research grants at the national level, then we must be willing to compensate them at the appropriate scale," he remarks.

Paul Dawson, professor of construction management and engineering, also has concerns, to say the least. "Time resources, faculty wages, technical support resources, administrative support resources, library resources and equipment support resources are limited here," he states. "There are few incentives to pursue research here other than the tenure and promotion concerns among faculty."

The BSU chemistry department has a dual track system for the consideration of promotion and financial rewards, notes Schimpf. "Those in the teaching track are judged on their teaching success; those in research are judged on their research efforts, and are given lighter teaching loads so that they can compete with those in the teaching track," he says. "Tenure and promotion requires some effort in research with publications in peer review journals, but publish or perish is certainly not a truism. Excellent teaching and service are still major factors in the reward system at Boise State. Compared to research institutions with graduate programs, tenure at BSU requires a smaller research effort."

**"If we are looking to hire individuals who are competitive for research grants at the national level, then we must be willing to compensate them at the appropriate scale."**

The university's reward system isn't flawless, but department chairs Raymond and Jerry LaCava believe that any faculty member pulling his or her weight will be evaluated fairly.

LaCava, computer information systems and production management chairman, says, "All faculty should be avid 'learners.' BSU seems to allow 'researchers' and 'teachers' to thrive; this is as it should be. I try to evaluate my faculty on the basis of contribution to the department's goals. Some teach more so others can be more active in research. Both are rewarded."

Adds Raymond: "Teaching and research are given equal weight in evaluations of faculty in the political science department. At a university, all faculty should be involved in some level of research. The level or amount may vary from person to person, but the point remains that an active research agenda contributes to good teaching."

To be sure, these various strains of thought in regard to research at Boise State represent only a portion of the discussion. But one thing is certain: The debate will only become more passionate as the university grows. ❑

# Centers of their Universe

With each year, research activities grow and become more sophisticated at Boise State University. From birds of prey to geosciences to health-care policy, BSU is diversifying its efforts to study universal issues that affect residents of the world, not just Idaho. Perhaps most important, student gain hands-on experience that would not be accessible to them at larger institutions. Some of the research is focused in centers or collaborative groups that provide resources and structure for faculty and research associates. Here's a look at a few of them.

### Center for the Geophysical Investigation of the Shallow Subsurface

The largest research center at BSU is the Center for the Geophysical Investigation of the Shallow Subsurface (CGISS). It was established in July 1991 to focus graduate geophysical research on the study of the uppermost part of the Earth's crust. The center seeks a better understanding of fundamental geological processes that occur at shallow depths in both terrestrial and marine environments.

Cities around the state have benefitted from expertise at the center. Projects have included a seismic study of sedimentary strata beneath Pocatello; experiments to help evaluate aquifers, faults and alluvial channels in the Boise River valley; and a study of groundwater seepage and landslides in Hagerman.

CGISS assists state agencies with geophysical projects, answers inquiries and provides speakers to the general public on a wide range of issues such as natural hazards and general earth science.

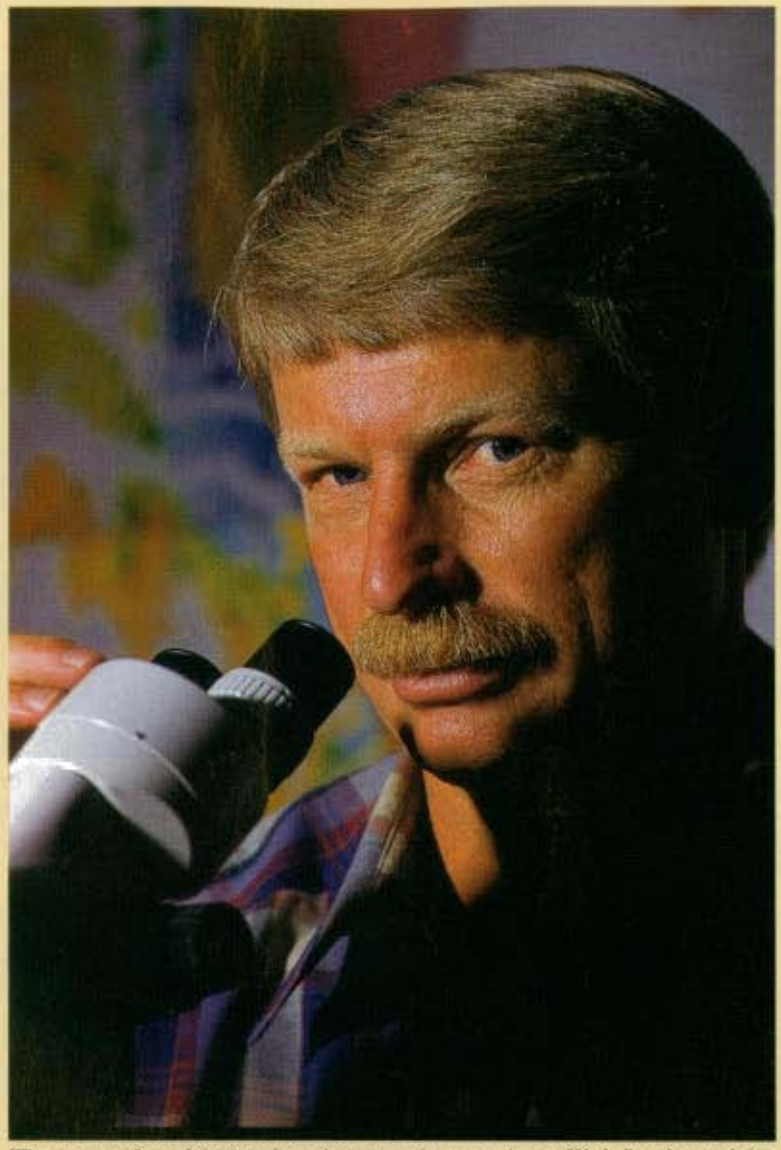
Initial funding was provided by a $400,000 grant from the State Board of Education. The grant provided seed money that has helped the center compete for other funding from public and private sources. All told, the center has been awarded $2 million from external contracts and grants.

### Raptor Research Center

The Raptor Research Center is located in the biology department and is part of the Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center. The Raptor Research Center facilitates BSU's master's program in raptor biology and manages a number of grant accounts and cooperative agreements for field research.

The center is a research partnership of federal and state governments, the academic community and the private sector. It serves as a national and international center for raptor issues on birds of prey habitat management and conservation, such as effects of pesticides on birds of prey and the effects of military training on the Snake River Birds of Prey Area.

GLENN OAKLEY PHOTO



*The scope of work being done by Boise State geologist Walt Snyder and the university's Permian Research Institute is worldwide.*

## Survey Research Center

Roads and bridges, court-ordered mediation and the Endangered Species Act are just a few of the many issues addressed this year by the Survey Research Center. Administered by BSU's College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, the Survey Research Center specializes in applied research on public policy issues for local, state and federal government agencies.

Director David Scudder, three full-time researchers and a student staff conduct surveys and needs assessments, provide methodological and technical assistance, and help with grant proposals.

Federally funded research conducted this year is being used to help solve social problems, including juvenile delinquency and child support.

Among the center's most visible projects is the annual Public Policy Survey, which provides a statewide glimpse of public opinion on topics as diverse as saving the state's salmon and steelhead and the importance of museums to Idaho's quality of life. A newly formed consortium of state and local agencies, non-profit groups and the private sector helped guide the direction of the survey this year.

## Permian Research Institute

Scientists at the Permian Research Institute are studying the geology and fossils in Nevada, Russia and China to find answers to questions about the dynamics of the Earth's plates. Their results could be the key to the discovery of new oil fields in Russia and the United States.

Walt Snyder, a BSU stratigrapher and petroleum geologist, and paleontologist Claude Spinosa work closely with several research associates as well as BSU students and colleagues at other universities. This fall they also are hosting visiting research scientist Vladimir Davydov of the All-Russian Geological Research Institute. Davydov is collaborating with the BSU researchers on work in the Ural Mountains.

The institute's work has broad applications for understanding the geology of ancient oceanic basins as well as geologic time, plate movements and the historic rise and fall of sea level.

Funding has been provided by grants from a wide range of sources, including the National Science Foundation, State Board of Education and American Chemical Society.

## Center for Health Policy

A consortium effort with Idaho State, the University of Idaho and Lewis-Clark State College, the Center for Health Policy is administered by BSU's College of Health Science.

The center was instituted in 1994 to provide opportunities for students and faculty to participate in research and educational activities about health-policy development, health-care reform and future health-care needs.

By assisting researchers delving into health-care issues, the center seeks to provide public information on health issues through printed material, forums and conferences. It also provides independent, non-biased analysis and consultation on health-policy issues for executive and legislative branches, organizations, businesses and individuals.

Directed by College of Health Science Dean Eldon Edmundson, the center has participated in research activities with other agencies. One was researching how much money the western states under an education consortium spent on medical education opportunities for their residents. This information was used by the State Board of Education in determining how much additional funding should go into programs to support medical education for Idaho residents.

The center also has assisted the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in identifying the needs of primary-care providers in Idaho, and helped develop a statewide trauma plan to build research data bases. ❑