The report of the Department of Geosciences and the Chair’s response to it provide a good foundation for the review of the department’s achievements and goals. We thank the Chair, Dr. Crawford Elliott, and the department for their efforts, and we commend the self study committee – Jeremy Diem (Chair), Leslie Edwards, and Seth Rose – for the considerable thought and time that they devoted to this important endeavor.

The Geosciences Department has compiled a strong record of successes. Some noteworthy items are the following:

- **In instruction**, the Geosciences Department has played important roles.
  - The faculty has a heavy responsibility for teaching undergraduate non-majors for their core science requirement and for science educators in the College of Education, and indicators are that the quality of the courses is high.
  - The undergraduate and graduate degree programs in Geosciences are relatively small but growing. There has been an average of 16 BA/BS and 10 MA/MS graduates per year over the last three years. Credit hours in the degree programs have increased by 15-20% cumulatively over the last three years.

- **In research**, Geosciences is making solid contributions. The faculty have national and regional recognition, with solid publication records and some grant activity

- **In service**, several faculty have assumed major roles in their professional organizations and national journals. Some are editors or associate editors of journals, and some are serving on review panels and reviewing for granting agencies.

- The Geosciences Department also faces some significant challenges.
  - Since the formation of the Geosciences Department in January 2006, the Department still has not integrated some of its activities. For example, there are no new degrees (though we should submit proposals for new BS and MS degrees to the Georgia Board of Regents this spring), and until recently still operated with multiple graduate directors.

  - The department could be more effective in connecting with other areas of strength in the university, making its unique technologies (GIS, ICPMS) more central to other university groups, identifying themes that will give them distinctiveness and leverage resources locally or nationally, and in securing extramural support for its research programs.

  - Despite numerous faculty hires in targeted areas since the formation of the Geosciences Department, there has been considerable turnover (for a variety of reasons, many not under the control of the department or college), such that the number of tenure track faculty is back
to the 2006 level. Since January 2006, the Department has hired 9 faculty – 8 TT, 1 Lecturer – and we plan on hiring 2 new TT and 2 new Lecturers to begin Fall 2011. On the other hand, by the end of this academic year, the Department will have lost 8 faculty – including 3 of those 8 TT hires, plus 5 others.

These challenges also bring with them opportunities. For example, development of focused, interdisciplinary, and nationally competitive programs around themes identified themes (‘urban’ and ‘environment’ have been identified as two possibilities) and faculty recruitment can be coupled. This is particularly important where much of the hiring of new faculty will be in areas secured through the Second Century Initiative. Consequently, the external review team’s visit provides the department and the Dean’s Office with an excellent opportunity to review the department’s progress and to shape our vision for its future.

The Dean’s Office again congratulates the Department of Geosciences on its efforts and development since the last academic program review, and we thank it for its review. We also look forward to the external reviewers’ visit and to working with the Department on an action plan that will make many of their goals achievable in the next five years.

Lauren B. Adamson, Dean

Charles Derby, Associate Dean