Undergraduate Seminar in Geology: Research in the Geosciences  
GEOL 2103.001  
Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences  
Fall 2016

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section:  GEOL 2103.001  
Class meeting time:  Wed 05:30-06:20 pm  
Class location:  IH 157  
Course Website:  http://bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:  Randy Bissell  
Office location:  TBA  
Office hours:  The instructor will be available to meet with students 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after each class meeting or by appointment.  
Phone/Text:  (361) 816-4920  
E-mail:  randy.bissell@tamucc.edu  
Alt. E-Mail:  randy.bissell@att.net  
Appointments:  Please email instructor directly for an appointment.

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description  
Introductory level seminar featuring diverse topics and speakers. Focus on current geologic research. In-house as well as external speakers. May not be repeated for credit but attendance in subsequent semesters is highly encouraged. Credit/no credit credit/no credit Offered on sufficient demand.

Extended Course Description  
This seminar-style course is designed to expand awareness of the role and scope of research for geology majors and to guide them in understanding how to prepare for their career. Completion of this course (or GEOL 2102 Undergraduate Seminar - Careers in the Geosciences) is a requirement for geology majors.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites
None.

Corequisites
None.

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES
Required Textbook(s)
No text required. Required reading material will be posted on blackboard.

Optional Textbook(s) or Other References
Any will be provided by instructor.

Supplies
None.

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT
Assessment is a process used by instructors to help improve learning. Assessment is essential for effective learning because it provides feedback to both students and instructors. A critical step in this process is making clear the course’s student learning outcomes that describe what students are expected to learn to be successful in the course. The student learning outcomes for this course are listed below. By collecting data and sharing it with students on how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes students can more efficiently and effectively focus their learning efforts. This information can also help instructors identify challenging areas for students and adjust their teaching approach to facilitate learning.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:
1. Demonstrate awareness of the breadth of research in geoscience-related areas;
2. Demonstrate understanding of how research advances geoscience and contributes to university, industry, government, and community growth and improvement.
3. Be able to critically evaluate research reports and literature for key applications and results. Students should understand how research is conducted and reported.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES
Instructional methods will include seminar-style weekly meetings featuring speakers from the campus, community, and beyond, and discussion of assigned readings.

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
The student learning outcomes described in Section F will be measured through the assignments listed below. The grade assigned for this course will be “credit” (CR) or “no credit” (NC). In order to receive a grade of CR, students must have earned a total course score of 60% or higher on all assignments, and have demonstrated regular attendance, no more than two (2) class meetings missed during the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to sign in each class meeting.

The course score will be based on the following assignments:
1. Notes on Speaker Presentations, due one week following each speaker. These must include (a template/form will be provided on Blackboard):
   - Speaker’s Name
   - Title of presentation
   - Area of expertise/profession of presenter
   - Summary of presentation (approximately 100 words)
   - Reflection on most interesting points learned (no fewer than 3)
   - Questions for presenter (if any)

2. Summary paper on an assigned research reading will be due on November 30. (details to be given in class).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and notes weekly presentations</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative list of topics. Speakers will be announced as they are confirmed and information will continually be sent out via Blackboard and TAMUCC email.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LECTURE TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/31</td>
<td>Seminar overview &amp; syllabus.</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/7</td>
<td>Research at TAMUCC</td>
<td>Guest</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>Harte Research</td>
<td>Guest</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9/21</td>
<td>Field Research - Outcrops</td>
<td>Guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9/28</td>
<td>Reading Abstracts and Articles</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>No Class – Independent Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>Blucher Institute Research</td>
<td>Guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/19</td>
<td>Field Research - Sediments</td>
<td>Guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>Technology as Research</td>
<td>Guest</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Research in a Company</td>
<td>Guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>Graduate Thesis</td>
<td>Guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>Local Graduate Programs</td>
<td>Guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>No Class – Thanksgiving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>Summary of Articles Due</td>
<td>Details TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>No Class – Reading Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Final Exam Day</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary due to guest availability and will be announced to the class by the Instructor. The assignments shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

J. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance/Tardiness
Regular attendance and active student participation is critical in order to achieve the learning outcomes. In order to pass this class, students **cannot miss more than 2 class meetings during the semester**. It is the student’s responsibility to document attendance. Students are expected to arrive to class on time, particularly as they will miss part of a speaker’s presentation. **Chronic tardiness will be deemed disinterest and therefore non-attendance.**

Late Work and Make-up Exams
Due dates will be specified. Grades will be reduced by 20% for each day an assignment is late. Therefore, after 5 days, the grade is zero.

Extra Credit
Limited extra credit opportunities will be available. Extra credit work must be submitted by the stated deadlines.

Cell Phone Use
The instructor does not prohibit but discourages the use of electronic communication devices such as cell phones (texting, etc.) during class because they are disrespectful to guest speakers and distract other students from the learning experience. Please place such devices in silent mode during class. **Students may be asked to leave class, if so, they are not in attendance.**

Laptop Use
You are welcome to bring a laptop or other device to class, with the presumption that you are using it to facilitate your own learning (take notes, research an issue, etc.). The use of laptops for other uses is discouraged as it distracts from the learning experience. **You may be asked to discontinue the use of a laptop if it is disruptive.**

Food in Class
Eating/drinking in the classroom is discouraged.

Missed Exam
There are no exams given in this course.
Participation
Students are encouraged to actively participate in lecture discussion. Generally students who participate more actively are able to learn the material more effectively.

K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity (University)**
  University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

- **Classroom/Professional Behavior**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

- **Statement of Civility**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

- **Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)**
  The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must submitted. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Please consult the Academic Calendar
Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the Office of the Provost.

Disability Services
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call (361) 825-5816 or visit Disability Services in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

L. OTHER INFORMATION
• **Academic Advising**
  The College of Science & Engineering requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. Meetings are by appointment only; advisors do not take walk-ins. Please call or stop by the Advising Center to check availability and schedule an appointment. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction 350 or can be reached at (361) 825-3928.

**GENERAL DISCLAIMER**
I reserve the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. I will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods.