

The Strategic Planning Process in the Department of Geography and Planning

Historical Perspective

The roots of the department of geography and planning at GVSU go back over 30 years. In the beginning, there was only the City and Regional Planning minor. Mr. Ron Poitras who was hired in 1974 coordinated the City and Regional Planning minor. He had a Masters in Urban Planning. He taught GPY235 World Regional Geography, GPY345 Geography of Michigan, GPY309 Introduction to City and Regional Planning, and SS324 Urbanization. He also taught PA439 Community Analysis, and a graduate course in the School of Public Administration focused on strategic planning. The remainder of the City and Regional Planning Minor was made up of courses from other units.

In 1992, Dr. Roy Cole was hired (Ph.D. Geography, Michigan State University). He worked on developing new courses and the program. The Michigan Department of Education approved the teachable minor in Geography in 1994. In 1993, GPY307 was approved and in 1994, GVSU faculty governance approved the GIS minor. Roger Hunt (Ph.D. Geography, Pennsylvania State University), a cultural geographer, was hired in 1995. The proposal for a major in Geography was put forward in 1995 and faculty governance approved the major in 1996.

At the time, the Geography and Planning program was housed within in the Anthropology and Sociology Department. The faculty were Ronald Poitras, Associate Professor and Coordinator; Roy Cole, Assistant Professor; and Roger Hunt, Assistant Professor. There were also a couple of adjuncts teaching in the program.

In 1999, Dr. Elena Lioubimtseva (Ph.D., Physical Geography, Moscow State University) and Ms. Laurie Gasahl (Ph.D., Geography, Michigan State University) were hired. The following year Dr. Edwin Joseph joined the faculty (Ph.D., Development Studies, University of Wisconsin at Madison). In 2003, two additional faculty joined us, Kin Ma (ABD, Geography, Michigan State University) and Dr. James Penn (Ph.D., Geography, University of Florida at Gainesville).

The teachable major in Geography was approved in 2000. We chose not renew our certification in 2003 after the Michigan Department of Education recommended curricular revisions could not be implemented due to faculty shortages.

Currently there are 43 majors and 108 minors, 88 Social Studies majors, and annually we serve 2100 - 2800 students in our courses.

The Department of Geography and Planning became its own Department in 2000. At that time, there were five faculty: Ron Poitras, Chair; Roy Cole, Associate Professor; Laurie Gasahl, Instructor, Edwin Joseph, Instructor; Elena Lioubimtseva, Assistant Professor; and a few adjuncts. In 2003, Kin Ma (ABD Geography) and Jim Penn (Ph.D. Geography) were hired.

After Ron Poitras's retirement Laurie Gasahl became interim Chair, Dr. Danny Vaughn whose tenure as Chair was terminated before it could start followed her. Drs. Erika King and Gary Stark, Deans of Social Sciences acted as interim Chairs until August of 2004. In August 2004, Dr. Jeroen Wagendorp started as the sixth Chair of the Department of Geography and Planning. In 2006, Drs. Xu Gang and Wanxiao Sun joined the department and Dr. Laurie Gasahl left.

Vision Statement

As an essential part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Department of Geography and Planning will assist with setting a standard of excellence in liberal education that will be recognized nationally. We will prepare our students to be engaged citizens, productive professionals, and lifelong learners in a global environment assisted with a strong set of spatial analytical skills. We will help foster a diverse community of inquiry and discourse, discovery, expression and reflection in which spatial accountability and geographic literacy are core proficiencies.

Mission

As part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences the Department of Geography and Planning is a rich academic discipline that creates, communicates critiques, celebrates, preserves and extends human knowledge to enrich and enliven public life from a spatial perspective.

Geography and Planning at GVSU with dedicated, state-of-the-art GIS and remote sensing labs, physical geography labs, and fieldwork and internship opportunities will serve students. Without these resources and applied research experiences, Geography and Planning at GVSU will not be able to compete with other departments across North America. By offering a high quality program here at GVSU, we will be able to recruit outstanding students and a more diverse group of students to our program, including both out-of-state and international students. Students will expect and demand such diversity because it is the very nature of our discipline.

Values

In the Geography and Planning Department, we believe in the value of intellectual inquiry and discourse fostered by an engaged and diverse community of learners, which rests upon academic freedom, integrity, collaboration, and collegiality and is enriched by functional spatial awareness and a global perspective.

We value:

- Excellence in teaching understood as:
 - Active student-teacher engagement and quality learning supported by appropriate class size and teaching responsibilities, as well as a high proportion of permanent faculty.
 - Access to a quality education for a broad range of students of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds including international students.
 - Fostering student development as citizens in a democratic society capable of analyzing and responsible interaction with multiple scales of global dimensions.
- Excellence in a broad range of scholarly and professional activities including interaction with and exposure to diverse geographic dimensions supported by appropriate resources and evaluation.
- University and community service valued for its contribution and effectiveness.

Concepts, Principles and Analytical Tools of Geography and Planning

Geographic literacy and spatial accountability¹ provided across all geographic scales are at the core of contributions to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences by the Department of Geography and Planning. As the world becomes more populated, the physical environment more challenged, resources more scarce, the global economy more competitive, and cultures, urban environments and people more interconnected, geographic awareness and geographic accountability become paramount. The interaction efficacy with all of these challenges requires a solid understanding of the knowledge and skills learned in Geography and Planning. This core foundation in geographic awareness and skills will translate into better spatial accountability and ultimately into enhanced geographic sustainability. Urban and regional planning in this context becomes anticipatory spatial interaction, maximizing design functionality, environmental and economic sustainability, and energy efficiency.

¹ Spatial accountability is a concept linking spatial analysis with spatial stewardship through key skills acquired through geographic training. It is scale independent.

As an integrative and wide-ranging discipline, Geography and Planning promotes the study of how diverse and sometimes seemingly disparate processes come together in distinct spatial configurations. Crossing disciplinary boundaries in pursuit of geographical understanding, geographers help other scholars and citizens to come to terms with how social, political, environmental, cultural and economic relations occur and interact in particular places -- being shaped by particular spatial configurations. Thus, geography and planning faculty and its students should hold themselves accountable for the use of and contributions to other disciplines, for the empirical foundations of their own theories, and to the ultimate use of their scholarship. In so doing, we hope to increase GVSU student's abilities to be accountable to society, their environments and to the world as a whole.

Our vision of Geography and Planning is a discipline that provides critical tools for examining spatial accountability at the local, regional, state, national and global levels.

Background of Current Department of Geography and Planning Educational Programs and Services Provided

In order to provide geographic literacy and spatial accountability the Department of Geography and Planning is active in the following programs and service areas;

1. General education
2. Providing regional geography courses for area and regional studies.
3. Teachable geography for education minors
4. Geographic & Geo-spatial information technologies
5. Environmental change and development in a sustainability context.
6. Urban and regional planning

1. The Department of Geography and Planning. Total credit hours generated for the Department consists for well over 50% of general education credit hours. World Regional Geography and Cultural Geography reach almost 1300 students every year. With a renewed interest on campus towards global studies, global awareness and global sustainability and as part of the liberal arts and science education, these two courses fulfill a core function of the curriculum. The typical student who enrolls in World Regional Geography is exposed, often for the first time to globally interconnected dimensions and issues

2. The 300 level regional Geography courses fulfill a similar role compared to World Regional Geography and Cultural Geography. The curricula of these six courses have been or are being modified to include the World Perspectives General Education designation. Furthermore, these six courses are core support courses for East Asian studies, Latin American studies, Russian studies, Middle Eastern studies, and African/African American studies. The World Regional Geography or GPY 235 prerequisite for most of these courses has been eliminated in order to permit student access to these geographies.

3. The connection between education majors and minors and geographic literacy is paramount. The multiplier effect of geographically literate primary and secondary educators ultimately should reduce the need for general geographic education at the college and university level. This positive feedback loop will take many years perhaps decades, to establish. In 2003, Geography and Planning did not renew its teachable major in Geography due to staffing issues. Efforts are underway to reestablish the teachable major alongside the teachable minor at Grand Valley State University.

4. Since the late eighties and early nineties Geography in general and geography departments in particular have undergone a major transformation. The advent of ever-increasing personal computing power along with geographic information technologies software has transformed many geographic theories into geographic practice and realities. The evolution of geospatial technologies continues, permeating many different facets of engineering, management, government, market analysis, intelligence gathering, and resource management. Geographic information systems or, as it is called now, geographic information science, is now a required skill set for all Geography majors and minors. The role and function of geographic information science in the curriculum is being evaluated in light of the ever-increasing popularity and demand by Geography students and students in general.

5. The man-land tradition or cultural-ecology theme in Geography dates back many centuries. The spatial interaction between people and their environment as modified by unique physical geographies and cultural settings produces a never-ending array of outcomes. In the past the matrix of possible spatial interactions exceeded practical analysis for all but a few graduate level scholars. Applications of models in conjunction with geographic information systems and remote sensing have relocated this type of analysis from graduate school and post-doctoral research institutions to the undergraduate geography laboratory. Geographic information science is a wonderful visualization tool combining right-brain spatial analysis with left-brain sequential and logical analysis. It produces empirical evidence that can be used to inform and support decision making in many applications

6. Urban and regional planning is at the historical center of the department of geography and planning. Started as a minor in 1974, the curriculum support for this minor since the beginning

of the department in 2000 has stagnated. Efforts are underway to evaluate the possibility of converting this minor to a major. The synergy between this minor or major along with the man-land tradition as amplified by geographic information science is enormous. In North America, there are very few stand alone undergraduate programs in urban and regional planning. At Grand Valley State University, urban and regional planning can flourish at the undergraduate level without having to compete with its graduate counterpart. Yet, the institution is big enough to supply the resources to make it a strong program at GVSU.

Goals and Objectives in the Department of Geography and Planning For the Next Five Years.

Program Goal 1.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: Enhance the image and visibility of the university.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will be a national leader in liberal education.

- **Goal:** Promote excellence in academic areas.
- **Objective:** By 2010, become a top-five large university undergraduate Geography and Planning program.
- **Strategy:** Support all aspects of a well-rounded and balanced undergraduate geography and planning program.
- **Outcome:** Increase in the number of geography and planning majors and minors, increase outside funding, increase community interaction and outreach, and increase scholarly visibility of the department at the national and international levels.
- **Measurement:** Comparison of FY 2005 grants, scholarly output, internal and external recognition, and number of graduates with those of FY 2010.
- **Dates Beg/End:** Fall 2005 - Spring 2010.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Any decrease in university commitment to a nationally competitive undergraduate program in Geography and Planning. Allocation of dedicated space and resources.
- **Resources/Sources:** five new faculty lines and one staff line; replacement of existing faculty lines by GVSU in case of resignations; failed searches; outside funding.

The new requested faculty lines are:

Line 1: Tenure track position at Assistant Professor Level in environmental geography (*filled 2006*)

Line 2: Tenure track position at Assistant Professor Level in systematic geography(ies) such as economic, political, transportation, or urban geography. (*filled 2006*)

Line 3: Tenure track position at Assistant Professor Level in regional planning.

Line 4: Tenure track position at Assistant Professor Level in urban planning.

Line 5: Tenure track position at Assistant Professor Level in geographic education.

Line 6: A staff person with a high-level ability in graphic design and production cartography and GIS capable of supervising Physical Geography Lab. Sections.

Program Goal 2.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: September 27, 2006

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: Enhance the image and visibility of the university.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will be a national leader in liberal education.

- **Goal:** To increase and promote the number of research opportunities for faculty and students through the development of a graduate program in geography and planning at GVSU. We expect to increase the opportunities for our B. A. and B. S. graduates, attract more students from other schools in Michigan, the Great lakes region and nationwide, create more educational opportunities for returning graduate students working full-time, and actively recruit international students.
- **Objective:** By 2009, develop a graduate program in Geospatial Technologies and the Environment
- **Strategy:** Comparative study of other institutions to obtain best practices and benchmarks, new course development (primarily with 400-level advanced classes that have dual-use in the graduate program.
- **Outcome:** Increase in the number of geography Masters students, increase the opportunities for our B.A. and B.S. graduates, increase outside funding for research, increase research in the community (almost unlimited potential in such things as “citizen surveys” and the like), and increase the scholarly visibility of the department at the national and international levels.
- **Measurement:** There are a variety of measures that we will use to quantify the achievement of our objectives and goal. For example, counting the numbers of graduate students enrolled over. Home locations of graduate students will tell us the geographic extent of the draw of our program: local, regional, national, or international. We will use such indicators as the number of theses successfully defended as a measure of our success as well. We will measure the increase in scholarly activity in the department, including faculty, student, and faculty-student publications and other scholarly activity such as public presentations. To measure the quality of our program we will look at how many of our graduates go to Ph.D. programs and how and where they are employed after graduation.
- **Dates Beg/End:** Fall 2006 - Spring 2009.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** New faculty lines, outside funding.

Program Goal 3.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: Access to quality education for a broad range of students

- **Goal:** Rework the curriculum allowing for maximum program flexibility
- **Objective:** By 2006, have a new curriculum in place.
- **Strategy:** Maintain the current pace of curriculum revision
- **Outcome:** A degree program with maximum degree design flexibility to meet student's career objectives.
- **Measurement:** more satisfied and marketable graduates, which complete a Geography major or minor at GVSU within four years as indicated by follow-up surveys, higher starting levels of employment and shorter lag times between graduation and first employment.
- **Dates Beg/End:** Fall 2005 - spring 2007.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Increase frequency of course offerings to increase choice and decrease program length. Timely review and approval of proposed curriculum changes by external entities.
- **Resources/Sources:** More student FTE's, add adjunct/visitor positions.

Program Goal 4.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised: April 4, 2006

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience and to effectively develop and allocate financial resources

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: Access to quality education for a broad range of students

- **Goal:** Amplify the department's role in general education as a way to increase geographic literacy and spatial accountability, but also as part of the business model to help underwrite greater curricular depth of the Geography major and minor.
- **Objective:** Maintain percent credit hours generated in the General Education categories.
- **Strategy:** Offer Gen. Ed. Courses on all GVSU campuses at competitive times in a mixture of large and smaller lecture halls.
- Add World Regional Geography (GPY 235) Coordinator to streamline content delivery to satisfy GED knowledge and skills requirements
- **Outcome:** Better liberally-educated students, continued recruitment base majors and minors, continued financial justification for overall program support.
- **Measurement:** Course evaluations, cost per credit hour delivered²
- **Dates Beg/End:** Fall 2005 - spring 2010.
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** Space availability of large(r) classrooms.
- **Resources/Sources:** The Adjunct teaching base in Geography is small but is being worked on. This will help the bottom line as well as scheduling flexibility.

² At the lowest possible tuition (16 hours per semester) of \$182.93 per credit hour, the Department of Geography & Planning by way of 6327 credit hours taught (summer '04, fall '04, Winter '05) grossed \$1,157,445 in tuition for the university. Department labor cost as provided by CLAS was \$380,029 or 32 percent of the gross revenues. The cost to the university and CLAS per credit hour generated was \$60.06. This is an extremely cost effective figure within CLAS. It provides a benchmark for year-to-year comparisons as well as a unit benchmark.

Program Goal 5.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience that is guided by a philosophy supporting liberal education in all academic programs

Linked to CLAS Goal/Values: Active student-teacher engagement and quality learning supported by appropriate class size and teaching responsibilities, as well as a high proportion of permanent faculty.

- **Goal:** Improve academic learning environment.
- **Objective:** 1. Acquire dedicated laboratory space for geographic information technologies.
2. Acquire dedicated physical geography laboratory space(s).
- **Strategy:** Work with CLAS on monitoring space as new building(s) become available.
- **Outcome:** Better prepared students, capable of interacting with diverse software and hardware environments.
- **Measurement:** increased enrollments in these courses, greater GIS/GIT competence.
- **Dates Beg/End:** .2005/ Spring 2010.
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** Space limitations.
- **Resources/Sources:** Start-up hardware is accumulated by the department. Outside funding is investigated.

Program Goal 6.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To build partnerships and collaborations between the university and external entities that contribute to the enrichment of society in the region, the state and beyond.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: We believe in the value of intellectual inquiry and discourse fostered by an engaged and diverse community of learners, which rests upon academic freedom, integrity, collaboration, and collegiality.

- **Goal:** Gather, house, and disseminate local, regional, state and other geographic information. Increase exposure of Geography and Planning at GVSU's to the public.
- **Objective:** Development, administer and management of Spatial Data and Meta Data Library.
- **Strategy:** Transfer existing data to dedicated server (this objective was in part realized summer 2005).
- **Outcome:** Public access to a diverse geographic data set using the internet.
- **Measurement:** Number of hits on the website and volume of data transferred.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2005/2010.
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** Need better, faster better reliable server equipment
- **Resources/Sources:** GVSU library.

Program Goal 7.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience that is guided by a philosophy supporting liberal education in all academic programs

Linked to CLAS Goal/Mission: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a diverse learning community that creates, communicates, critiques, celebrates, preserves and extends human knowledge to enrich and enliven public life.

- **Goal:** Increase scope Geography and Planning program.
- **Objective:** Continue the development of our existing Planning program.
- **Strategy:** Develop and offer more planning courses.
- **Outcome:** Greater enrollments in planning curriculum.
- **Measurement:** Number students enrolled and number of students employed in planning, eventually APA certification.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2004 / 2010
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Finding qualified adjunct faculty until TT faculty lines become available.
- **Resources/Sources:** Improved relationships with local private/public sector planning.

Program Goal 8.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience that is guided by a philosophy supporting liberal education in all academic programs

Linked to CLAS Goal: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a diverse learning community that creates, communicates, critiques, celebrates, preserves and extends human knowledge to enrich and enliven public life.

- **Goal:** Broaden scope and richness of geography education.
- **Objective:** Increase course offerings in systematic geography courses.
- **Strategy:** Take advantage of in-house systematic geography expertise as additional adjuncts teach courses.
- **Outcome:** Better well rounded geography curriculum.
- **Measurement:** One systematic course added every year until 2010.
- **Dates Beg/End:**.2005 / 2010.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Maintaining percentage Gen Ed. Enrollment in geography and quality geographic education.
- **Resources/Sources:** Larger lecture halls, additional adjuncts.

Program Goal 9.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised: April 4, 2006

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience that is guided by a philosophy supporting liberal education in all academic programs.

Linked to CLAS Goal/: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a diverse learning community that creates, communicates, critiques, celebrates, preserves and extends human knowledge to enrich and enliven public life.

- **Goal:** As part of the Liberal Arts and Science education experience, amplify/strengthen university wide global studies.
- **Objective:** Increase curricular interaction with all area and regional studies on campus and support inter-disciplinary regional studies initiative.
- **Strategy:** Increase accessibility to and the visibility of 300 level regional geography courses.
- **Outcome:** Increased global awareness among students on campus.
- **Measurement:** Enrollment in area studies and efficacy of global studies program.
- **Dates Beg/End:**.2005 /2010
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** Academic turf politics
- **Resources/Sources:** None

Program Goal 10.

Department: Geography and Planning. **College:** Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised: April 10, 2006

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To create a broad educational experience that is guided by a philosophy supporting liberal education in all academic programs.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: Active student-teacher engagement and quality learning supported by appropriate class size and teaching responsibilities, as well as a high proportion of permanent faculty.

- **Goal:** Increase interaction with College of Education
- **Objective:** Explore the regional market demand for a teachable major in geography at the secondary level.
- **Strategy:** Work with State Geographic Alliance on geographic education.
- **Outcome:** Reinstatement of the major
- **Measurement:** increased enrollment of students seeking teachable major in geography
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2006 / 2010
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** Proposal to MDOE must be written and accepted.
Development of dedicated course in geographic education.
- **Resources/Sources:** Dedicated faculty line with focus on geographic education.

Program Goal 11.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised:

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To build partnerships and collaborations between the university and external entities that contribute to the enrichment of society in the region, the state and beyond.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: We will prepare our students to be engaged citizens, productive professionals, and lifelong learners in a global environment.

- **Goal:** Enrich curriculum with practical experience (does not apply to regional studies).
- **Objective:** Increase practical laboratory exposure and promote internships.
- **Strategy:** Work with Program Goal 4. and continue to build linkages with private and public sector serving as sources of internships as well as sources of future employment.
- **Outcome:** Students with practical experiences.
- **Measurement:** (all) majority of majors take internships.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2005 /2006.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Finding time to organize all and maintain professional contacts.
- **Resources/Sources:** List of potential internships possibilities.

Program Goal 12.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised: April 4, 2006

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To build partnerships and collaborations between the university and external entities that contribute to the enrichment of society in the region, the state and beyond.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: We will prepare our students to be engaged citizens, productive professionals, and lifelong learners in a global environment.

Linked to NCA Criteria 4c : The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

- **Goal:** Enrich curriculum with field experience.
- **Objective:** Develop and promote field studies both domestically and internationally.
- **Strategy or means for reaching objective:** Encourage faculty to develop these courses
- **Outcome:** Greater diversity of summer courses.
- **Assessment Measure:** Number of students enrolled in field courses; number of new international field experiences available to students.
- **Responsible for collection:** Chair.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2006- 2010.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Funding sources, low value of the dollar.
- **Resources/Sources:** Office of International studies.

Program Goal 13.

Department: Geography and Planning.

College: Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Date: March 17, 2005

Revised: April 11, 2006

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: A range of thoughtful perspectives is necessary for open inquiry, liberal education, and a healthy community. Recognizing this, we seek and welcome a diverse group of students, faculty and staff. We value a multiplicity of opinions and backgrounds and seek ways to incorporate the voices and experiences of all into our university. We value our local community and embrace the participation of individuals and groups from Michigan, the nation and the world. We also encourage participation in educational opportunities abroad. In order to foster a healthy and diverse environment, we will act with integrity, communicate respectfully, and accept responsibility for our words and actions.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Vision: Goal: To increase and support diversity at all levels.

- **Goal:** Promote diversity in the university community.
- **Objective:** By 2010, have an undergraduate geography student body and faculty that better reflects the ethnic, gender, and cultural diversity of Michigan
- **Strategy:** Add to department's website the active promotion of ethnic, gender, and cultural diversity. Analyze undergraduate curricula to see whether new courses need to be created to serve better the pedagogical goals of cultural diversity. Continue to recruit nationally competitive women and minority faculty.
- **Outcome:** Increase in the number of Latino, African-American, and female undergraduate and faculty. Have curricula that had better address the goals of cultural diversity.
- **Measurement:** Comparison of the number of Latino, African-American, and female undergraduate and faculty in fall 2005 with those in spring 2010. Compare the curricula for 2005 with those of 2010.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2005 / 2010
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Scarcity of minority PhD's in geography and planning. Minority student recruitment is a university wide issue not unique to geography and planning.
- **Resources/Sources:** Integrate efforts with resources/advice/ initiatives at university level.

Student Learning Goals with their Respective Objectives.

Student Learning Goal 1.

- **Goal:** To expose students to key studies, concepts and principles essential to the spatial aspects of process, patterns and functions of human-environmental and geographic view of the world.
- **Objective 1a:** Students will demonstrate mastery of geographic theory.
- **Objective 1b:** Students will be able to apply theory to the understanding of contemporary geographic issues.

Student Learning Goal 2.

- **Goal:** To build a tool kit of geographic quantitative and qualitative skills (computer cartography, geographic information science, and remote sensing) to be applied in the analysis of geographic questions.
- **Objective 2A:** Competency and ability to apply at least 2 geographic tools in Human Geography
- **Objective 2B:** Competency and ability to apply at least 2 geographic tools in Physical Geography.

A. Body of the Plan.

1. Overview of the Assessment Plan

Fall semester 2006 will begin the implementation of our assessment plan. The department's capstone course will be the venue of data collection for all assessment.

2. Student Learning Goal 1.

Linked to NCA Criteria 3a. : The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To support high quality, student-focused, undergraduate and graduate education provided by a faculty dedicated to excellent teaching, scholarship and professional service.

Linked to CLAS Goal/Values: Active student-teacher engagement and quality

learning supported by appropriate class size and teaching responsibilities, as well as a high proportion of permanent faculty.

- **Goal:** To expose students to key studies, concepts and principles essential to the spatial aspects of process, patterns and functions of human-environmental and geographic view of the world.
- **Objective 1a:** Students will demonstrate mastery of geographic theory.
- **Objective 1b:** Students will be able to apply theory to the understanding of contemporary geographic issues.
- **Assessment Measures 1a1. :** Faculty evaluation of student portfolio in capstone course.
- **Assessment Measures 1a2. :** Scheduled assessment exam at the end of Capstone course..
- **Assessment Measures 1b1. :** Evaluation of originality of research conducted as part of the capstone.
- **Assessment Measures 1b2 :** Assessment by GPY faculty of student research projects.
- **Dates Beg/End:** 2006 /2011.
- **Obstacle to be Overcome:** None.
- **Resources/Sources:** None.
- **Collection Cycle of Measurements:** Annual.
- **Responsibility for Collection:** Faculty teaching Capstone course (GPY495) and several colleagues.
- **Anticipated use of findings.** We will revise our course content to strengthen weak areas.

3. Student Learning Goal 2.

Linked to NCA Criteria 3a. : The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Linked to GVSU Goal/Objective: To support high quality, student-focused, undergraduate and graduate education provided by a faculty dedicated to excellent teaching, scholarship and professional service.

Linked to CLAS Goal 1. : To support high quality, student-focused, undergraduate and graduate education provided by a faculty dedicated to excellent teaching, scholarship and professional service.

- **Goal:** To build a tool kit of geographic quantitative and qualitative skills (computer cartography, geographic information science, and remote sensing) to be applied in the analysis of geographic questions.
- **Objective 2A:** Competency and ability to apply at least 2 geographic tools in Human Geography
- **Objective 2B:** Competency and ability to apply at least 2 geographic tools in Physical Geography.
- **Strategy/Means to implement Objective:** Better communication and coordination between those teaching methodology courses (GPY 200, 307, 407, 470).
- **Outcome 1A:** Stronger student preparation in geographic methods and skills.
- **Assessment Measures 2a1. :** Student portfolio of completed projects in cartographic/graphic format
- **Assessment Measures 2a2. :** Complete ESRI Certification or equivalent.
- **Assessment Measures 2b1. :** Student portfolio of completed projects in cartographic/graphic format
- **Assessment Measures 2b2. :** Complete ESRI Certification or equivalent.
- **Dates Beg/End:**.2006 /2011.
- **Obstacle to be overcome:** Increased pressure on laboratory facilities.
- **Resources/Sources:** None.
- **Collection Cycle of Measurements:** Annual.