



## Winter 2020

### STUDENT NUMBERS

93 Undergraduate majors

17 Graduate Students

7 Attended 2019 Field Camp

15 Earned B.S. in 2019

5 Earned M.S. in 2019



### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

It has been an exciting two years in the Department of Geosciences since the last newsletter was released. Dr. Grady Dixon, who joined us as Chair in 2014, stepped in as the Interim Dean of the Werth College of STM, so I took over as Interim Chair in May (Dr. Dixon has now been named as the full time Dean). I joined the Geosciences faculty in 2012, after finishing my Ph.D. at the University of Colorado, and quickly found a home at Fort Hays State. As a vertebrate paleontologist, my time at FHSU has always been split between being faculty in Geosciences and Curator at the Sternberg Museum. As Interim Chair, I have stepped back from my museum responsibilities to focus my attention on Geosciences. It has been an exciting and enlightening opportunity to get to know my colleagues better, to better understand university processes, and to advance department initiatives. Following national trends in higher education, Fort Hays State is pushing departments to set learning goals for our students and assess that they have attained these goals upon graduation. Geosciences is also working to expand our degree and course offerings to make sure we are offering up-to-date and relevant programs for our students to succeed in the evolving work force (see page 2 for more details). Pursuing these important goals have kept us moving forward during this time of transition. And in the process, the online geography degree was recently recognized by “Great Value Colleges” (<https://www.greatvaluecolleges.net/rankings/online-bachelors-geography/>) based on tuition, return on investment, and other factors!



Laura Wilson, Interim Chair

### WELCOME TO DR AGBOGUN



**Dr. Henry Agbogun** joined the Geosciences faculty in Fall 2018. With expertise in geophysics, hydrogeology, petroleum geology, and digital rock physics, he is currently teaching Introduction to Geology, Environmental Geology, Sedimentology (formerly Depositional Environments), and Structural Geology. Dr. Agbogun is originally from Nigeria and earned his Ph.D. at the University of New Brunswick in Canada. Prior to joining the FHSU Geosciences faculty, he was a professor at Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada.

## NEW GEOSCIENCES DEGREE AVAILABLE

In Fall 2019, we launched enrollment for a new Geosciences degree option: a Bachelors of Arts in Environmental Geosciences. This degree is an exciting hybrid of our geology and geography curricula that emphasizes human-environment interactions. It is available both on campus and online, which will put a portion of our geology program online for the first time; it also supports on campus students unable to participate in field-intensive courses. National and regional employment projections indicate faster than average job growth in environmental science-related occupations, and we aim to train students for those jobs. This dovetails with an increase in the number of majors coming into the department interested in environmental issues. The degree is designed to be flexible, supporting a wide-variety of career options. Faculty are looking forward to creating new courses (oceanography, an online research course, and environmental impact courses have all been mentioned) and hopefully growing enrollment in the geosciences.



You can read more about our curriculum on our website: <http://www.fhsu.edu/geo/Undergraduate-Programs-in-Geosciences/>

## IN THE FIELD

Field experiences have always been an important part of geosciences education, and our department continues this tradition. In addition to our annual Geology Field Camp, we run study abroad trips (2020 is Austria and Germany), a storm chase course, and regional fieldtrips to geographical and geological sites of interest (this year features dinosaur tracks and lava flows in New Mexico, and salt mines and the Cosmosphere in Kansas). And Oktoberfest counts as field work, right?



Undergraduate Research in Cameroon

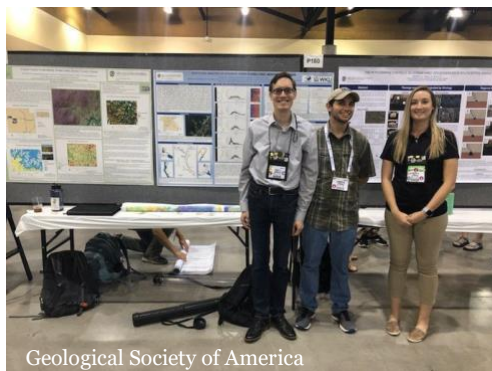


2019 Storm Chase



2019 Field Camp

Of course, we continue to help students attend professional meetings where they can meet peers, network with future employers, and learn how other scientists are applying what they have learned. Over the past year, we have helped students attend annual meetings for the Geological Society of America, American Association of Geographers, Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Association for Materials and Methods in Paleontology, Society of Exploration Geophysicists, and Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections.



Geological Society of America



American Association of Geographers

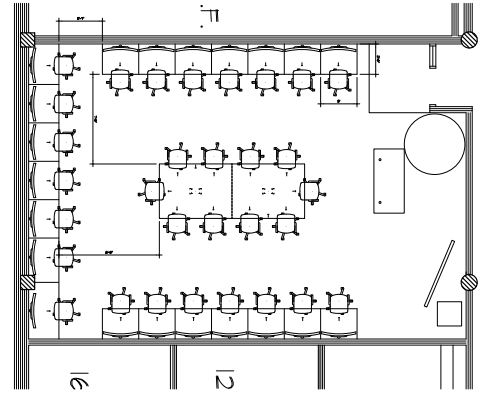


Association for Materials and Methods in Paleontology

## UPDATING DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

During the 2019/2020 academic year (and likely into Summer 2020) we are renovating the GIS computer lab in Tomanek Hall. Classroom changes include computing and audio-visual updates, as well as new carpet, paint, and lighting, and an overall reorganization that will increase the number of work stations. We also hope to purchase virtual reality headsets that interface with GIS software so we can keep course content on the cutting edge of evolving technology. The STM College Dean and the University Provost are very supportive of this project and are helping finance renovations. If you are interested in supporting GIS lab improvements, particularly with the purchase of VR headsets, please visit:

<https://ifedthetiger.everydayhero.com/us/gis-virtual-reality-technology!>



In February 2019, FHSU held the official ribbon cutting for the Dane G. Hansen Paleontology Research Center and Oceans of Kansas Fossil Prep Lab at the Sternberg Museum. Renovation and construction of the lab and research space was funded by a Dane G. Hansen grant and fundraising efforts that included 58 individual donors. A substantial donation from Mike and Pam Everhart (Mike is an Adjunct Curator at the Museum) resulted in naming rights to the prep lab. Updates allowed us to expand the footprint and install state-of-the-art equipment. We currently have ten geosciences undergrads volunteering in the prep lab, a geosciences graduate student lab manager, and several geosciences graduate students utilizing the research spaces.



## FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our faculty continue to do great things, and there is not enough room to detail everything in this newsletter. But here are a few highlights from recent months:

- Dr. Hendratta Ali earned a National Science Foundation grant and a Geoscientists Without Borders grant supporting geophysical, aquifer, and carbon cycle research in Cameroon.
- Dr. Grady Dixon was recognized as FHSU's President's Distinguished Scholar for 2019.
- Dr. Laura Wilson was recognized as FHSU's Outstanding Scholar for Fall 2018 and FHSU's Faculty Member of the Year at the Fall 2019 convocation.
- Dr. Richard Lisichenko earned two National Geographic Foundation grants supporting workshops for Kansas K-12 teachers.
- Dr. Keith Bremer established a chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon geographical honor society at FHSU.
- Dr. Laura Wilson earned an Institute for Museum and Library Studies grant to support the geology collection at the Sternberg Museum.
- Dr. Richard Lisichenko was promoted to Full Professor.
- The Fall/Winter 2019 issue of ROAR Magazine featured Geosciences faculty.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

Visiting lecturers and colloquium speakers are a valuable part of our students' education. It is helpful when external people reinforce the messages coming from the faculty, and these events often provide networking opportunities as well. We have been fortunate to host the following people recently, and we look forward to bringing in more.

- Mark Allen, President and Co-founder, Enertech
- Paul Baumann, Geographer, Oneonta University
- Todd Moore, Climatologist, Towson University
- Chris Neeley, FHSU Geosciences alumnus, Kansas Corporation Commission



*Tomanek Hall on the campus of FHSU  
(photo by Grady Dixon)*

## YOUR TURN

We want to hear from you. We welcome alumni and friends who return to campus for a visit. Are you interested in organizing a reunion? Are you willing to come talk to our students? Do you have news to share about your accomplishments? Do you have questions about what is happening at FHSU? Please reach out to us. We try to stay active on Facebook and Twitter, and we are easy to reach via email and phone. Find us on Facebook and Twitter @GeoFHSU

## Contact Us

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*Robbins Center, FHSU Foundation and Alumni Association  
(photo by Grady Dixon)*

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