Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan

Derrick Hasterok, the named postdoc for this project, is being jointly mentored by Steven Constable, Dave Sandwell, and David Stegman. This unusually large number of mentors is a result of Derrick’s interest in combining electromagnetic methods with geodynamic modeling, an approach he started during his thesis work in Utah. Constable provides the single point of contact for administrative matters, and will be responsible for ensuring that nothing is neglected as a consequence of the divided responsibility, but the diversity of mentors should provide Derrick a rich environment in which to work. The work proposed here, which would occupy about half of Derrick’s time, would be mostly supervised by Constable.

Mentoring will primarily include training activities appropriate for a career in research, and is intended to develop the core competencies recommended by the National Postdoctoral Association. These include scientific knowledge, development of professionalism, research, and communication skills, and the responsible conduct of research. We will also promote opportunities to develop leadership and management skills.

Our strategy in mentoring is to have an open door that allows regular communication and discussions with the postdoc as needed. The PIs expect routine discussions about work related to this proposal, and will ensure that they transmit information about educational or government research organizations or industry opportunities, as appropriate. At IGPP (the division of Scripps in which Derrick and the mentors sit) Postdocs are expected to:

1. participate in the weekly group meetings at Scripps for students, technical, and research staff. The marine EM group holds such meetings throughout the year;

2. interact with other postdocs, students, faculty. Currently there are 23 students, 8 Postdocs, and 53 academics at IGPP, and many more in the broader Scripps community.

3. attend a broad spectrum of local scientific seminars, including some on the management and conduct of science;

4. attend relevant national and international conferences, (e.g., AGU, GLADE workshops) to present research results;

5. write up work for publication in peer-reviewed journals;

6. begin to acquire proposal writing skills (Derrick contributed substantially to the preparation of this proposal);

7. participate in education and outreach activities as appropriate;

8. work towards acquiring the skills necessary for whatever long term career position is appropriate, whether in education, government or private research.

These expectations are clearly communicated at beginning of the postdoctoral appointment, when mentors develop a written plan in collaboration with the appointee.

In accordance with Scripps’ policy, the postdoc’s progress is evaluated on an annual basis. This assessment includes a frank face to face discussion of what has been accomplished, versus what might have been anticipated. Postdocs are encouraged to provide commentary during this assessment and usually contribute to the planning for the next phase of their work while keeping in mind their broader career goals.