Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)

Statement on Education Needs for
GIS/LIS Education Summit, November 1998

The Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS) is a national trade association of more than 125 private sector professional firms in all aspects of geospatial information: photogrammetry, value-added remote sensing, GIS services, aerial photography, image processing, hydrography, and surveying services, as well as hardware, software and data products and satellite remote sensing.

MAPPS has a critical interest in geographic information science education programs. Collectively, MAPPS represents the largest block of employers of GIS students in the world.

Our interest in education programs is concentrated in three general areas:

1. A post-secondary program that educates students in basic knowledge and understanding in sciences such as mathematics, engineering, natural resources, computers, and geography, as well as business principles in economics, management, and English. MAPPS believes 4-year degree programs, (as well as masters and Ph.D. programs) should be "education" programs, not "training" programs. Students should graduate with an ability to "think," not necessarily to "do." MAPPS believes that students with a strong academic background in these disciplines are excellent candidates for career-enhancing employment who can be "trained" in the private sector. College degree programs should not train students "how to push buttons" to utilize GIS software. Rather, these programs should teach students how to understand problems, analyze situations, evaluate alternative solutions, and develop methodologies for problem solving.

2. MAPPS supports increasing the use of "internships" and work/study programs for students in MAPPS member firms, and improving the role of MAPPS member firm principals as mentors, career counselors and visiting lecturers at universities.

MAPPS believes there is a critical need for cooperation between universities and the private sector on training, as well as research. University personnel and facilities can be better utilized to create non-degree "training" programs for technicians who are not degree candidates, as well as for continuing professional development and education for individuals with degrees. Moreover, a robust research agenda that focuses on basic research and conceptual development should be encouraged in universities with participation by the private sector. MAPPS believe such properly focused research should complement and enhance private sector needs and efforts, not compete with them.

3. MAPPS desires to work with the university community in general and UCGIS in particular on a common vision for the respective roles of universities and the private sector in GIS. Many MAPPS member firm principals and university GIS program leaders share a concern that universities not engage in activities that compete with the private sector. Some UCGIS members view such university activities as unethical. Others disdain the pressure imposed upon them by university administrators to "market" their services and generate reimbursable income. MAPPS wishes to work with UCGIS on a mutually agreed upon statement outlining our common understanding of our respective sectors’ roles and responsibilities.
Finally, MAPPS has adopted the following education-related goals, objectives and implementation tasks in its strategic plan:

**Goal 4: Encouraging and enable members to interact with each other and stakeholders**

**Objective C:** Act as a conduit for interaction between MAPPS member firms and universities and government agencies

- Expand and improve dialogue between MAPPS and other sectors and organizations (NSGIC, universities)

**Goal 5: Providing effective education programs for members to increase the knowledge and competency of their personnel.**

**Objective A:** Develop continuing education and training programs at technical and subprofessional levels

- Conduct education needs survey
- Seek to sponsor more technical specialty conferences (e.g. ABGPS)

**Objective C:** Implement partnerships with universities on post secondary and continuing education and on defining the respective roles of universities and private firms

- Develop a MAPPS ‘endorsement’ process of university programs