

Dear VISIT Participant,

Welcome to the VISIT (Virtual Immersion in Science Inquiry for Teachers) Online Collaboratory!

This letter includes the following information for both NEW and RETURNING TEACHERS to VISIT:

- Calendar
- Instructions for logging in to the course and going to your discussion forum
- Instructions for getting started with the course
- Information on how to obtain graduate credit for this course

### **CALENDAR and SYLLABUS information:**

The course begins immediately when you successfully registered and will last till **Saturday, February 7, 2004**. Each “week” of the course begins on a Sunday and ends the following Saturday. The Syllabus **online** provides a week-by-week set of assignments.

### **LOGGING ON for Accessing Educator’s Forum:**

Please follow the steps below to log in to the Educator’s Forum, which serves as the VISIT Online Collaboratory. The Educators Forum is where you communicate with your colleagues, submit your assignments for graduate credits, and get technical support.

1. First, go to the VISIT dissemination website at <http://ceita.emich.edu/visit>.  
(Be sure to add this URL to your “favorites” in your browser, or make it your browser’s Home page.)
2. From the menu of green boxes on the left panel of this page select the “EDUCATORS’ FORUM” link.
3. Next, select the link titled “Register”.

A new page of “VISIT Discussion – Registration Agreement Terms” will open, and you should read the terms and decide whether you agree to the terms.

4. Next, you will be asked to create a user ID by yourself and to provide one of your valid email addresses for registration verification.
5. After submission, you can use the newly created user ID as “Log-in ID” and your email address as “Password” to login to the Educators’ Forum.

### **YOUR CLASS DISCUSSION FORUM:**

Please select one of the four class discussion forums to work in as your primary forum.

The “**Getting started**” forum is a great place for both NEW and RETURNING TEACHERS to begin this dissemination session. You can use this “**Getting started**” forum as a place to introduce yourselves, get oriented, and report on your activities and assignments in the “Getting Started” section on the “EDUCATORS’ RESOURCES” on the left side of the opening page at <http://ceita.emich.edu/visit/>.

If you are a returning VISIT teacher and you want to skip the “Getting Started” activities, you can get help in developing your own lesson or in other credit options. Please join one of the topical forums: **Environmental Science**, **Earth Science**, and **Social Studies**.

To go to your chosen forum simply click on a “Forum Title” in the “Topic Forums” within the Educators’ Forum Page.

## **ORIENTATION TO GET STARTED WITH THE ONLINE COURSE:**

1. First, go to the VISIT dissemination website at <http://ceita.emich.edu/visit>.
2. From the menu of green boxes on the left panel of this page select the "EDUCATORS' RESOURCES" link. You don't need to log in "EDUCATORS' FORUM" when you take a lesson and do an assignment.
3. Next, read the link titled "What You'll Need", and then order a free ArcVoyager Special Edition CD from a link contained in this paper.
4. Finally read the link titled "Getting Started", and then follow recommendations in this document to proceed with the VISIT dissemination session.
5. **PLEASE be patient with us as you work through this rendition of the VISIT Project. We're breaking "new ground" here and "glitches" are likely to surface from time to time. Together, we can work to enhance this new online, educational resource. Please submit feedback in the appropriate forum and we will strive to make improvements "on the fly" as we proceed.**

## **GETTING CREDIT:**

Participation in the online course is free. Teachers who complete requirements for the online courses are also eligible to apply for one to four free graduate credits from Eastern Michigan University. Because the course ends in February, you will receive the credits at the end of Winter Term 2004. To receive free Graduate Credits from EMU, you must fill out a registration form, which will be mailed to you when you complete your online registration at <http://maps.acad.emich.edu/asptest/newd/teacher.htm>. Any questions regarding credit issues can be directed to Ling Zhang at [lzhang2@emich.edu](mailto:lzhang2@emich.edu) or (734) 487-5396.

There are five credit options.

### **1. Credit Option One – 2 Credits (GIS Skill & Science Inquiry Lessons)**

Teachers may receive two graduate credits from EMU after they have completed a selection of 8 lessons (a combination of GIS basic skill lessons, or/and GIS-based science inquiry lessons) and participated in the VISIT Collaboratory to exchange ideas and obtain technical support. A teacher new to VISIT can expect to complete this sequence within approximately six weeks of participation in the VISIT online program, and many returning teachers may already qualify for these credits.

Note: You may take Credit Option 1 plus one more option from Credit Option 2, or 3, or 4, or 5. This policy of "credit options" applies to teachers new in the February 2003 Semester as well as the teachers in the Fall 2002 and previous semesters. Therefore the teachers registered in previous semesters are encouraged to come back completing one of the project options.

### **2. Credit Option Two – 1 Credit (Classroom Tryout)**

Teachers may receive an additional one graduate credit from EMU after they have tried out an existing lesson (a GIS basic skill or science inquiry lesson) in their own classroom. This option requires that a teacher submit one VISIT Curriculum Rubric done by herself or himself, three VISIT Curriculum Rubric completed by the students, and a summary report of the class try-out (such as, the grade level, class subject, number of students, student responses and assessments, etc.). A

teacher can expect to complete this sequence within approximately three weeks after completing Credit Option 1.

### **3. Credit Option Three – 1 Credit (Evaluate A Teachers' Investigation)**

Teachers may receive an additional one graduate credit from EMU after they have evaluated an investigation developed by teachers. The teachers' investigations are accessed through the line, "Teachers' Investigations" from the left panel within "EDUCATORS' RESOURCES". This option requires that a teacher submit one VISIT Curriculum Rubric done by herself or himself, and an evaluation report. The evaluation report will assess what is there and what isn't from the perspectives of curriculum and GIS, how to characterize the materials for possible users, and how to improve this investigation if you are revising or adapting it in your classroom. A teacher can expect to complete this sequence within approximately three weeks after completing Credit Option 1.

### **4. Credit Option Four – 1 Credit (Build A Basemap)**

Teachers may receive an additional one graduate credit from EMU after they complete a GIS basemap for the future use in GIS lesson/project development and submit the basemap and data sets to the Collaboratory. A teacher can expect to complete this sequence within approximately three to four weeks after completing Credit Option 1.

### **5. Credit Option Five – 2 Credits (Build A Lesson)**

Teachers may receive an additional two graduate credits from EMU after they (individually or as part of a team) develop a lesson or project for their own curriculum or community. A teacher can expect to complete the steps involved in developing this lesson in approximately six weeks after completing Credit Option 1.

**YOU CAN ALSO DOWNLOAD THIS ORIENTATION NOTE from, [CEITA.EMICH.EDU/VISIT/!](http://CEITA.EMICH.EDU/VISIT/)**

The VISIT staff and teacher leaders are looking forward to working with you online!

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