Can We Save the MS in Hydrogeology?

Ty Ferre, University of Arizona

# Abstract

Here's an alarming fact - the hydrogeology industry is struggling to fill hundreds of open technical positions while enrollment in hydrology (and other Earth Science fields) has plummeted. Several of the historically large hydrology programs are struggling to meet minimum enrollment in core MS courses. Many programs are not planning to hire subsurface hydrologists to replace retiring faculty in this area. In part, we are a victim of our own success as a scientific discipline. PhD enrollments are still strong and faculty, especially young faculty, are encouraged to provide support exclusively for PhDs and postdoctoral researchers. This begs the question – who will produce those future PhD candidates? We propose that a key step toward rebuilding student numbers in hydrology is to agree upon what someone who earns an MS in hydrology should know: a core curriculum. Once established, we can design more flexible, efficient MS programs that offer a better value proposition and we will have a shared vision of who we are that we can market to potential students. This presentation will introduce the problem and show you how you can participate in defining the future of hydrologic education.