

South Plains College

Physical Geology - GEOL 1403

Instructor: Aaron Greene

Department: Science

Campus: Levelland Campus

Format: Hybrid

Revised: August 19, 2024

Course Information

Course Description

An introduction to the materials and processes that have modified and shaped Earth's surface and interior over time. These processes are described by theories based on experimental data and geologic observations gathered from field studies.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 4 (3 hours lecture, 3 hours lab)

Textbook: *A textbook is no longer required for this course*

Core Curriculum: This course satisfies the Life and Physical Science (030) core curriculum requirement.

Core Objectives

This course addresses four core objectives:

- **Communication skills** — developing, interpreting, and expressing ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
 - **Critical thinking skills** — including creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
 - **Empirical and quantitative skills** — manipulating and analyzing numerical data or observable facts to reach informed conclusions
 - **Teamwork skills** — considering different points of view and working effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
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Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course with a passing grade, you will be able to:

1. Describe how the scientific method has led to our current understanding of Earth's structure and processes.
 2. Interpret the origin and distribution of minerals, rocks, and geological resources.
 3. Describe the theory of plate tectonics and its relationship to the formation and distribution of Earth's crustal features.
 4. Quantify the rates of physical and chemical processes acting on Earth and how these processes fit into the context of geological time.
 5. Communicate how surface processes are driven by interactions among Earth's systems (e.g., the geosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere).
 6. Identify and describe the internal structures and dynamics of Earth.
 7. Describe the interaction of humans with Earth (e.g., resource development or hazard assessment).
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Course Requirements

General Expectations

To succeed in this course, you should:

- Read assigned chapters in the textbook and laboratory manual
- Attend all lectures and laboratory classes
- Take notes during class
- Participate in class discussions
- Complete assigned readings and homework
- View audiovisual materials on selected topics
- Use computer software in the lab and/or classroom as assigned
- Complete exams on the assigned dates (exams may include essay questions)

Laboratory Requirements

For laboratory work, you should:

- Complete pre-laboratory assignments before each lab session
 - Read and understand each laboratory assignment
 - Successfully complete all laboratory assignments
 - Learn to use and analyze data from instruments or equipment
 - Complete post-lab calculations and discussion questions
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Assessment and Evaluation

Student Learning Outcome Assessment: Embedded test questions within the comprehensive final exam will be used to determine mastery of each learning outcome.

Course Evaluation: Student performance data will be compiled and analyzed using Excel. Course evaluation surveys provide direct assessment from student observations and experiences.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. When absences become excessive and minimum course objectives cannot be met, you will be withdrawn from the course.

Absence Limits:

- Fall and Spring semesters: 4 days
 - There are perks for 0-1 day absent
 - Each day after results in a 10% deduction in the final grade for the course
- Summer 1 and 2 semesters: 4 days
 - There are perks for 0-1 day absent
 - Each day after results in a 15% deduction in the final grade for the course

Dropping a Course

During Late Registration Period:

You may drop courses through Texan Connect, the Admissions and Records Office, or the Advising and Testing Center.

After Late Registration:

You must complete a [Student Initiated Drop Request](#) online or submit a completed Student Initiated Drop Form in person (with photo ID) at:

- Levelland Admissions and Records Office
- Student Support Center at Lubbock Downtown Center
- Lubbock Career and Technical Center
- Plainview Center

A grade of "W" will be assigned for student-initiated drops that occur on or before the last day to drop as indicated in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Additional Attendance Information

Students are expected to attend all classes to be successful. You may be administratively withdrawn when absences become excessive as defined in this syllabus. When unavoidable absences arise (such as illness or official college activities), you may be permitted to make up missed work—contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to complete missed work within a reasonable timeframe as determined by the instructor.

Students who enroll but "Never Attend" by the official census date will be administratively dropped. Students who do not meet attendance requirements and do not officially withdraw by the census date should consider filling out a Student Initiated Drop form on the SPC website. **Each absence after 4 results in a drop of 10% in the final grade for the class.**

Important: Verify administrative drops through MySPC using your student online account. Financial aid may be adjusted if you are awarded aid for classes you never attended or participated in, and you will owe any resulting balance.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and Cheating

You are expected to do your own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply will result in an zero for the assignment and may result in an F for the course.

Plagiarism violations include:

- Submitting purchased, borrowed, or downloaded papers
- Cutting and pasting information without proper documentation
- Using direct quotations (three or more words) without citation
- Missing in-text citations

Cheating violations include:

- Obtaining exams through theft or collusion
- Discovering exam content before it is given
- Using unauthorized sources (notes, textbooks, devices, internet, apps) during exams or assignments
- Taking exams for another student
- Altering grade records
- Copying another's work during exams or homework
- Altering the testing atmosphere for unfair advantage
- Rewriting another student's work in peer editing
- Taking pictures of tests, answers, or other students' papers

- Violating the Artificial Intelligence policy (see [syllabus statements](#))

Consequences: The instructor will discuss violations privately with students. In extreme cases, immediate removal from class may be necessary. If a student is spoken to twice about plagiarism, cheating, or inappropriate testing behaviors, they will likely be removed from the course to preserve the learning environment.

Classroom Expectations

Student Code of Conduct

A successful learning experience requires mutual respect between students and instructor. Behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

The instructor will determine if behavior is unfit for the learning environment. Typically, one private warning will be given, but the instructor retains the right to immediately remove a student based on inappropriate behavior that prohibits learning or causes others to feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Diversity Statement

This class values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives challenges us to learn about others, the larger world, and ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we mirror society as it is and model society as it should and can be.

Support Services and Policies

Disability Services

Students with disabilities (including physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities) who wish to request accommodations should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester.

Contact Information:

- Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office): 806-716-2577
- Reese Center (Building 8): 806-716-4675
- Plainview Center (Main Office): 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations

If you are pregnant or have given birth within six months, you have a right to reasonable accommodations under Title IX. To activate accommodations, submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request with medical documentation to the Director of Health and Wellness at 806-716-2362 or cgilster@southplainscollege.edu.

Nondiscrimination Policy

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Contact the Vice President for Student Affairs at 806-716-2360 with inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies.

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas Senate Bill 11 authorizes carrying a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons with a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. License holders may not carry in restricted locations. Open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all campuses. For more information, visit the [Campus Carry page](#). Report violations to College Police at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

Additional Syllabus Statements

For information about Artificial Intelligence, CARE Team, and COVID-19 policies, visit: <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Important Note

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus and course policies at any point during the semester. Students will be notified of any changes.