Students interested in geology can get a general impression of a region’s topography and geologic composition by looking at maps and photos. Or they can see it with great detail, in real time, in Wyoming’s Bighorn Basin during WSU’s geology summer field camp.

“The rock exposures there are spectacular,” said Will Parcell, associate professor of geology and department chair. “You can see pictures in a textbook of a fold or a fault in the earth or certain geometry to the rock strata. Out there you can actually see it on the ground and extending for miles. It’s spectacular geology.”

In the area also known as Wyoming’s Bony Back Pocket, time spent in the basin is part of a hands-on experiential learning class for geology upperclassmen held in late May and early June. Bordering by six mountain ranges—Pryor, Bighorn, Bridger, Owl Creek, Absaroka and Beartooth—topography in the basin ranges from the flat desert floor to sheer cliff outcroppings to 13,000-foot mountain peaks.

This year, 16 undergraduate students will participate in the four-week class and end the camp with visits to Yellowstone and Teton national parks. This six-credit-hour course will help students apply and integrate their understanding of geology and its processes in ways far beyond the scope of traditional classroom instruction.

“It’s our capstone course so it comes at the end of the degree plan. It pulls together all facets of the discipline, including sedimentology, mineralogy and structural geology,” said Parcell. “Much of learning geology occurs during fieldwork. You get to see something in three dimensions rather than staring at it in two. It also adds the fourth dimension of time as part of the story.”

Bill Bischoff, professor of geology, agrees. He will teach part of the course.

“Looking at rocks in the field and understanding the context of the rocks in the field—as opposed to looking at them as a hand specimen in the laboratory—is so much more informative,” said Bischoff.

In the Bighorn Basin, students will also learn how to map and how to interpret and describe rocks. This will lead to improved critical thinking and communication skills.

“A lot of it (camp) is learning how to tell a story that makes sense geologically. When students get back home, they still have a paper to write that pulls together the geologic history of the Bighorn Basin,” Parcell said. “In looking at the real rocks and having to make an interpretation, they ask ‘what’s the right answer?’ It’s not in the textbook. It’s based on the evidence they present and can back up. It’s in their head. It’s how they back up their story. We’re teaching them how to communicate as scientists.”

Travis Korst, a graduate student assisting with field camp, participated as an undergraduate last year. He believes the experience has helped prepare him to be a professional geologist.
“For me, the most beneficial part of field camp was being able to exercise everything I learned in my undergraduate years in a field setting,” said Korst. “I think the ability to apply my knowledge foundation in understanding subsurface geologic activities will be a key asset when I become a professional geologist. I will always be grateful for WSU hosting a field camp because I think this capstone course provided a necessary skill for my future career as a professional geologist.”

**The Field Camp Experience**

**John Gries**, who died in 2013, created and led WSU’s Colorado-based field camp for nearly 40 years. Influenced by Gries, Parcell is continuing to build upon the traditional methods, techniques and experiences that have been part of field camps across the country for a century. He notes that field camp is not for the faint of heart. Students spend one week tent camping, one week in a residence hall and another week in the Mickelson Field Station lodge. Acclimating to the higher elevations is initially challenging. Students are encouraged to be in good physical condition and are provided with a detailed clothing and gear list.

Although students will learn a great deal about geology in general, they will also get a crash course in interpersonal skills.

“Part of field camp is experiencing the geology; the other part is learning to get along with people in close quarters for an extended period of time,” said Parcell. “You’ve got to learn tolerance and perseverance and patience and how to work in a group, but also have self-confidence.”

Parcell’s favorite part of field camp is the first day: seeing the students’ expressions of wonder.

“The first exercise is always difficult. The first day we get out there and go straight up,” said Parcell. “It sets the mood for the rest of camp, and they expect the rest of the time to be tough.”

Parcell also joked that field camp deals with being brave in dangerous situations. Students should be prepared for unexpected weather and temperature extremes. Wildlife sightings could include bears, wolves and rattlesnakes. All students carry a whistle and bear spray.

Although students are kept busy, they do have fun. One experience last summer included an impromptu snowball fight in June.

“We went up Beartooth Pass from Red Lodge, Montana to Yellowstone. We couldn’t have timed it better. We went from 8,000-feet to 13,000-feet up the side of the big U-shaped glacier valley. We hit the top and a snowstorm came in. It snowed for a while, and then the skies parted. There was blue sky above and if you looked behind you, it was completely black. So we got out and had a snowball fight.”

Field camp participants have also made unexpected finds. During last year’s camp they found dinosaur tracks and gastroliths, stomach stones made by dinosaurs.

“They are really bright colored, large, shiny, smooth rocks,” said Parcell. “There’s no rock around like those. The dinosaurs swallowed them, migrated into the basin, and then died and left them there. We also found some small bones in the Cretaceous (section of the basin), but we’re not sure what they were. Very, very small bones. No big Tyrannosaurus Rex bones or anything.”

**The Importance of Donors and Support**

Parcell is quick to point out that much of the success of field camp depends upon financial resources. Last year the geology department received donations to use on equipment. They spent it on an electronic surveying station, the type that civil engineers use. The department hopes to continue receiving donations to help fund the field camp. It’s a program everyone in the department supports.
“Most geologists would argue that field camp is fundamentally important,” Parcell said. “It serves many areas of the discipline.”

Parcell’s ultimate goal is to reduce student fees significantly and build the camp into a self-sustaining program that covers travel, lodging, equipment and maintenance from year to year for the three geology vehicles. One of the Suburbans issued to the department has accrued nearly 300,000 miles.

“It’s going to take some time to save the funds to replace that vehicle,” Parcell said.

**Future improvements**

Though field camp participants will always begin with low-tech approaches to fieldwork such as paper maps, field books, Brunton compasses and aerial photos, Parcell plans to build up the technology. The electronic surveying station is a part of that movement.

“Slowly, over time, as we raise money for this, we’ll start using GIS (geographic information systems) in the field. In order for every student to have it, we’ll need substantial amounts of money to get computers in the field,” said Parcell. “I’m looking at using Android tablets to map and record information. They’re fairly cheap and almost at the point where you can run GIS programs. Using handheld tablets is where I want to go.”

Students from other institutions across the U.S. have the opportunity to participate in WSU’s field camp. Many geology programs in the East require a field camp experience for their students, but no longer provide one of their own. When Parcell posted an online field camp application to the geology department’s website, 40 students outside of WSU completed the form. Five were accepted: three from Kansas State, one from Virginia Tech and one from Boston College. Parcell has also formed an informal relationship with Northwest College (Cody, Wyoming), which owns the field station WSU uses during one week of camp.

**A rite of passage**

*Melissa Worley,* a graduate student in geology, participated in last year’s field camp and is assisting with the program this year. For her, the most beneficial part of field camp was the ability to travel outside of Kansas and explore a part of the country that has interesting geologic features.

“As much as Kansas has to offer,” she said, “you just can’t get the same experience as we did while hiking in the mountains of Wyoming. Field camp is a rite of passage for geologists, and many professional geologists will ask where you went and what you learned from the experience. We’re very fortunate to have a field camp at a time when many schools are getting rid of their programs. It is our capstone course for a reason. It brings together every geology class we have taken, and it forces you to think as a geologist.”

“It also gives you an opportunity to be outside in the fresh air and beautiful summer weather of Wyoming,” said Worley. “Four weeks of hiking, mapping and camaraderie combined with side trips to Yellowstone and Grand Tetons make for an unforgettable experience.”

For more information about field camp, visit [tinyurl.com/lzz33xt](http://tinyurl.com/lzz33xt) or view photos of previous field camps on the Wichita State Department of Geology Facebook page.
One course influenced Will Parcell's academic path unlike any other: an undergraduate introductory geology course taught by Bran Potter. Originally planning to be a history major, Parcell took a course in geology to fulfill his science requirement. He had never considered himself a science person, but the class Potter taught hooked him.

“We'd go out in the field for most of our introductory labs. We learned how to read the layers of rock as if learning how to read and interpret the pages of the book,” said Parcell. “That just fascinated me. That got me to switch my major. About two years later I took field camp and that cinched it.”

Although a native of Maryland, Parcell has lived in Tennessee, Delaware, Alabama, Texas and Kansas. Field experiences have taken him to England, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Gulf Coast, Arkansas, New Mexico and Texas, in addition to the fieldwork he's done in Wyoming and Montana. Although he has enjoyed them all, the most memorable trip for him was in eastern France when he was working on his doctoral dissertation. He examined Jurassic age reefs appearing as outcrops southeast of Paris. He also did fieldwork in the Dijon area south of Paris around the wine fields and conducted canal-side geology. He studied outcrops near World War I battlefields outside of Verdun.

“It was an amazing trip because it mixed geology, history and the culture,” said Parcell.

He also holds great respect for the Kansas Geological Survey, well known nationally for their work on the stratigraphy of Kansas. They have been pioneers of applying new methods of stratigraphy to Kansas rocks.

In his free time, Parcell works on classic cars. Of those he owns, his favorite is a 1950 Jaguar sedan. For the past three years, he has played French horn with the Friends University Orchestra. He and his wife, Lisa, an assistant professor of communication, have two sons, Austin, 10, and Grant, 7.

Parcell holds a bachelor’s degree from Sewanee: The University of the South, a master’s degree from the University of Delaware, and a doctorate from the University of Alabama. All of his degrees are in geology.
Students who graduated in December received a surprise in the handshake they exchanged with **Tony Vizzini**, vice president of academic affairs. As they clasped hands, Vizzini passed a large coin bearing the seal of the university on one side and an image of the student’s college on the other. Many students held up the coins when they had their photo taken after crossing the stage. They were the first group of Wichita State graduates to earn challenge coins.

“**It’s a ritual now, a tradition,**” Vizzini said. “I think a lot of them probably did not realize they were the first class to receive it.”

Vizzini received his first challenge coin when he was a department chairperson at Mississippi State. He saw personally the impact the coins had in creating an instant recognition of belonging and commonality.

“It ties people together,” he said. “I want people to know beyond the quality of your work product who you are. You’re Shockers.”

Although the coins might be coveted by those who don’t yet have them, Vizzini is clear that the coins must be earned.

“They are not for sale,” he said.

Over his career, Vizzini has observed that students are sometimes reluctant to reveal their collegiate identity. He started his own challenge coin ritual at Western Michigan, where he was dean of engineering. He then brought the idea with him to Wichita State.

“I’ve always been at places where students are very humble. They’re quite good, but they tend not to put their colors out there as much as other students at other colleges and universities,” Vizzini said. “I want our alums to always have their colors with them.”

The Fairmount College design features the lamp of learning, the third eye of learning and wheat heads. At almost two inches in diameter, the highly polished gold and black coins are eye-catching and easy to find in a pants pocket or purse.

That is important, because there is a reason it’s called a challenge coin.

If an alum pulls out his or her challenge coin and shows it to you, you must be able to produce yours, too. The general rules allow you to take a step and pick up your coin within an arm’s reach. If you can’t produce your coin, then you must buy the challenger the beverage of his or her choice.

It’s happened to Vizzini.

“It’s usually a rare time I don’t have my coin and I get caught every now and then. It happens, but not too often,” said Vizzini. “I try to have my coin, but I change pants. Sometimes you take it out and put it on the counter and forget to put it in your pocket again.”

“I went to church one day and I thought ‘Man, I don’t have my coin,’ and I was driving my wife’s car,” Vizzini said. “My car has extra coins in it. I would have taken in an extra coin. And I thought ‘well, it’s church, no one’s going to ask me.’ Then I meet up with **Andy Schlapp** (WSU’s executive director of government relations) and his father-in-law, and his father-in-law takes out his coin. Andy looked at me and I said, ‘No Andy, I don’t have my coin,’ and he said, ‘What?!’ It happens.”

It seems Vizzini’s plan to create unity is catching on within Fairmount College. **Ron Matson**, interim dean, has enjoyed watching students, faculty and staff interact and have conversations about the coins.

“Vice President Vizzini’s challenge coin idea, and the story behind it, has become a delightful topic of discussion among Fairmount College faculty and students,” said Matson. “Many of us are making challenges and sharing our pride of membership in the liberal arts and sciences. Honestly, it’s been fun.”

In addition to the college coins, there is also the university coin and the president’s coin, which is numbered. WSU President **John Bardo** presented university coins to the members of the Kansas Board of Regents last fall. The coins were well received.

“They are now coin-carrying members. If we see them, we can now challenge them and be prepared to either buy them the beverage of their choice or try to extract one from them,” Vizzini said.
The Center for Community Support and Research helps strengthen nonprofits, government agencies, community coalitions, health departments and other Kansas organizations. It is one of the largest centers at WSU and is recognized nationally for its efforts in leadership, organizational capacity building, community collaboration and applied research. This year marks its 30th anniversary of serving Kansas.

The CCSR, located at 3rd Street and Main in Wichita, has more than 45 full- and part-time staff who transfer best practices and evidence-based strategies from across academic disciplines to more than 100 partner organizations in Kansas communities and beyond.

The origin of challenge coins dates back to World War I. A lieutenant commissioned coins for his squadron as a symbol of their unity and membership. One of the pilots, wearing the coin in a neck pouch, was hit in flight by ground fire and captured by the Germans when he landed. He was taken to a French town, but escaped during a bombardment. He was found hiding at a French outpost and was taken captive again. Thinking he might be a spy, the French held him for execution. The pilot showed his medallion to one of his captors. The officer recognized the insignia as representing an American squadron and eventually released the pilot back to his unit with a bottle of wine.

WSU CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESEARCH TURNS 30

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IN MEMORIAM

**Alan Elcrat**, 71, professor of mathematics, died Friday, Dec. 20, 2013 of a heart attack. A graveside burial service was held Dec. 27 at Kensington Gardens. Elcrat was an active and well-known researcher during his 46-year career at Wichita State. Donations may be made to the Dr. Alan R. Elcrat Memorial for WSU Mathematics Department, care of the Wichita State University Foundation, 1845 Fairmount St., Wichita, KS 67260.

**Steve Hathaway**, 68, professor emeritus of English, died at his daughter’s home in Maine on Dec. 26, 2013, following a week of hospice care. Hathaway taught creative writing and American literature at WSU from 1974-2012. No services were held at his request, but a celebration of his life will take place at the “Festival of Steve,” at Ten Apple Farm in Gray, Maine, in early June. Donations in his memory may be made to Wichita State’s public radio station, KMUW, 3317 E. 17th St. N., Wichita, KS 67208 or Levey Day School, 400 Deering Avenue, Portland, ME 04103.

**John Hartman**, 82, professor emeritus of sociology, of Springfield, Mo., died Jan. 25, 2014. He retired in 1997 after 29 years of teaching, 15 of which he served as department chair. Memorial donations may be made to the Dr. John J. Hartman Scholarship Fund care of the Wichita State University Foundation, 1845 Fairmount St., Wichita, KS 67260, or to the Parkinson’s Disease Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018.
ACCOLADES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

FACULTY & STAFF

Deborah Ballard-Reisch. Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Chair in Strategic Communication, was presented with the Virginia Lockhart Health Education Award by the Kansas Public Health Association in September.

Michael Birzer, professor and director of the School of Community Affairs, and Jodie Beeson, assistant professor, were recently invited by Kansas Board of Regent and state cabinet member Mildred Edwards to facilitate a juvenile justice initiative for Wyandotte County. They represented the WSU criminal justice program at a meeting in Kansas City, Kan., for a problem-solving session between community and government leaders.

Misty Bruckner, associate director, Center for Urban Studies, collaborated with the City of Wichita to develop the engagement process and training for the ACT ICT engagement project. Citizens gave input on critical issues facing the City of Wichita, including community vision, community priorities and willingness to pay for future commitments.

Doris Chang, women’s studies, was invited to give a lecture at the Strait Talk Symposium at Brown University in April.

Barbara Chaparro, psychology, is the 2014 John R. Barrier Distinguished Teaching Award recipient. The award honors humanities and social sciences faculty who exhibit excellent teaching and influence upon the lives and career choices of their students.

Dan Close, Elliott School of Communication, has been selected to attend the 2014 Ted Scripps Leadership Institute in Kansas City, a program of the Scripps Howard Foundation. Close was also elected membership chair for the Kansas chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Kimberly Engber, associate professor of English, has been named dean of the Honors College. The unit was recently approved by the Kansas Board of Regents and will welcome its first class in August 2014 in its new home at Shocker Hall.

Ed Flentje. Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs, received the Outstanding Leader Award from the Kansas Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration. This award is given to individuals who have served with distinction to promote quality public service.

Jeff Jarman, associate director, Elliott School of Communication, has been selected as co-editor of Contemporary Argumentation & Debate, a scholarly journal sponsored by the Cross Examination Debate Association (CAD). Editorship is a three-year term starting in 2014. CAD publishes articles on the theory and practice of debate and argumentation.

Ken Kriz, Regents Distinguished Professor of Public Finance, Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs, has been awarded a grant by the Scientific Council of Lithuania. He will travel to Lithuania to give lectures in the Masters in Public Policy program at Siauliai University, meet with students in their doctoral program and work with faculty members on developing a research agenda in comparative public finance.

WSU’s Alumni Association presented Rhonda Lewis, psychology, with the University Recognition Award. The award honors alumni, friends, faculty or staff for outstanding public service or for particular service to Wichita State.

Nancy McCarthy Snyder, Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs, was appointed advisor to the Court Budget Advisory Council of the Kansas Supreme Court last fall. The council was charged by the chief justice with developing and prioritizing recommendations for cuts necessary to cover an $8.2 million deficit in base budget deficits of the Kansas judiciary.

Peer Moore-Jansen, anthropology, received the President’s Distinguished Service Award for his outstanding service to the university community beyond his professorial role.

Jay Price, professor of history, and Sue Abdinnour, Helen Omer Professor of Business, received the 2014 Frederick C. Luebke Award for outstanding regional scholarship for their essay “Family, Ethnic Entrepreneurship, and the Lebanese of Kansas.” The prize, named for the founder of the journal, is given each year for the best article published in the Great Plains Quarterly.
Sandy Sipes, Elliott School of Communication, received the Dottie C. Miller award honoring her work as advisor of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity at WSU.

Jim Snyder, Katherine and Edith Erker Distinguished Professor of Psychology, has been named 2014 Individual Child Champion by Child Start. For decades, Snyder has consulted with teachers and home visitors in the Head Start 0-5 program to promote early childhood development and the self-sufficiency of at-risk families.

Sam Taylor, assistant professor of English, won the prestigious Amy Lowell Poetry Award of more than $50,000. Lowell, an American poet, died in 1925. Her will established this annual scholarship to support travel abroad for gifted American-born poets. Awarded to only one or two poets each year, previous winners include Elizabeth Bishop, Adrienne Rich, Robert Bly, Galway Kinnell, Ed Hirsch, Elizabeth Arnold, Kenneth Rexroth and Stanley Kunitz.

STUDENTS

Emily Lancaster, chemistry pre-med, is the inaugural recipient of the The Rosalée and Alvin Sarachek Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Natural Sciences. This $5,000 award is given annually to a graduating senior majoring in biology, chemistry, geology or physics in the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Decisions about the award are based on evidence of a candidate’s intellectual acuity, scholarly breadth and achievements in science as an undergraduate.

Shane Maxton, political science and Washington D.C. intern, coauthored “The Military Retirement Complex Veterans Benefits” with Katherine Blakeley and Larry Korb in the February issue of Foreign Policy. Korb is Senior Fellow at American Progress Action Fund and the former assistant secretary of defense during the Reagan administration.

Ken Ward, graduate student in communication, received the Top Student Paper Award at the American Journalism Historians Conference in September.

Midwest Model United Nations students continue to have an exceptional year. In February, the following awards were presented in St. Louis: Outstanding Delegate, Iran, Second Committee, Ruben Lebron, Hatim Zeineddine; Outstanding Delegate, Netherlands, Fourth Committee, Shaelynn French, John Truong; Outstanding Delegate, Netherlands, Commission on the Status of Women, Marisa Bayless; Delegates Choice, Netherlands, Fourth Committee, Shaelynn French, John Truong; Position Paper, Netherlands, Commission on the Status of Women, Marisa Bayless; Position Paper, UK, Security Council, Olivia Sullivan; Honorable Mention, Luxembourg, Security Council, Andrea Luque; and Outstanding Delegate, BBC, International Press Delegation, Cassie Standley. In March, members of MMUN traveled to Antalya, Turkey and received these awards: Outstanding Delegate, Scheidemann Cabinet (Germany circa 1919), Casey Donnell, and Honorable Mention, Germany, International Labor Organization, Andrea Luque.

In February, several undergraduate and graduate students presented their research findings to state legislators, the Kansas Board of Regents and other attendees at the state Capitol during Research Day at the Capitol. Fairmount College students included Thoi McNair (advised by Rhonda Lewis, psychology) and Khondoker Usama (advised by Jibo He, psychology) Graduate students included Sumitra Acharya (advised by Bill Hendry, biological sciences); George Browne (advised by Michael Birzer, school of community affairs); and Jacob Sinclair (advised by Will Parcell, geology).

Dear alumni, faculty, staff and friends -

I believe it is apparent to everyone who works at WSU and in the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that things are not slowing down!

What an exciting time to be a Shocker: historic basketball success for our women’s and men’s teams; continuing progress on Shocker Hall, which will house almost 800 students and open in August 2014; emerging priorities from a year of work by faculty to complete the strategic planning process; and the nearly completed renovation of the Rhatigan Student Center. Whew! Wichita State and Fairmount College continue to make history together.

Now more than halfway through my second year as interim dean of Fairmount College, I can report that I am more energized and excited about the immediate and long-term future of the liberal arts and sciences at WSU. All of our staff, students, faculty and alumni continue to nurture an environment of excellence. These enthusiastic, creative energies will feed our future success. Thank you for your contributions.

Sincerely,

Ron Matson
Interim Dean

RECENT GRANT ACTIVITY

Neal Allen, political science, has received more than $10,000 in archive research grants, including the prestigious Dirksen Congressional Center Research Grant.

Moriah Beck, chemistry, procured a $40,000 grant for “Total Internal Reflection Fluorescence (TIRF) upgrade based on the CIBOR confocal microscope,” Kansas Institutional Development Awards Network of Biomedical research Excellence.

Bill Hendry, biological sciences, procured a local $3,000 grant for his project, “Translational studies of gynecological cancer with a unique in vivo system,” Wichita Medical Research and Education Foundation.

Katie Mitchell-Koch, chemistry, was awarded a $90,000 grant for “Computational studies of biocatalyst systems for biomass conversion,” National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.

EMERITI FACULTY

Four Fairmount College faculty have earned emeriti status: Andrew Acker, professor emeritus of mathematics; Connie Morris, instructor emerita of communication; Richard Spilman, associate professor emeritus of English; Peter Zoller, associate professor emeritus of English.