

## **CARTOGRAPHIC AND GIS EDUCATION AT SIR SANDFORD FLEMING COLLEGE, CANADA STRIKING A BALANCE**

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Since the inception of the Cartography program at Sir Sandford Fleming College in 1973, the program has adopted the philosophy that graphic communication together with cartographic theory and technology must be at the core of cartographic and GIS education. The uniqueness of its curriculum has helped garnered the program special recognition in Canada and the United States. The ACSM Bulletin reported that “among the many school and student entries, none has earned more awards than the Cartography program at Sir Sandford Fleming” in the 25 years’ history of the ACSM mapping competitions.<sup>1</sup>

Cartography and GIS experienced major and rapid changes in the past few years. This has posed new challenges to practitioners in the field. Educational institutions responsible for the preparation of such professionals have to constantly rise to meet the challenges. Given the limited financial resources and time for education, striking a balance in curriculum development is always a daunting task.

The paper explains how the program strives to maintain its core focus. It chronicles the evolution of a proven curriculum. The paper details the approach taken at SSFC to balance the demand on cartographic theory, cartographic application, GIS theory, GIS application, programming, software development, spatial technology, information technology, and last but not least, the internet and the Web. The paper explores in detail and shares the newest curriculum in its more than 25 years of successful history. It sheds practical insight toward preparing graduates to meeting the new changes and tough challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Sir Sandford Fleming’s Award –Winning Ways’, [American Congress on Surveying and Mapping Bulletin](#), November/December, 1997.