

Dr. William J. Cleary

Dr. William J. Cleary is a marine and coastal geologist whose interests have included coastal management oriented investigations involving inlet and hurricane related shoreline changes and the modification of inlet systems for sand resources for nourishment purposes. His inner continental shelf studies focused on the inter-relationships between the shoreface geology and the nature of shoreline change along the adjacent barriers and headlands. Geologic mapping of these offshore areas was based on remotely sensed data and SCUBA diving based sampling programs.

Dr. Cleary was a Professor of Geology in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNCW) from 1972 to 2009 and is now Professor Emeritus of Geology at UNCW. He received his BS degree in Geology at Southern Illinois University in 1965 and subsequently received his MS Degree in Geology at Duke University in 1968. Prior to receiving his Ph.D. Degree in Geology at the University of South Carolina in 1972, Dr. Cleary worked as a Petroleum Exploration Geologist with Pan American Petroleum Corporation. Upon completion of his doctoral degree, he held a post-doctoral research position at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina. Dr. Cleary's research, while at the University of South Carolina, involved genesis and transport of sand on the continental margin and in the deep ocean. Such a diverse background has afforded him the opportunity to work in a variety of marine and coastal settings.

Since the early 1980s Cleary's research focused on coastal geology, shoreline erosion related to inlets, and offshore sand resources. Additionally, he has traveled extensively to give presentations of his scientific research in order to promote scholarship and educational ties between UNCW and with other academic institutions, and thus expand UNCW's exposure as a marine science research facility. Dr. Cleary has acted as Chief Scientist on numerous NSF and NOAA/NURC sponsored scientific cruises. Much of his earlier research in the deep ocean was funded by the National Science Foundation, and more recently his coastal oriented research was funded by NOAA's National Undersea Research Center at UNCW and North Carolina Sea Grant. He supervised or advised approximately 30 Graduate Students at UNCW and other universities. He has authored or co-authored over 75 publications in national and international scientific journals. His paper dealing with beach nourishment on storm-impacted barriers in Southeastern North Carolina won the 16th International Coastal Symposium Award for best professional paper.