

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This letter is to correct misconceptions about the recently revised Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-16, titled "Coordination of Surveying, Mapping, and Related Spatial Data," discussed in the article "OMB Considers Data Committee, A-16 Revisions" in the Summer 1990 issue of *Cartographic Perspectives*. Specifically, we would like to correct the following misconceptions: 1) that the Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on Digital Cartography's (FICCDC's) proposal to establish the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) was separate from its proposal to revise OMB Circular A-16; 2) that the proposal advocated that resource, environmental, cultural and demographic, and ground transportation data would become part of the responsibility of the Geological Survey's National Mapping Division; and 3) that the proposal named the National Mapping Division as the chair of the FGDC.

The revised Circular A-16 expands the breadth of coordination to include other categories of spatial data and assigns government-wide leadership roles to Federal departments for coordinating these data. These categories and lead departments include: digital soils and vegetation data (Department of Agriculture); geodetic and cultural and demographic data (Department of Commerce); base topographic mapping, cadastral, geologic, and wetlands data (Department of Interior); portrayal of certain international boundaries (Department of State); and ground transportation data (Department of Transportation).

The revised Circular also establishes a new interagency coordinating committee named the Federal Geographic Data Committee which replaces the

FICCDC. The objective of the FGDC is to promote the coordinated development, use, sharing, and dissemination of surveying, mapping, and related spatial data. The Circular identifies the following organizations as members of the FGDC: the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, State, and Transportation; the Environmental Protection Agency; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the National Archives and Records Administration. The Circular also identifies the Department of the Interior as the chair of the committee.

The proposal for a revised Circular A-16 was developed by the FICCDC in response to a request from OMB. The proposal was reviewed and commented upon at a government-wide Forum on Spatial Data Coordination in December 1989.

Written comments from Federal, State, and local government agencies and professional societies were received in early 1990. The Secretary of the Interior formally sent the proposal to OMB in May. During the summer OMB requested that the departments and independent agencies, which are members of the FICCDC, formally review and comment on the proposal. OMB Director Richard Darman signed the revised Circular on October 19, 1990.

If you have any questions about this information, please call me at (703) 648-4533.

Sincerely yours,
Michael A. Domartz,
Executive Secretary,
Federal Interagency Coordinating
Committee on Digital Cartography

cartographic techniques

ANATOMY OF THE INTRODUCTORY CARTOGRAPHY COURSE

Dr. James F. Fryman and Bonnie R. Sines, University of Northern Iowa

ABSTRACT

The principal focus of this paper is to determine whether a common consensus exists among cartography instructors regarding the content of the introductory cartography course. In addition, the research describes the background of instructors and the course context and content. The determination of differences and similarities among introductory cartography courses was facilitated using a questionnaire mailed to 378 instructors at 285 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada in the Fall of 1989.

INTRODUCTION

Since the introductory cartography course is often students' only formal exposure to cartographic concepts, theory and map production, it is especially important to define essential topics, exercises and techniques. In addition, a strong cartographic foundation is needed for those students choosing to do advanced work in cartography. It is probably idealistic to assume that the population of cartography instructors would be in universal agreement about what should be contained in an introductory cartography course. However, it should not be unrealistic to believe that a reasonable consensus of what is important can be determined.

The intent of this study is to give an overview of the introductory cartography course today. The survey emphasizes the variations and similarities between introductory cartography courses in