

Geology 1403: Physical Geology [online]

Fall 2017

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Office Hours: 9-10 AM MWF; by appointment or anytime I'm around and my door is open (knock if it isn't, I still might be there – hiding...)

Course Information

Location: Online

Required Text: Essentials of Geology by Stephen Marshak, 4th edition or later (W.W. Norton & Company)

Course Description

This class is an online introduction to Physical Geology. The class will focus on the origin and history of the earth, the materials and structure of the earth, and the processes and forces that continually act upon the earth both internally and externally.

The class will be somewhat self-paced. That is, you will not have to be online at any certain time and you may do your work at your leisure. ***However, the class will have deadlines that you will have to meet to progress through the course.*** Failure to meet these deadlines will adversely affect your grade in the course. So you can't wait until the last 3 weeks of the semester to do your work, nor can you do the class in the first 3 weeks. You're in it for the long haul, just like if you had to come to lecture. You should treat this class no differently from a face to face lecture.

Grading

In this course, your lecture grade will be 75% of your total grade. Your laboratory grade will be 25%. (Lecture 3 hrs; Required Lab 1 hr credit)

Your grade in lecture will be based on your performance on **participation and homework assignments, three lecture exams, 12 to 14 quizzes of which the top ~10 will count toward your grade, and a comprehensive final exam.** Exams may include any of the following: multiple choice, true/false, identification, and short answer based on lectures and reading assignments.

There are 550 total points available for the lecture portion of the class. Each of the quizzes will be worth 10 points each. The first three lecture exams will be worth 100 points each and the final comprehensive exam will be worth 150 points.

To calculate your grade in lecture, just add up the total of number of points you earn (remembering to use only your top 10 quiz grades) and divide by 550 to get the percentage. Multiply by 100 and round to the nearest whole number.

To calculate your final grade, weight your lecture and lab grade accordingly and add the result.

For example: Your top 10 quiz grades add up to 88 points. Your grades on the exams are as follows: Exam 1: 77; Exam 2: 84; Exam 3: 71; Final Exam: 117

Total points: 437

Grade for Lecture: $(437/550) * 100 = 79.45$ which would be rounded to an 80.

In lab, your get a 77.

Your final grade would then be calculated as follows: $(80 \times 0.75) + (77 \times .25) = 60 + 19 = 79$ for the course.

Standard cutoffs of 90, 80, 70, and 60 percent will be used.

There will be no extra credit and no curve in the course.

Quizzes and Exams:

Quizzes will come directly from your reading assignments. Exams will come from a combination of online lecture and assigned reading from your book. Please complete the reading assignments prior to attempting the quizzes and exams.

Exams will open on Monday during the week shown below and must be started by 11 PM the following Sunday (i.e. completed by midnight that Sunday). Exams will be one hour long (the time allotted for a normal MWF face to face course is 50 minutes).

Quizzes will be open each Monday by 8:00 AM and will close the following Sunday at 11:00 PM. You may access the quiz by logging into SHSU Online at: <https://shsu.blackboard.com>

All quizzes and exams are timed assignments (just like in a face-to-face class). You will have 15 minutes per quiz, 1 hour for each of the lecture exams, and 1 hour 50 minutes for the final exam. Quizzes must be attempted in the week that they are assigned.

Exceeding the time limit for any quiz or exam can and will affect your grade. Your overall score may be reduced or, in cases of extreme abuse, result in a zero for the graded assignment. If you exceed the time limit, I will review each instance and determine the penalty.

Important Class Dates

It is your responsibility to complete the quizzes/exams in a timely manner. Failure to complete the quiz/exam during the week it is scheduled will result in a zero for that quiz/exam. Exceptions fall under Missed Exams and Assignments below.

Exam 1: Week of September 18th Must be finished by midnight September 24th

Exam 2: Week of October 23rd Must be finished by midnight October 29th

Exam 3: Week of November 27th Must be finished by midnight December 3rd

Final Exam: Opens at Noon, Saturday December 2nd and must be completed by 11 PM, Thursday, December 7th.

Academic Honesty

I expect you to fulfill your academic obligations through honest and independent effort. If I have sufficient reason to believe you are cheating on any graded work in this course, you will be dropped from the course with a failing grade.

Policy on academic honesty: Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of our university. Members of our academic community must be confident that every student's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort on the part of a student to gain an advantage not given to all students (including the asking of an instructor to arbitrarily change a grade) is viewed as dishonest, whether or not that effort is successful. Our academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation, to suspension, to expulsion. If you are ever in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult your course instructor.

Class Policies on Attendance/Behavior

Your motivation and participation are integral to your success in this course. Regular “attendance” is by far the easiest way to achieve a good grade in this course. I implore you to complete your readings and review the online lectures in a timely manner.

If **you** decide to drop the course, it is **your** responsibility to fill out the necessary paperwork or you will receive a grade based upon your performance in the class regardless of the amount of work you completed.

Missed Exams and Assignments

Make-up exams, quizzes, and assignments will be allowed for *documented emergencies only* (e.g., severe illness, death of immediate family, etc.). To be eligible to take a make-up for any work you missed, you must notify me **before** the missed exam and present sufficient proof to document your emergency. It is your responsibility to schedule a make-up exam/quiz and the exam/quiz must be taken within one week of the missed exam/quiz. There will be no make-up exam for the final.

Computer Problems:

SHSU Online runs through any internet browser. No additional software is needed. SHSU Online has 24 hour, 7 day a week help available to you online if you have any questions about the software package.

***Please Note:** Computer problems are not sufficient cause for making up missed work. All assignments/quizzes/exams are set up such that you have ample opportunity to complete the assignment. If you wait until the last possible time to complete an assignment and have computer problems, unfortunately I cannot help rectify the situation.

HOWEVER, these things do happen. If an SHSU Online assignment/quiz/exam locks up on you during the week and you contact me with sufficient lead time, I can generally reset the assignment in most instances. Know that I become suspicious of any pattern of multiple reset requests.

REMEMBER this class can be accessed from any computer device on this planet with an internet connection if you are enrolled in this class. SHSU maintains multiple computer laboratories for your convenience if your personal computer should crash. Forgetting to get to a computer before an assignment deadline is your problem, not mine.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

Any student with documented disabilities who may need classroom academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services may request academic accommodations (for example, a note taker). Students must request assistance with academically related problems stemming from a disability by contacting the Director of the Counseling Center in the Lee Drain Annex or by calling (936) – 294-1720. It is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements.

Lecture Topics

*****Please Note***** The topics of lecture are in relative chronological order but are subject to change. The dates of the exams are set and the material to be covered will be clarified based on lecture topics completed. Topics highlighted in green are tentative (i.e. we may or may not get to them).

Lecture Topics		Readings/Reference
1	Introduction to Geology	Prelude & Chapter 1
2	Birth of a Planet	Chapter 1
3	Geologic Time	Chapter 10
4	Earth Processes: Physical Principles	Interlude D; Chapter 2
5	Plate Tectonics: How the Earth Works	Chapter 2
	Exam 1	
7	Minerals	Chapter 3
8	Introduction to Rocks and the Rock Cycle	Interlude A & C
9	Igneous Rocks	Chapter 4
10	Volcanoes and Volcanic Eruptions	Chapter 5
11	Sedimentary Rocks	Chapters 6; Interlude B
12	Sedimentary Systems	Chapters 6
13	Weathering	Chapters 6
14	Metamorphic Rocks	Chapter 7
	Exam 2	
16	Mountain Building	Chapter 9
17	Earthquakes	Chapter 8
18		
	Introduction to Earth Systems: The Dynamic Earth	
		Lecture Review; Chapter 19
19	Landslides and Mass Wasting	Chapter 13
20	Streams and Floods	Chapter 14
21	Groundwater	Chapter 16
	Exam 3	
22	Glaciers and Ice Ages	Chapter 18
23	Deserts	Chapter 17