

NMSU PHYSICS DEPARTMENT
2009 GARDINER LECTURE
Dr. Steven Squyres (Cornell University)

7:00 PM, Sunday, April 26th, 2009, NMSU Corbett Center Ballroom

Dr. Steven Squyres is the Goldwin Smith Professor of Astronomy at Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York. Dr. Squyres is the Principal Investigator of the NASA Mars Exploration Rovers SPIRIT and OPPORTUNITY, which landed on Mars in January 2004 and to this day continue to be remotely driven around the surface of Mars, obtaining measurements of Mars' surface materials and atmosphere and transmitting those observations back to Earth.

In his April 26th Gardiner Lecture in the NMSU Corbett Center Ballroom, Dr. Squyres will discuss the history of the Rovers SPIRIT and OPPORTUNITY and the future of Mars Exploration. Dr. Squyres has recently been selected to be the Chairperson for a "Decadal Study" of Solar System Exploration. The results of that study, which obtains input from planetary scientists around the country and world, will be a guiding document for American solar system exploration decisions for years to come.

Biography: Steven Squyres's research focuses on the large solid bodies of the solar system: the terrestrial planets and the satellites of the Jovian (Gas Giant) planets. His work involves analysis of data from both spacecraft and ground-based telescopes, as well as a variety of types of geophysical modeling. Areas of particular interest include the tectonics of Venus, the history of water on Mars, and the geophysics of the icy satellites of the outer planets. Data analysis and theory are used together to examine the processes that have shaped the surfaces and interiors of these bodies.

Dr. Squyres has participated in a number of planetary spaceflight missions. From 1978 to 1981 he was an associate of the Voyager imaging science team, participating in analysis of imaging data from the encounters with Jupiter and Saturn. He was a radar investigator on the Magellan mission to Venus, a member of the Mars Observer gamma-ray spectrometer flight investigation team, and a co-investigator on the Russian Mars '96 mission. Dr. Squyres is currently the scientific Principal Investigator for the Mars Exploration Rover Project. He is also a co-investigator on the Mars Express mission, and on the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter's High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment. He is a member of the Gamma-Ray Spectrometer Flight Investigation Team for the Mars Odyssey mission, and a member of the imaging team for the Cassini mission to Saturn.