In the October 1967 issue of Geotimes, Robert L. Bates spoke to the subject of new earth science curricula in a somewhat half-serious and humorous way by asking what's wrong with the following address: Professor Sigmoid Frump, Department of Geology, Backwater College, Zenith, North Somestate.

He responded to his own question by noting that Professor Frump has now been promoted to Dean, Backwater College is now Backwater University, and Zenith has a zip code. A new chairman has replaced the Dean and has added three recent Ph.Ds. to the staff. The four-man department now includes an oxygen-isotope geochemist (the chairman), a theoretical petrologist, an astrogeophysicist, and a biometrical micropaleontologist. Three floors of a brand new building bulge with over $14,000,000 worth of electronic equipment, computers, and other esoteric gear. The members of the staff hold $780,000 in research grants from the National Science Foundation. Only a very few students, who mastered physical chemistry and calculus in the 9th grade, are considered undergraduate majors. The Department of Geology is now the Department of Geochemical and Geophysical Sciences. The last point is, of course, fantasy, for 68% of the geology-teaching departments still retain the title Department of Geology and another 14% share honors with Geography. The others are variously known as Departments of Earth Science, Geological Sciences, Geosciences, Geophysics, or Geological Engineering. In a class by themselves are Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, and Earth and Planetary Sciences. In such a cosmic context, how quaint and antiquated the word geology seems. Geology, like Sophia Loren, may be a simple subject but put together in a complicated manner.

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