Essentials of Geology GEOL-1303.W01  
Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences  
Fall 2020

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: GEOL-1303.W01  
Class meeting time: Fully online  
Class location: N/A  
Course Website: https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Valeriu Murgulet  
Office location: CS 205  
Office hours: Via WebEx (or other web venues): Tuesday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm; Wednesday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm; Friday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm or by appointment. Please contact me to set up the WebEx sessions during or outside the office hour times.  
Telephone: (361) 825-6023  
e-mail: valeriu.murgulet@tamucc.edu  
Appointments: Please email instructor directly for an appointment, or if you have any questions or concerns.

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description
One-semester introductory Earth science course for students majoring in a non-science subject area. Basic geologic material and concepts, such as minerals, rocks, the rock cycle, and plate tectonics theory. Origin, composition, and evolution of our planet, as well as the importance of geology in everyday life, including geologic resources, global change, earthquakes, and volcanism. May not be counted toward a degree in Geology or Environmental Sciences. Will not substitute for GEOL 1403. This course counts toward the natural science component of the University Core Curriculum Programs.

Extended Course Description
This fully online course is taught via the Web at a distance and is available at http://Bb9.tamucc.edu. The learners may need PowerPoint, spreadsheets, word processing, and other software as needed to complete some requirements of this course.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites
No prerequisites. Non-science majors
Corequisites N/A

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES
Required Textbook(s)
Essentials of Geology, Lutgens F.K., Tarbuck E. J. and Tasa D. G. 13th ed. (Source Pearson)
NOTE: Please note that you will be able to buy the manual (e-book or hard copy) when you first access Mastering Geology, the first day of school. Follow the instructions in the Sign up Instructions.pdf file of the Syllabus tab. It is also available as a “loose leaf textbook” with access card in the TAMU-CC bookstore, ISBN 978-0-13-478449-6.

Optional Textbook(s) or Other References
Supplementary text and handouts will be provided as necessary.
Online Homework Account: Mastering Geology

Readings
• Geology is a cumulative subject: you will need to use information from earlier in the course in later topics. The text book complements the online materials, but there is not complete overlap between chapters.
• Please read the pertinent chapter before working on the online homework and quizzes.

Supplies
1) Scientific Calculator
2) Pencil, eraser and ruler (calculation problems must be done in pencil).

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT
This class will cover the basic concepts of physical geology, emphasizing surficial and deep earth processes, including rock formation, plate tectonics, weathering and erosion, formation of landscapes, hydrogeology, and crustal deformation. We will also discuss how the Earth was formed, and the building materials of the Earth. The forces that shape the Earth’s crust and how it changes over time will also be covered.

The primary objectives of GEOL 1303 are to provide the student with the fundamental knowledge and tools necessary to understand and examine the following basic components:
• Understand the Scientific Method.
• Identify & understand the processes of formation of the major geologic materials (rocks/minerals, resources).
• Appreciate the Earth’s interior and surface processes.
• Gain an overview of the physical and biological history of the Earth, including its formation.
• Identify the ways in which geology affects your life.
• Discover interactions between geology and other realms of knowledge.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES
The following instructional methods and activities will be used: Lecture Power Points, Homework and Quizzes, and Discussion Board. Geology is a very visual and hands-on discipline. Power Point slides will be made available to you that include many photos depicting geologic features from around the world.
H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Required Readings
- Online Homework Account: Mastering Geology

Course Schedule
Reading Assignments from the Textbook
- Chapter 2- Plate Tectonics: A Scientific Revolution Unfolds 1
- Chapter 3- Matter and Minerals 2
- Chapter 4- Igneous Rocks and Intrusive Activity 3
- Chapter 5-Volcanoes and Volcanic Hazards 3
- Chapter 6- Weathering and Soils 4
- Chapter 7- Sedimentary Rocks 4
- Chapter 8- Metamorphism and Metamorphic Rocks 5
- Chapter 9- Earthquakes and Earth’s Interior 6
- Chapter 10- Origin and Evolution of the Ocean Floor 7
- Chapter 11- Crustal Deformation and Mountain Building 8
- Chapter 12- Mass Movement on Slopes: The Work of Gravity 9
- Chapter 13- Running Water 10
- Chapter 14- Groundwater 10
- Chapter 15- Glaciers and Glaciation 11
- Chapter 17- Shorelines 12
- Chapter 18- Geologic Time 13
- Chapter 19- Earth’s Evolution Through Geologic Time 13
- Chapter 20- Global Climate Change 14

Mastering Geology Homework: When you start working on a chapter,
  - first read the chapter,
  - then study the power point
After you feel comfortable with the material, start working on homework. You do not have unlimited tries on homework, so do not answer it randomly. Then, take the chapter quiz. A number of extra credit exercises will be assigned later in the semester.

Evaluation (18 chapters):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Quiz</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 4  Quiz  2.22  
Homework  4.44  
Module 5  Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 6  Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 7  Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 8  Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 9  Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 10 Quiz  2.22  
Homework  4.44  
Module 11 Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 12 Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Module 13 Quiz  2.22  
Homework  4.44  
Module 14 Quiz  1.12  
Homework  2.22  
Total points  60.

**Class Grade:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quizzes</th>
<th>20 (20%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>40 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Total Grade</strong></td>
<td>100 (not including bonus points)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra credit exercises (TBA)</th>
<th>10.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction and class discussions</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Bonus Points</strong></td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points</strong></td>
<td>113.0 (including bonus points)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignment Grades** are extra points that will be added to your “Final Total Grade”. You can accumulate up to 11.5 extra points by completing all the assignments. I highly encourage you to take advantage of these extra points because some of the questions in quizzes and final exam are similar to the assignment questions.

**Introduction Discussion and Class Discussion:** Before you start the course, you introduce yourself to your classmate and get 8 extra points that is added to your final grade. The other 12 extra points are from the discussions that will be assigned during the semester.

**I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Where and how to submit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Module 1 folder – Ch. 2| Aug. 24  | All these links are available in your Module 1 folder: 1. Read Chapter 2  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 2 folder – Ch. 3| Aug. 31  | All these links are available in your Module 2 folder: 1. Read Chapter 3  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 3 folder – Ch. 4&5| Sept. 7  | All these links are available in your Module 3 folder: 1. Read Chapters 4&5  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 4 folder – Ch. 6&7| Sept. 14 | All these links are available in your Module 4 folder: 1. Read Chapters 6&7  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 5 folder – Ch. 8 | Sept. 21 | All these links are available in your Module 5 folder: 1. Read Chapter 8  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 6 folder – Ch. 9 | Sept. 28 | All these links are available in your Module 6 folder: 1. Read Chapter 9  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 7 folder – Ch. 10| Oct. 5   | All these links are available in your Module 7 folder: 1. Read Chapter 10  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 8 folder – Ch. 11| Oct. 12  | All these links are available in your Module 8 folder: 1. Read Chapter 11  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 9 folder – Ch. 12| Oct. 19  | All these links are available in your Module 9 folder: 1. Read Chapter 12  
2. Do Homework  
3. Take Quiz                                                                                                                                  | Mastering Geology       |
| Module 10 folder – Ch. 13&14 | Oct. 26 | All these links are available in your Module 10 folder: 1. Read Chapters 13&14 2. Do Homework 3. Take Quiz | Mastering Geology |
| Module 11 folder – Ch. 15 | Nov. 2 | All these links are available in your Module 11 folder: 1. Read Chapter 15 2. Do Homework 3. Take Quiz | Mastering Geology |
| Module 12 folder – Ch. 17 | Nov. 9 | All these links are available in your Module 12 folder: 1. Read Chapter 17 2. Do Homework 3. Take Quiz | Mastering Geology |
| Module 13 folder – Ch. 18&19 | Nov. 16 | All these links are available in your Module 13 folder: 1. Read Chapter 18&19 2. Do Homework 3. Take Quiz | Mastering Geology |
| Module 14 folder – Ch. 20 | Nov. 24 | All these links are available in your Module 14 folder: 1. Read Chapter 20 2. Do Homework 3. Take Quiz | Mastering Geology |
| Final Exam | Dec. 5 | Mastering Geology | Mastering Geology |

Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class by the Instructor. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

J. COURSE POLICIES

COVID-19

Face Coverings - (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Extra masks will be made available if needed.

Attendance/Tardiness
N/A

Time Requirements
Regular 3-credit hour courses require approximately 3 hours of class time per week plus 9 hours of study time during the regular semester. Therefore, expect to spend a minimum of 24 hours each week for the 5 weeks on this class. Because this is an online course, you may have to spend even
more time than 24 hours some weeks.

**Late Work and Make-up Exams**
Assignment/quizzes, Pearson’s MyLab & Mastering, and final exam before need to be completed by the assigned due date. *You should* follow the due date on the table above.

Grades of "INCOMPLETE" will be given only for certifiable medical reasons or in other extraordinary circumstances. Requests for incompletes must be made in writing and must include:
- Documentation
- Advanced notice
- Date that coursework will be submitted
If the coursework is not submitted by that date, the Incomplete will become permanent.

**Related Issues**
*Online courses require time management and planning on your part.* You cannot afford to get behind since many topics and assignments are based on the skills and products of previous assignments; there is no meaningful way to "cram." Contact me if you are having any problems with assignments.

There is a reliance on technologies in this course that impacts the need to have assignments done on time. Having ample time to complete an assignment will be the responsibility of the student. It is also the student's responsibility to find solutions to technical problems with sufficient time to complete the required tasks. Do not wait until a due date is near to discover/report lack of access to software, inability to connect to a network, etc. While the instructor will help wherever possible, it is the students' responsibility to maintain his or her network. However, technical problems can originate on the TAMU-CC campus, in which case you will not be responsible to complete work that you cannot complete due to TAMU-CC network or software problems. You are responsible for contacting me as soon as you detect a problem so that we can arrange a way for you to meet the course objectives.

**K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIY 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)**
  I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. *Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.* Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please consult the Academic Calendar ([http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/](http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/)) for the last day to drop a course.

- **Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)**
  As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, 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 required 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). 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/

- Civil Rights Complaints
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free from discrimination, relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and ensuring that all affected students have access to services. For information on reporting Civil Rights complaints, options and support resources (including pregnancy support accommodations) or university policies and procedures, please contact the University Title IX Coordinator, Sam Ramirez (Samuel.ramirez@tamucc.edu) or Deputy Title IX Coordinator, Rosie Ruiz (Rosie.Ruiz@tamucc.edu) x5826, or visit website at Title IX/Sexual Assault/Pregnancy.

Limits to Confidentiality. Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, are not able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report alleged or suspected civil rights discrimination that is observed by or made known to an employee in the course and scope of their employment. As the instructor, I must report allegations of civil rights discrimination, including sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator if you share it with me.

These reports will trigger contact with you from the Civil Rights/Title IX Compliance office who will inform you of your options and resources regarding the incident that you have shared. If you would like to talk about these incidents in a confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with counselors in the University Counseling Center.

- 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.

M. Technical Support and Requirements

Blackboard Learning System Help: http://iol.tamucc.edu
“Help” At the bottom of the Blackboard Course Management Control Panel in the course menu on the left hand column of the course interface. Phone: Help Desk (361) 825-2825

Island Online Student Resources Webpage:
https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html

Getting Technical Help
If you are having difficulties accessing course materials from your home computer, first let your instructor know, then contact the IOL Helpdesk at (361)825-2692 or submit a request via email to iol.support@tamucc.edu

Technology Requirements
To prepare your computer for using Blackboard 9.1, go to https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.php for computer requirements.
- To view .pdf files you will need the Adobe Reader. Download it at: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
- To view flash (.flv) files from sites such as YouTube, download the Flash player at http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/

Navigating Blackboard 9.1
Once you are in the course, read the “Announcements” on the home page. Check this each time you enter your course. You will see a Course Menu on the left of the page. The menu is a list of links that connect to materials and tools associated with the course. Blackboard has several features and tools for communicating content delivery that you should use almost daily. Links to information about how to use these tools include: Bb Help, which contains a complete guide to
learning how to use the many tools and features in Blackboard, and Bb Video Tutorials, which links to a page with videos to show you how to do tasks such as submitting an assignment.

Library resources (including print, electronic, and human) can be accessed through the Mary and Jeff Bell Library website that supports electronic searches of articles, books, journals, course reserves, and databases. It includes information such as Ask a Librarian, research tools, remote access information and tutorials, information about plagiarism and copyright, and interlibrary loan (http://rattler.tamucc.edu/distlearn/). The library is a member of TexShare which provides you with a card that allows you to checkout materials from libraries across Texas. Librarians’ contact information is also on the website and you are encouraged to contact librarians for assistance.

In the event of a campus evacuation I will make every effort to continue teaching your course. Should such an event occur, I will continue to interact with you by using the Blackboard Announcement, Messages, Collaboration, Discussions, Blogs, Journals, and/or Wikis tools. If you have access to the Internet, you will be able to continue your coursework by posting assignments and interacting with me as well as each other online. You will also be able see your grades on assignments, quizzes, and tests using the My Grades tool.

Online Course Guidelines

Students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. Here are some things you can do to exhibit an attitude of respect and responsibility:

- Post assignments on time. Early is even better.
- Work extra hard to get to know other classmates.
- Reach out through email Blackboard Messages, Discussions, and Wikis to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you/resource ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
- Respect other classmates by watching what you say.
- Add your opinions to/participate in the discussions.
- Check the assignments every week. Don’t wait until the last minute.
- Be helpful to other students
- Don’t get behind. If you get behind in an online course it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
- Stay focused and stay connected.
- Keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher’s responsibility to tell you what you have or haven't turned in. Your grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted for all work.
- In general terms, students are expected to "demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs" and to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty." Instances of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations as listed in the current catalog.
Delivery of instructor feedback – During the week (exclude weekends), Instructor response to online requests usually occurs within a 24-hour period, but you can expect a response within 3 days.

Student login expectations - Students are required to login often – once every three days at a minimum. It is recommended that students check daily for announcements and updates.

Faculty availability to support students - I maintain a consistent web presence and am available to meet online in the Blackboard asynchronous or synchronous environment or via phone.

N. 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.