GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
AFTER FIFTY YEARS

Abstract

The Geography Department at the University of Florida serves the academic community by offering general education courses, courses designed to serve other disciplines as well as Geography for majors and, in turn, is assisted by other disciplines as it has developed student programs. A graduate program at the doctoral level has contributed to students in a number of fields and, moreover, drawn from them as it attempted to structure the best academic program for its students. Thus, the Geography Department is not a lonely element in the University but rather plays an active role with a number to the end that all are sounder.

The Department entered what it believed might be a growth period with the hiring of medical and population geographers. At the same time, one eminent geographer, Dr. Raymond E. Crist, retired and was not replaced. The prospects of being in new quarters, close to disciplines with which close ties had been enjoyed in the past, suggested that Geography might realize its potential in a few years. This feeling has been dampered by the resignations of three geographers, two on Geography Lines, with only two hires--none on Geography Lines.

To enable Geography to continue to play its role in the University, there is an urgent need to restore lines so that appropriately trained geographers could continue the initial progress in medical and population Geography. A new chairman is also needed.

Introduction

Although Geography courses were offered in 1926 when Mr. Ogden Phillips was appointed to the faculty, the development of Geography as a discipline dates back to 1928. In that year Dr. Rollin S. Atwood joined the faculty.

Dr. Sigismond de Diettrich was appointed in 1931 as the second geographer but there was no separate department. Geographers were on the faculty of the Department of Economics in the College of Business Administration. Geography at that time was considered to be an important element in the training of majors in the College where it played a significant role.
Later, in 1943, an intercollegiate Division of Geography and Geology was established with courses in Geography becoming an integral part of the curriculum in the College of Arts and Sciences as well as in the College of Business Administration. It was during this period that Dr. Atwood helped to establish the Institute of Inter-American Affairs which is today known as the Center for Latin American Studies. In 1948 the Division of Geography and Geology was abolished and separate departments within the College of Arts and Sciences were set up. However, for many years Geography courses were cross-listed in the College of Business Administration.

The Geography Program

During the twenty-year period of its development, Geography was recognized as a service department providing valuable electives and some requirements for majors of a variety of disciplines. During the war years, 1941-45, Geography became the focus of a training effort which brought faculty from a number of departments into training courses organized around "geography". Out of this grew respect and support for Geography as a separate department with its own majors. This was realized in 1948.

The Department continued to offer cross-listed courses, to schedule courses required or suggested in other programs and cooperated with the University College in joint appointments whereby general education was fostered. At the same time, however, a Geography major was available to students who had come to appreciate the discipline as an excellent preparation for careers in many areas as well as Geography, itself.

The pioneer faculty members quickly realized that there was a need for a more advanced level of training in Geography. This was considered to be essential in the strengthening of the undergraduate program but pressures had been developing for a doctoral program. Indeed, the first geographer to receive a Ph.D. at Florida did so in Latin American Studies. The Department's perceived need to prepare advanced degree geographers for the profession and in teaching was recognized by the Administration and Board of Regents in 1955 when they authorized a Ph.D. in Geography.

It should be emphasized that the Geography faculty realizing its relatively small number and consequent inability to cover the entire field focused upon economic and Latin American Geography when it first offered the doctorate. Later, staff additions with different specialisms allowed the Department to expand the scope of its graduate program which now includes agricultural Geography, political Geography and both African and Asian regional Geography. This became wider with the approval of the cooperative doctoral program with Florida State and Florida Atlantic Universities. However, the early emphasis in Latin American has been retained.

In keeping with technological advances as well as new viewpoints in Geography some changes in the Geography program became necessary. Courses in air photo interpretation and qualitative methods were added. A population geographer, Dr. Thomas Risiwski, was appointed in
response to increased awareness of the dynamics of growth, its
demographic characteristics and implications for the State. It is
appropriate to stress the support provided by the Tinker Foundation
to this element of the program. The Foundation, supported with a
three-year $150,000 grant a Certificate Program in Latin American
Demographic Studies. This Program included advanced population
Geography in its core curriculum. At the time (1971) that the Uni-
versity accepted the Tinker Foundation grant, it indicated its in-
tention to fill the retiring faculty Line in Geography (1975) with a
senior-level population geographer. A medical geographer, Dr. Gary
Shannon with urban Geography interests, bolstered the program in a
hitherto neglected area of concern. The tempo of urbanization sug-
gested this much earlier, but action awaited both a faculty Line and
a suitably trained geographer. It was believed, furthermore, that a
faculty member with training an interests in medical Geography would
be able to meet some of the needs of the Medical School. Courses in
epidemiology and the Geography of health care delivery were thought
to be particularly valuable in serving the School's particular needs,
but moreover, were believed to be significant areas of knowledge neg-
lected in the general student's program. Dr. Kenneth Haddock, a
geographer with interests in epidemiology was brought in to the pro-
gram on a joint appointment with University College.

A need for a recreation geographer was perceived and supported
by requests from outside the Department. Consultations with recre-
ationists elsewhere on campus revealed a demand for course work in
recreation Geography. The Department, with its limited resources has
been obliged to place higher priorities on existing courses and pro-
grams and has not developed courses in recreation Geography. However,
it believes that it should do so at such time as circumstances permit.

Finding that our geographers were in demand by planning agencies
the Department, with courses selected from the outside, has developed
a concentration in planning which is well recognized in the State.
This is enhanced by a small internship program which contributes to
student training and subsequent employment.

The Crisis

As we examine the present, it is a matter of pride that the
number and quality of graduate students continue high. However,
there is a concern for the service sector and we wonder how long we
can continue to maintain the high quality of the graduate and under-
graduate major programs.

The loss of three faculty members has had a significant impact
on Geography at Florida. Dr. Raymond Crist, Research Professor, who
was internationally recognized for his field studies in Latin America
and who inspired so many undergraduate students as well as guiding
graduates in their programs, was not replaced upon his retirement.
Some administrative encouragement was given but circumstances con-
spired against an adequate replacement when an opportunity arose.
Since that time the Department has not had permission to search for
a Latin American-oriented geographer and the program is thereby
weakened.
In June, 1977, Dr. Thomas Roswell, population geographer with
demography a special area of concern, resigned. Dr. Roswell had been
working in the Caribbean Islands so his resignation carried with it a
weakening in two fields. In the same month, Dr. Kenneth Haddock,
population and medical geographer with problems of the aging and epi-
demiology as his major interests resigned. Although Dr. Haddock was
on a University College Line, he contributed to Geography and was ex-
pected to develop courses to serve other departments. In particular,
it was hoped that he would teach a course centered around epidemiology
or the geography of disease in which environmental factors would be
stressed.

In August, 1977, Dr. Gary Shannon, medical geographer who was on
Leave, resigned. He could not be replaced. His course on the
Geography of Health Care Delivery was in demand by students outside
the Department as well as within. He was considered a national leader
in his chosen field. With his leaving the Department lost not only a
Line but someone to whom graduate students had come to study. His
urban course could be and was taught by others but that demanded the
dropping of important courses.

Two faculty members have been added to the Geography program via
affiliate appointments and a third, Dr. Herbert Schaeper, has been
able to help out in Remote Sensing. They help cover some courses but
obviously are limited by teaching obligations in University College.
Climatology, long neglected in the Geography curriculum, is now an
integral part of the program. Urban geography is again being handled
by a specialist. However, these represent much less than making up
the loss of Professors Roswell, Crist, Haddock and Shannon.

A lack of funding for the summer program is viewed with grave
concern as it hampers efforts to service summer school demands as
well as curtailing Geography in the field.

The Opportunities

The Department moved into fine new quarters September 1978.
These included, for the first time, a cartography room which was both
spacious and well equipped. Furthermore an optical laboratory and
remotely sensed imagery analysis center give it new tools for research
and teaching.

The faculty has the respect of the academic community and ranks
high among departments in the nation. The map library has the largest
holdings in the South. The institutional arrangements on the campus
give the Department unusual breadth and depth in program planning.
The Institute of Tropical Agriculture has provided geography students
with unmatched opportunities to develop as specialists in agricultural
geography. The Latin American Center with its specialized library
holdings and interdisciplinary resources is able to provide the student
support unrivaled by any American University. At the same time geo-
graphy contributes to these programs.

Changing roles for Florida's institutions of higher education
suggest that the cooperative doctoral program shall be given a much
larger part in the future. The Department has taken an early role in
developing the program and sees this as one in which it can and should assume a more active part.

The Future

The faculty of the Department has given much attention to the role of geography in a major University. In agreement with those at other institutions we contend that ignorance of geography is deplorable and that all students should have some basic courses in the discipline as part of general education. We also maintain that such courses are best offered as part of a geography program rather than scattered in other departments. Also there is complete agreement that an undergraduate program should include courses intended to serve students from other disciplines. We see, also, where courses outside the Department should be utilized to broaden or support the program of individual geography majors. We deplore restrictions that tend to narrow choice.

Paralleling other disciplines, geography has become dualistic in that it has sought to meet a demand for technicians and sub-professionals at the same time it continued its role in liberal arts education. We have been successful in this effort, but have reached a crisis point in faculty strength.

As we look to the Fall of 1978, there are courses scheduled for which there are no instructors. They will be dropped without replacement faculty. There are other courses which should have been scheduled but, in the absence of qualified instructors, were not. There are yet others for which there is a perceived need but which would require the addition of geographers of specialized training.

Beyond the undergraduate crisis there is the commitment to graduate students which is threatened. Although the present faculty seems able to handle the thirty-eight graduate students registered fall term, the fact is that some students came to the University to pursue work under professors now gone taking with them expertise in the student’s work area. Furthermore, with fewer faculty members the program must be more restricted.

Another problem involves departments at two other universities. The cooperative doctoral program with FSU and FAU is centered around the program at the University of Florida which has suffered by attrition. To enable us to maintain the position of leadership this program implies the Department should be at least returned to its 1975 staffing and in the areas noted. Also the cooperative program cannot be expected to fulfill its early promise unless support funds are made available.

Recent grants awarded Dr. Carl Spurlock demonstrate the respect held for his work. Dr. Virginia Hatrick is a consultant for the Alachua County School Board. The Department is developing its remote sensing analysis capabilities and climatology is now a part of the curriculum. The Department is one in which a modest investment can produce major returns — for the Department, its students, associated disciplines and the University.
Specific Request

Fall 1978 schedule includes three courses for which there are no instructors. These are GEO 1010, Geography for a Changing World and GEO 2420, Geography of World Societies and GEO 3430, Population Geography. With the merger of University College and The College of Arts & Sciences, it is believed that the 1000 and 2000 level courses should be kept to serve freshmen and sophomores especially. Population Geography is needed by many of our majors, and as noted earlier is part of the Latin American Demography Program. Several staff members seem qualified to teach GEO 1010 and 2420 but there is no one to handle GEO 3430. We, therefore, request permission to initiate a search for a population geographer.

Medical geography was dropped Winter term 1975, when Dr. Gary Shannon went on leave. This seems tragic as we have not met the perceived need of many students, some of whom are entering the medical or health care delivery field. The most disturbing fact, however, is that much of the groundwork to develop a viable program is being eroded and with it our ability to meet State needs in that area of concern. It is our request that we be allowed to search for a medical geographer.

The Senior Latin American scholar, Dr. Raymond Crist, Professor Emeritus, has not been replaced although permission was granted to return him to the campus for one third time - subject to funding. Funds for the 1977-78 academic year were available only because Dr. Carl Spurlock went on leave one third time and this replaced the needed funds. Dr. Crist contributed to the program Winter term 1978 but, in no way does this compensate for the loss of his efforts in supervising graduate students work or in teaching advanced courses on a regular basis. Therefore, permission is sought to replace him with another Latin American geographer able to support both the Geography and Latin American studies programs.

Finally, the Department should be given authority to initiate a search for a new chairman to replace Dr. Clark I. Cross who will be sixty-five years old September 20, 1978.
Notes for the History of the Department of Geography at UF

Courses of Geography were offered for the first time in 1926 in the College of Arts and Sciences by Ogden Phillips, a retired state geographer. In 1928 Dr. Rollin S. Atwood was hired by the Department of Geology as a geographer after the definite retirement of Phillips. However, the beginning of Geography as a structured discipline at the University of Florida is related to the arrival of Sigismond von Rüdesheim Diettrich (born in Hungary 1906) who, after finishing a PhD degree at Clark University (1931), obtained a lecturing position in the Department of Economics in the of College of Business Administration. The connections that Diettrich maintained with his alma mater explain a certain influence that Clark University had over the nascent unit, enhanced by visits of Professor Wallace Atwood to teach summer sessions in Gainesville.

In 1941 a unit called Intercollegiate Division of Geography and Geology was formed to provide courses in these disciplines to the colleges of Business Administration and Arts and Sciences. Around this time, Dr. Atwood was instrumental in the creation of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs (today center for Latin American Studies), a fact that explain the close ties that were established between Geography and the Center since those years, and the strong vocation of geography towards area studies on Latin America. Although Second World War meant a halting in the development of this unit an explosive growth was to be experienced after the conflict.

The end of WWII marked the return to the state of many enlisted young men that during the war had been trained in Florida basis. Enrollment at UF rapidly increased and programs that during the war years have stagnated. Geography was one of these. In 1948 the Department of Geography was made independent in recognition of the disciplinary differences and methodological approaches with Geology, and a master program was immediately initiated. Diettrich was placed at the helm of the new department, that during the WWII years consisted of three faculty: Sigismond v.R. Diettrich, William H. Pierson (a cartographer with a doctoral degree from the U. of Washington), and W. Terhune (an economic geographer).

The inflow of new students - - many of them with practical experience in collection of intelligence information and dealing with geo-surveying tools - - demanded the opening of new courses beyond the elementary ones that have been taught the conflict years. Thus, John Dunkle (Ph D Clark, cartography and political geography), Robert B. Marcus (D.Ed Florida, regional and didactic of Geography), Clark Cross (Ph D Washington), Charles Varney, Ray Gildes, and others with short stays at UF, engrossed the ranks of Geography at the end of the 1940s.

The arrival of Raymond E. Crist in 1951 meant the transit into maturity of the program. With studies in Europe during the pre-war years (Bonn and Grenoble; Dr Lettres 1937) and stays in the Near East and Venezuela as an oil geologist, Crist brought in a flair for internationalism that powerfully influenced the philosophy of teaching and research in the department. He had been hired as a Research Professor with the main responsibility of catering to graduate students, and to this end his association with the Guggenheim Foundation and the Fulbright Foundation assured splendid connections with these granting agencies. His arrival also coincided with the coming of age of the UF's Center for Latin American Studies which was dotted now now with
several preeminent scholars in History, Hispanic and Portuguese languages, and Sociology. The interaction with faculty members of that Center proved to be beneficial to students of Geography who trained in Latin America, and the program grew strong in that regional specialization. In fact, the first student to obtain a doctoral degree with concentration in Geography did it precisely in the Center for Latin American Studies.

In 1955, and with the backing prestigious Latin Americanist scholars, a doctoral program was authorized, with concentration in Latin American geography and Economic Geography. This action sanctioned the regional specialization that had been building since the end of the 1940s and fostered a new direction of studies, that in the long run proved to be divisive to the unity of the department.

The establishment of the doctoral program and the expansion of enrollment at UF during the 1950s imposed the necessity of widening the disciplinary scope of the courses offered. Thus, it was seen as appropriate for a solid formation in Geography to incorporate courses on field survey, data analysis, and land utilization. New appointments in these disciplinary currents were made in the transition of the 1950s to the 1960s. Among the faculty that joined the department in the early 1960s were the quantifier Maurice H. Yeates (Ph D Northwestern), the climatologist Keith D. Butson (?), and two graduates of the department, Edmund E. Hegen (tropical settlements’ specialist) and Hugh Popenoe (soils and tropical ecology), incorporated as adjunct teachers.

An asset to the rapidly progressing department were the periodic stays at UF since 1956 of the Hungary- born cartographer Erwin Raisz (Ph D Columbia). As a Visiting Research Professor, he was the main force behind the publication of the “Atlas of Florida” (1964) with John Dunkle, in the production of which was also involved a graduate student, Louis Paganini.

The priority given to Economic Geography at the time of creation of the doctoral program led to the search for a established figure in that field. James R. Anderson (Ph D Indiana) was hired in 1960, proving to be a welcome addition to students looking for the understanding of cultivation systems and agricultural production. When he became chair of the department after the retirement of Sigismond v. R. Diettrich in 1965, he tried to orient the department into a more systematic and empiricist direction. One of his first hires at a high rank was David L. Niddrie (Ph D Manchester), a specialist on Africa, tropical agriculture, and the Caribbean, who inaugurated the orientation of the department towards Africa, and enhanced the concentration on agricultural systems, while at junior level Stanley Brunn (Ph D Ohio State) was recruited to incorporate quantitative methods and urban systems into the curriculum.

Although Anderson had been hired under the special recommendation of Raymond Crist (both had met as faculty members at the University of Maryland), his style and discipline orientation collided with the regional paradigm that Crist had pursued since his arrival. Not much later, a divorce between these two currents became extremely disruptive, and, from this, doctoral candidates and young faculty members hired during the 1960s were to suffer most. A succession of short-term hires characterized the 1960s decade as they were caught in the cross-fire between the dominating personalities of Anderson and Crist. This schism conspired against the
consolidation of a sense of unity in the department and fostered tenure insecurity among young hires. Faculty retention became very difficult. The incapacity of senior faculty to reconcile their differences and the inability of successive chairpersons to resolve long-standing internal problems resulted in the instauration of a governance modality whereby policy-creation and departmental decision-making were sequestered by the office of the dean. The prerogative of the department to forge its own destiny went to powers outside the unit and, the bad reputation of the departmental members to take care of their own affairs subtracted respect from other departments and university authorities.

When in 1969 Anderson resigned, the authorities of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences tried to bring order and harmony to the department by hiring, without consultation with the faculty, Shannon McCune (Ph D Clark) a man with administrative credentials. While he was successful in obtaining permission from the dean to hire personnel to fill in systemic fields, his skills were unable to quell the internal dissension and diminish the sense of insecurity that still dominated among young faculty members. During McCune’s term in office junior appointments were made to modernize orientations in the department. Thomas Boswell (Ph D Columbia) came to cover the field of population; Gary Shannon (Ph D Michigan) tried to start a specialization in medical geography; and, David M. Smith (Ph D Manchester) filled in urban and social geography. Lamentable for the future of the department was the fact that none of these young faculty saw any future in the department and departed to pursue careers in other institutions.

The 1970s were the saddest and most critical years for the department. The incapacity to retain promising scholars, the chronic internal bickering, and the lack of academic productivity by many long-established faculty members became so patent that the college’s authorities saw not many reasons to maintain a troubled department and considered, at a certain point terminating the department through attrition. In 1973 Anderson left for a position with U.S. Geological Service in Washington; in 1975 Raymond Crist retired. None of these positions were replaced by the dean, C.A. VanderWerf, a chemist with no sympathies for the troubled unit. The hiring during the early 1970s of graduates from the same department -- Louis Paganini and Joshua Dickinson III -- and of Carl Spurlock (Ph D Oklahoma) did not improve the academic standing of the department. Thus, when in 1978 the number of lines shrunk to six, Dean VanderWerf froze any prospect to replace the departures from the department. The chairpersons who succeeded McCune had a rough time in office. Clark Cross took the reins of the department in 1975, but the lack of support from the college’s office made his term in office ineffective. Robert Marcus who assumed the position of chairperson in 1978 had, initially, very bleak perspectives, but turns of events in that year made his chairmanship more propitious.

There was little doubt that in 1978 the future of the unit was uncertain. Fortunately, three circumstances saved the department from abolition: large enrollment numbers in introductory courses, the arrival of a new dean in 1978, and the closing of the former University College. Large enrollment in undergraduate course had been secured by the activity of stimulating teachers such as Robert B. Marcus, Louis Paganini, and Clark Cross, among others. The appointment of Charles Sidman as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences brought some hope to the beleaguered department. Dean Sidman was a historian with a degree from
Wisconsin, where he had Geography as a minor. His contact with the discipline at a good institution convinced him of the value of solid geographical education and its place in a college of liberal arts and sciences. Although the number of lines in the department had been severely reduced by the previous dean, Sidman took it as a challenge to mend course and decided to give a survival chance to the department. To this effect, the impending closing of the University College - a division of the University of Florida destined exclusively to provide elementary courses to fulfill the requirements of General Education - served Sidman handily to give a boost to Geography. Some lines from the University College that resided in the divisions Physical Sciences and Social Sciences were transferred in 1979 to the Department of Geography, that in this way grew to nineteenth lines. The transferee were in their majority teachers of introductory courses - some of them geologists or astronomers - but, among them there was also a historical geographer, Ary Lamme III.

Dean Sidman, recognizing that these new additions originated from units dedicated to education and not fully oriented to conduct research and produce publications, also authorized the hiring of additional faculty with proved credentials in scholarly endeavors and visibility in their fields of speciality. Further, at this stage, hiring of junior members was to be avoided for the sake of improving visibility and to prevent the premature losses that had so plagued faculty retention in the previous decades. The vacant position of a senior Latin Americanist was filled in 1980 by Cesar N. Caviedes (D Sc Freiburg, Germany), and Stephen M. Golant (Ph D Washington) was appointed in social geography. In 1981 a national search was authorized at senior level for a new chair of the department, but when the search did not produce the results expected, Stephen Golant assumed the chairmanship of the department.

Consistent with his plans and faithful to his promises, Dean Sidman approved in 1981 the hiring of Nigel J.H. Smith (Ph D California-Berkeley) as Associate Professor to strengthen the areas of environment, resources, and South America, and in 1983 authorized the hiring of two economic geographers: Edward Malecki (Ph D Ohio State) and Grant I. Thrall (Ph D Ohio State). Thus, in a matter of five years the department took a totally new outlook.

The regional specialization on Latin America was robustly emphasized with Gustavo Antonini (tenured at the Center for Latin American Studies) specializing in the Spanish Caribbean; David Niddrie interested in the English Caribbean; Louis Paganini focusing on Central America and Panama; Cesar Caviedes in charge of Andean South America and the Southern Cone; and, Nigel Smith concentrating on Brazil and the Amazon basin. The second strength of the department centered on Economic Geography, with Edward Malecki stressing industrial location and Grant Thrall concerned with spatial location and statistical analysis. As secondary fields of specialization remained tropical agriculture (with close links to UF's Institute for Food and Agricultural Systems) and social/historical geography. To complement the methodological needs of the new appointees, two additional positions were filled with specialists in quantitative methods: Stewart Fotheringham (Ph D Mc Master) spatial theory, and Peter R. Waylen (Ph D Mc Master) hydrology and use of quantitative techniques in physical processes. The latter joined the Latin Americanist team by engaging in studies about the climatic/hydrologic effects of El Niño.
The plans of changing the department drawn by Dean Sidman proved to be positive and rejuvenating. Most of the recruiting caused a better recognition of the scholarly caliber of Geography in the College, the University, and peers' organizations. Losses of young appointees were minimal in the 1980s, and the openings created by retiring faculty were filled in within one or two years. However, there was a side-effect from the indiscriminate "hiring of scholars" that characterized the decade. The over-emphasis on scholarly production led to a priority concentration of some appointees on personal research and writing in detriment of student attention at undergraduate and graduate level. Thus, as proven by an evaluation of the department conducted in 1989 by prominent personalities of the AAG, the teaching and publishing carried out by faculty in environmental/physical geography and regional widely surpassed the achievements of those of the human/economic section of the department. It was clear that the investments made in the early 1980s had enhanced the progress of the regional and physical specialties, while the human component was lagging behind.

An exceptional case was Edward Malecki. Not only did he succeed Golant as chair of the department in 1988, but he bore the heaviest load in teaching and advising in economic and human geography. In his seven years as chair the department stabilized permanently, and the confidence and support he enjoyed from College authorities resulted in the hiring of Joann Mossa (Ph D Louisiana) to complement a new emphasis on hydrology, of Abe Goldman (Ph D Clark) and Barbara McDade (Ph D Texas) to strengthen a growing commitment to an African specialization started by David Niddrie, and of Timothy Fik (Ph D Arizona) in location theory and quantitative methods.

Past academic and programmatic priorities were adjusted when a new dean, the chemist Willard Harrison took office in 1989. The neglect for education that the necessary emphasis on scholarship during the years of Dean Sidman had produced was to be corrected. In the pursuit of this goal, the teaching limitations of some faculty at the human side of the department became visible, and Dean Harrison realized the direction that the department had to follow was that of the most successful natural environments and resource development specialties.

Thus, when Cesar Caviedes succeeded Malecki as chair in 1995, it was not difficult for the new chair to obtain the funds for the installation of a modern laboratory of remote sensing and GIS, and to secure the coming to the department of Michael Binford (Ph D Indiana) at a senior level to be in charge of this facility. The emphasis on modern technologies for the analysis of the environment and resource conservation was strengthened by the hiring of Joshua Comenetz (Ph D Minnesota) in 1999 to be in charge of a newly-established laboratory of automated cartography. He succeeded John Dunkle, active at UF from 1949 to 1998.

The fact that Geography was the department to lodge the remote sensing and automated cartography facilities for the service and teaching of the large College of Liberal Arts and Sciences opened the opportunity for the department to be the cornerstone of a research and training institute established in the college in 2000 under the name of Land Use and Environmental Change Institute. A joint hiring for this outfit and the department brought in Jane Southward (Ph D Indiana) with specialties in remote sensing and natural resources surveying.
Under the chair of Nigel Smith (1999-), the department has continued to pursue a course that lies distinctly in the research and teaching of specialties related to environmental surveying, resource management and conservation, impact of climate variability, water resources, and sustainable development in Florida, Latin America, and Africa.

César Caruades 2002