

Duluth--- Proudest man on the UMD campus is Dr. Robert L. Heller, one of the authors of the textbook "Investigating the Earth" being published this week.

Dr. Heller, UMD head of the Department of Geology and assistant to the provost, is pleased for two major reasons:

* The national Earth Science Curriculum Project (ESCP) which produced the book had its start at UMD early in 1963 under Heller's direction, a post he held two and a half years.

* Prof. Heller wrote one of the 26 chapters in the book --- on "Time and its Measurement" --- and was editor of seven other chapters.

Heller said 220,000 copies of the book are being distributed nationally by the publisher, Houghton Mifflin, Boston. The text is designed for the teaching of the earth sciences in the ninth grade with major sections on "The Dynamic Earth," "Earth Cycles," "Earth's Biography," and "Earth's Environment in Space." The book has 594 pages, 450 illustrations and an equal number of photographs.

A unique feature of the book is that it is a combination textbook and laboratory manual. Lab exercises are integrated with text materials throughout the book.

When the project moved to a more central location at the University of Colorado, Boulder, 40 scientists and teachers were invited to meet and write a first version of the book. The initial book then was tested by 77 teachers and 7,500 students across the country who sent their comments and criticisms back to the ESCP staff. A second version was written in the summer of 1965, tested again by teachers and students, then revised last summer for final publication.

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Even while the textbook neared completion the ESCP staff already was at work on other plans for up-grading the teaching of the earth sciences in secondary schools.

Field study guides, single-topic pamphlets, a reference series, and a number of major films are being produced for use around the nation.

The Earth Science Curriculum Project is sponsored by the American Geological Institute and supported by the National Science Foundation. Dr. Heller continues to serve on the ESCP Steering Committee, which generally directs the operation of the project.

In November, 1965, Heller was presented the Neil Miner Award for his outstanding contributions to geological education by the National Association of Geology Teachers. He currently is chairman of the education committee of the American Geological Institute. Heller has authored more than a dozen books and professional articles in geology and the earth sciences.