

WORKSHOPS

Miocene of Spain

Working from Original Sources

Minorities in Geology

THE LATE MIOCENE OF SOUTHEASTERN SPAIN: A STUDENT-FACULTY WORKSHOP

convened by

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Thirteen participants representing six Keck consortium colleges assembled for three days (11th to 14th) in January 1990 at Beloit College for a workshop on the late Miocene of southeastern Spain. The workshop nicely complemented the summer 1989 research project in Spain that was funded by the Keck consortium. Six of the nine students and three of the five faculty members that participated during the summer of 1989 also attended the workshop.

The purposes of the workshop were to:

1. give all participants an understanding of depositional environments during the late Miocene in southeastern Spain;
2. provide an opportunity for students to present their research progress to date;
3. allow ample time for discussing research progress, thin sections, and specimens;
4. provide an opportunity for students who were working in the same area to standardize their terminology and direct further research.

We suggest that all projects consider having a follow-up workshop; it had significant educational value for faculty and students alike.

Students and faculty convened Thursday evening, 11 January. Friday morning, the workshop began with a lecture by Carol Mankiewicz on the geology and carbonate sedimentology of southeastern Spain. The lecture was followed by a specimen workshop during which participants could examine suites of rocks from two representative reef complexes.

Friday afternoon and Saturday morning were devoted to student presentations and thin-section/specimen workshops. Each student described her/his research area, discussed the progress to date, and posed problems to the other participants. The problems provided ample discussion material. Following several student presentations, we all convened in the laboratory to study student thin sections and specimens. A video camera interfaced to a petrographic microscope permitted easy viewing of thin sections by several participants simultaneously; this greatly facilitated discussion.

Saturday afternoon was dedicated to group discussion and further study of specimens. Many students had worked as members of teams. This part of the workshop allowed necessary discussion to standardize terminology, iron out differences in interpretation, discuss methods for presentation of data, etc. Students who had not worked as part of a team continued specimen study. Participants departed on Sunday, 14 January.

The workshop was a logical outgrowth of our collaborative research in Spain. It provided opportunities to work together and discuss results to date. Students and faculty offered constructive criticism and suggestions on how to proceed further. More importantly, we believe that it reinforced the self-confidence of many of the students--their data and opinions mattered. In addition, two faculty participants had not been to the field area in Spain; the lectures and thin-section workshops allowed them to better understand the project so that they could better advise their students.