, and the gas line and wall repairs in Room 370 should be completed by 15 January. We were able to pay for this expense from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *O&M 4th floor (\$295K)*: The last renovation project on this floor has just been assigned to a contractor by Physical Plant. Room 409 will be renovated for graduate student offices. We were able to pay for these expenses mostly from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *O&M 7th floor (\$288K)*: Suite 707 for GEOG GIS faculty offices is near completion although several minor punch list items remain to be dealt with. Moving into this space could occur between semesters. We were able to pay for these expenses mostly from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *O&M 12th Floor (\$586K)*: This project, which includes noise reduction and also renovation of one room on the 9th floor, is expected to begin in mid-January. Contracts are scheduled to be signed before the holidays. Laboratory operations throughout the eastern half of the O&M building will be affected on all floors for a short period during the spring semester, when the east exhaust chase is renovated. Hood operators will be consulted to determine the best time for this shut down. The west exhaust chase will not be affected. We are able to pay for most of these expenses from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *Halbouty Rooms 326 and 327 (\$45K)*: Conversion to faculty, technician, and graduate student offices. We are able to pay for most of these expenses from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *Halbouty Room 327 (\$65K)*: Installation of two hoods and lab benches for preparation of samples for geochemical analysis. We are able to for pay most of these expenses from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *O&M 702 Suite (~\$45K but potentially more)*: Removal of benches, sinks, and safety shower; addition of walls and room dividers to create office space. We are able to pay for most of these expenses from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *O&M Rooms 714, 715 and 716 (\$50K)*: Laboratory space to be repaired; cleaned; replacement of some furniture; power upgrade. We are able to pay for most of these expenses from CBE Reinvestment allocations.
- *Halbouty Sidewalk (cost unknown)*: Engineers have determined that waterproofing the walls of Old Halbouty below grade is not required, so that job has been completed well before the announced date. The issue of providing a canopy over the new sidewalk is still being pursued. These expenses are covered by Physical Plant.
- *Dean's Offices Renovation (O&M Suite 2002; \$434K)*: Renovation of the Dean's Office suite in the western part on the second floor in the O&M Building is now complete. All renovations were funded by private gift money, most notably a \$250K donation by Dudley J. Hughes to renovate the office suite.
- *O&M Restrooms 107 and 108 (\$25K)*: These restrooms will be renovated and made ADA compliant over the holiday break. They will not be usable during construction. Rather, ADA restrooms are located in Teague and Animal Industries. These expenses will be covered by CBE.
- *Sea Grant at 727 Graham Road (estimated at \$50K)*: A contractor has been identified for renovation of the Sea Grant Building. Scheduling and cost estimates await a final engineering review. These expenses are at the present being covered by the College.
- *College of Geosciences Server Room (B04 of O&M, ~\$600K)*: Repairs and upgrades to the O&M building infrastructure to support the College's new server room and data center will include engineering, adding a chilled water distribution system to support 22 racks, replacing potentially unsafe power panels, adding power infrastructure to support existing and future racks, replacing the sprinkler system in B04 and adjacent rooms with an FM-200 gas fire suppression system, and upgrading physical security by adding card access. These expenses are being covered by the College.
- *O&M Building Re-commissioning (cost unknown)*: We still await the final report based on the contracted surveys for re-commissioning of the O&M Building. Repairs to the most obvious a/c system failures are already underway. These expenses are covered by Physical Plant.

Geography Department Ranked #9 Nationally in Faculty Productivity

Congratulations to the Department of Geography on being ranked 9th in the Nation, tied with Cornell, in Academic Analytics' third annual Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. According to the *Chronicle*, this ranking of research university graduate programs is based on "objective measures of per-capita scholarly accomplishment." The other geography departments in the top ten were the University of California at Los Angeles, UC Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, Ohio State University, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, San Diego State University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Photo Gallery Developed for the College

The College of Geosciences now has a photo gallery, accessible at <http://geoimages.tamu.edu>. This Gallery site is to provide storage and access to photos of College personnel, graduate students, and events. It can only be accessed through the above link. It is not linked to the College website. Contact Carol Trono at ctrono@tamu.edu if (1) your photo is not posted in the Gallery and you have had one taken by the College, (2) you would like to submit a photo to be posted in the Gallery, or (3) you do not want your photo posted on this site.

Thank You

As 2007 draws to a close, I would like to thank each and all of you for all that you have done for our students, your Department, our College, and the University. Happy Holidays!