FALL 2007 GRADUATE SEMINAR SERIES

Friday, November 2, 2007

4:00 – 4:50 p.m. MB 0.224

Guest Speaker: Dr. Eve Gruntfest

U. Colorado

Eve Gruntfest Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, B.A. Geography, Clark University; M.A., Ph.D Geography University of Colorado.

Eve has been working in the field of natural hazard mitigation for 30 years. She has published widely and is an internationally recognized expert in the specialty areas of warning system development and flash flooding. She is a Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs.

From June 2005-September 2006 she was a visiting scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder. She organized workshops called WAS*IS – (Weather and Society Integrated Study) (www.sip.ucar.edu/was_is) devoted to developing a group of people dedicating their careers to making weather research relevant to a wide spectrum of stakeholders. After 5 workshops there are 145 WAS*ISers. The WAS*IS idea is taking off. A WAS*IS workshop is planned for July 2008 and one was held in Melbourne Australia in January 2007.

In summer 2006 she was invited to help teach a graduate class on flash flooding in France and to evaluate a long term flood warning system for South Australia.

In 2003 she received National Science Foundation funding for a 4-year project evaluating warnings for short fuse weather events, particularly tornadoes and flash floods. Working with her colleague Chip Benight from psychology, the project studies how demographic changes, new technologies and new sources of information should be reflected in warning policy. The study focuses on Denver, CO and Austin, TX

During the spring of 2003 Eve was a Fulbright Scholar serving as the Distinguished Chair of Geography and University of Trieste, Italy. In 2002 she received a grant for a scholarly exchange with colleagues at Binghamton University in NY and University of Ljubljana in Slovenia to do comparable studies of flash floods and landslides. In 2002 she co-edited the volume Coping with Flash Floods (Kluwer 2000) that brings together papers from leading experts who participated at the 1999 NATO Advanced Studies Institute that she organized and held in Ravello, Italy.

Weather and Society * Integrated Studies (WAS*IS)

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This presentation provides an overview of the grassroots movement to change the weather enterprise by comprehensively and sustainably integrating social science into meteorological research and practice and summarizes the movement's progress to date.

WAS*IS is achieving its vision by establishing a framework to do two things:

- **Building an interdisciplinary community of practitioners, researchers, and stakeholders who are dedicated to the integration of meteorology and social science and,**
- **Providing this community (of now 145 WAS * ISers) with a means to learn about and further examine ideas, methods, and examples related to integrated weather-society work.**

The primary mechanism for implementing WAS*IS currently is through workshops, which provide the initial, focused interaction with peers as well as a learning environment. The "WAS*ISers" come from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, communications, economics, geography, hydrology, meteorology, psychology, and sociology. The WAS*ISers also span the public, private, and academic sectors, and they include people in all stages of their careers. By choosing a diverse group of individuals, WAS*IS promotes relationships among people from various backgrounds, allowing the participants to learn not only from the workshop but also from each other.

The following five goals guide the implementation of WAS*IS. The workshops are organized around a mix of presentations, group discussions, and small-group work to support these goals.

1. **Lay the groundwork for conducting interdisciplinary work by learning new strategies and addressing typical challenges.**
2. **Teach basic tools (e.g., geographic information systems, qualitative research methods, decision support tools) and concepts (e.g., communication of weather forecast uncertainty information, social vulnerability indices) fundamental for conducting integrated weather-society research and applications.**
3. **Learn about effective integrated research and applications though real-world examples.**
4. **Identify and pursue research, application, and educational opportunities for integrated weather-society work.**
5. **Improve and further facilitate the ongoing relationships among practitioners, researchers, and stakeholders in meteorology and the social sciences.**

Ultimately, the combination of the relationships, knowledge, and ideas fostered through WAS*IS will help the meteorology community better understand weather-society interactions so that society may better reduce vulnerabilities and make better decisions associated with the weather.