



In the field on the Texas Gulf Coast Mike Sweet (center) listens to a student's comments.

Joint UW-ExxonMobil Seismic Interpretation Course

In March 2005 the department engaged in an innovative teaching experiment, in which we collaborated with ExxonMobil to teach a joint "Introduction to Seismic Interpretation" course. For the first part of the course, about a dozen students traveled to Houston with Toni Simo, Alan Carroll, and Ben Abernathy for three days of instruction in the ExxonMobil training center. Amy Ruf (BS 1984), and Kyle Lewallen (PhD 1996), Fred Schroeder, and Amalia Olivera-Riley provided lectures, demonstrations, and exercises on topics ranging from basic principles of reflection seismology to more complex geologic interpretation and prospect analysis. Mark Solien (BS 1970, MS 1976) helped smooth out the inevitable bumps that occur in any new course, and took the entire class out for a fantastic dinner. After the classroom segment we took a two-

day field trip to see depositional systems along the Gulf Coast, led by Mike Sweet and Karoun Charkoudian (MS 2003). Upon return to Madison, the class spent a month applying their newly acquired knowledge to interpret a Gulf Coast 3-D seismic volume, working in the Sedimentary Geology Visualization Laboratory in Weeks Hall (equipped with assistance from ExxonMobil, BP, Schlumberger, and several other companies). At the conclusion of the project ExxonMobil personnel came to Madison to provide assistance and evaluation of the final results. Overall the class provided excellent exposure not only to seismic interpretation methods, but also familiarization with a broad range of industry technologies, work environments, and people. It was a fun and illuminating experience that we hope to repeat in the future.



The prospect of pizza and straight talk from an impressive group of alumni career geologists brought a student crowd that filled the Laudon Lecture Hall lobby on Sept. 30: A Mentor Panel Discussion was sponsored by the Board of Visitors. Left to right are Tom Johnson, Mark Solien, Jamie Robertson (back), Bill Morgan, Toni Simo, and Jean Bahr, who is responding to a question from an undergrad. See a complete list of the panel members on page 40.