CoSM Class Syllabus / Policy

2021 / Fall Semester

GEOL 1304.500

The Earth Through Time

Name: Dr. Kevin W. Stafford

Department: Geology

Email: staffordk@sfasu.edu

Phone: 936-468-2429

Office: E.L. Miller Science, Room 315

Office Hours: This is an online course and office hours will be offered electronically. In office hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 8AM to 11AM.

The lecture and laboratory portion of this class are both online classes. Please refer to the detailed calendar found as a webpage in this module. There is a mandatory quiz associated with this syllabus, so please read all the information in this unit carefully and then complete the Course Information and Syllabus Quiz in order to proceed into the course material.

Note: this quiz must be completed before any of the course material will be made available, the lecture and lab modules will remain locked until you complete this quiz.

Text and Materials:

- The Changing Earth (7th edition), Monroe and Wicander, 2015 (required)

COVID-19 Updates: As of August 1, 2021, Stephen F. Austin State University returned campus pandemic safety protocols to Status 1 (Normal Operations). This change follows Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s Executive Order GA-38 as well as evolving guidelines produced by the CDC and state mandates. SFA strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to visit with their healthcare provider regarding the COVID-19 vaccination, wear a mask in public indoor settings, frequently wash hands, and maintain physical distance when possible. Though these precautions are not required, actions like these are known to be effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

Course Description: The Earth Through Time (GEOL 1304) - Three semester hours. The history and development of the continents and ocean basins and the evolution of life on Earth; includes earthquakes and the Earth’s interior, mountain building, drifting of continents and sea-floor spreading, the Ice Ages, space science and oceanography. Co-requisite: GEOL 1104. Prerequisite: GEOL 1303.

Program Learning Outcomes: There are no specific program learning outcomes for this major addressed in this course. It is a general education core curriculum course and / or a service course.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating
Board has identified six core learning objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives. By enrolling in GEOL 1301 Fundamentals of Earth Science, you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that seeks to develop the following core objectives established by the THECB:

- **Critical Thinking Skills** – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- **Communication Skills** – effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- **Empirical and Quantitative Skills** – manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
- **Teamwork** – the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
- **Personal Responsibility** – the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- **Social Responsibility** – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

This course will focus on **Critical Thinking Skills**, developing scientific inquiry through weekly discussion threads, data analysis in laboratory exercises, and written reports associated with sedimentary depositional environments.

**Student Learning Outcomes for Lecture and Lab:** After successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of fundamental geologic concepts as it relates to Earth processes and landscape evolution through geologic time.
- Use quantitative reasoning to interpret geologic data (tables, figures, graphs) from primary research, data assimilation and models to assess the differences in competing scientific theories associated with rock formation.
- Demonstrate knowledge on the interdependence of science and technology and the influences geologic reasoning associated with identifiable and testable hypotheses of geologic processes.
- Critically assess the interrelationships between geologic phenomena and communicate the resulting conclusions in oral, visual and written formats.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the skills and attitudes necessary for effective teamwork in collaborative learning activities.

**Course Requirements:** GEOL 1304 (The Earth Through Time) is an introduction to the fascinating and complex processes of planet Earth – an ever-changing dynamic environment. Historical Geology is the evolutional history of geologic processes, and in this course, students will be introduced to the development of continents, ocean basins, mountain chains, volcanoes, earthquakes and many other geologic events. The rock record has also preserved the remains of various life forms, from microscopic invertebrates to large carnivorous reptiles and mammals. This course will introduce some of the various life forms that have evolved over time, their relative success and some of the factors that brought about their demise.

This class is a 3-credit hour course and has a weekly co-requisite lab where students will gain hands-on experience with fossils, geologic materials and data, and learn to interpret geologic maps. Grades from the lecture and lab will be separate.

**Time:** Remember, you are expected to spend the same amount of time on online courses that you would
spend for in the classroom for face-to-face courses. That is, expect to spend three hours per week on the lecture portion and three hours per week on the co-requisite laboratory portion. In addition, success in this course would also require additional time spent in the material and studying; reports indicate that two to three additional hours (per credit hour) be spent— independent of whether the class is online or face-to-face. Many of you are choosing to take an online course because of your work schedule, family responsibilities, and scheduling conflicts, so your time is precious. Be aware of the time commitment required by this course and work responsibly.

**Course Topics to be covered:**

**UNIT 1: Fundamentals of Historical Geology**
- Earth Composition and the Rock Cycle
- Plate Tectonics and Structural Deformation
- Sedimentology
- Marine Environments

**UNIT 2: Geologic Time and the Fossil Record**
- Geologic Time
- Fossilization
- Evolution and Geology
- Major Marine Fauna Groups

**UNIT 3: Earth Through Time**
- Precambrian Time
- Paleozoic Geography and Biology
- Mesozoic Geography and Biology
- Cenozoic Geography and Biology

*See the Course Calendar webpage for the dates associated with each topic.

**Access to Content:** I will provide access to the content as listed on the Course Calendar. By no means are you required to begin the content when it opens, but some of you have very tight schedules and could benefit from an early start. All lecture exams will be available 24 hours a day as listed on the Course Calendar. You will be able to receive your score on exams or quizzes immediately, provided there are no answers that need to be individually graded such as fill-in-the-blank or short answer questions. In these cases, time will be needed to review the assessments and make sure questions were asked and graded fairly. Answers to quiz and exam questions will be available once every classmate has submitted their assessment, but that day is usually on Monday after assessments are taken. Quizzes, unit, and module content will be available until 11:00 a.m. the day listed on the Course Calendar, but module content **cannot be viewed the day of an exam.** So, plan appropriately!

**Lecture Examination Schedule:**
- Exam 1: see Course Schedule
- Exam 2: see Course Schedule
- Exam 3: see Course Schedule

*Please see the GEOL 1304 Course Calendar webpage for the opening and closing times associated with these exams.*
All lecture exams will include a multiple-choice section with additional sections that will vary between exams but may include any or all of the following sections: 1) multiple choice questions; 2) true / false questions; 3) fill in the blank questions; 4) short answer questions; 5) figure illustration; 6) short essay questions. All exams will take place online and be delivered via D2L. The exams will cover questions from lecture modules and assigned activities and outside sources (videos, webpages) referred to in the material. The essay questions are part of the test and I expect you to use complete sentences, correct grammar and spelling.

There are between 20 and 50 questions each on each exam, and you will be given 50 minutes to complete the exams. The exams are not cumulative, but they are timed and you will not have adequate time to refer back to Unit/Module content. Questions on lecture exams and quizzes are written by the instructor, and the assessment content has been presented in the online content. D2L randomly selects questions from a question bank, and they appear one question at a time. You may not return to any question and change your answer after leaving that page so be sure of your response (study ahead of time!) before answering. It is recommended that you save your responses as you complete each question because of unknown timing of computer or power failure. I cannot help you if questions have not been saved. Once the time allotment for the exam has expired, the exam will be ended and scored.

No outside work or extra credit will be assigned to help improve your grade, so be prepared for the quizzes and exams. It is imperative that you log on and participate in all course material, pay attention to the course calendar, and keep up with the due dates for quizzes, discussions, and exams. In other words – get your money’s worth!

Dependable internet connection: Especially when taking quizzes or exams, always rely on a dependable internet connection. I do not recommend taking an assessment via your phone or any public wireless connection (McDonalds, Starbucks, etc.).

Discussion Board: The Discussion Board can be used as a place to exchange information between the instructor and classmates. There will be a general "Questions" post where students can ask questions regarding the course content. This is helpful to all, and I will respond to questions as quickly as possible. I always appreciate questions, and am happy to try to help. Please keep your discourse respectful to all, inappropriate comments will not be tolerated.

Lecture Grading Policy:

- Three exams @ 100 points each = 300 points*
- Fourteen online quizzes @ 15 points each = 210 points
- Fourteen discussion posts @ 5 points each = 70 points
- Total possible points = 580 points
- Lecture grade = your total points / 580, then multiply by 100
- Example: your lecture point total 450 / 580 = 0.78 x 100 = 78

Grade Scale: 90-100 + A, 80-89 + B, 70-79 + C, 60-69 + D, < 60 = F

Academic Integrity (4.1): Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.
Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5):** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

The circumstances precipitating the request must have occurred after the last day in which a student could withdraw from a course. Students requesting a WH must be passing the course with a minimum projected grade of C.

**Students with Disabilities:** To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to the Office of Disability Services website.

**Mental Health and Wellness:** SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

- **SFA Counseling Services** Rusk Building, 3rd Floor 936.468.2401
- **SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic** Human Services, Room 202 936.468.1041

**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Content by: Kevin W. Stafford, PhD - Department of Geology, SFASU
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<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 20, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;Getting Started / Course Information</td>
<td>Read through Start Here! module&lt;br&gt;Print course calendar&lt;br&gt;Introduce yourself with the &quot;Who am I?&quot; discussion board.&lt;br&gt;Take Course Content Quiz</td>
<td>The Start Here! Module 1 content will remain available throughout course. Module 1 Discussion Board and Quiz close August 24, 2021 at 11:00 AM&lt;br&gt;Take Course Content Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1 - Fundamentals of Historical Geology</strong></td>
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<td>August 24, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;Earth: Composition and the Rock Cycle</td>
<td>Read through Module 2 content</td>
<td>Module 2 Content will remain available until September 22, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 2 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 2 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 31, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sedimentology: A Review of Sedimentary Rocks</td>
<td>Read through Module 3 content</td>
<td>Module 3 Content will remain available until September 22, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 3 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 3 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;Plate Tectonics and Structural Deformation of Rocks</td>
<td>Read through Module 4 content</td>
<td>Module 4 Content will remain available until September 22, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 4 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 4 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;Marine Environments and the Seafloor</td>
<td>Read through Module 5 content</td>
<td>Module 5 Content will remain available until September 22, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 5 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 5 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 23-24, 2021 - Lecture Exam 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review all &quot;Fundamentals of Historical Geology&quot; lecture modules and materials covered in Unit 1</td>
<td>Lecture Modules for &quot;Unit 1 -Fundamentals of ...&quot; closes on September 22, 2021 at 11:00 PM and will not be available for Lecture Exam 1 Lecture Exam 1 will open on September 23, 2021 at 11:00 AM&lt;br&gt;Lecture Exam 1 closes on September 24, 2021 at 11:00 AM</td>
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<td><strong>Unit 2 - Geologic Time and the Fossil Record</strong></td>
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<td>September 21, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Geologic Time</td>
<td>Read through Module 6 content</td>
<td>Module 6 Content will remain available until October 20, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 6 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 6 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 28, 2021</td>
<td><strong>Module 7</strong>&lt;br&gt;Fossilization</td>
<td>Read through Module 7 content</td>
<td>Module 7 Content will remain available until October 20, 2021 at 11:00 PM&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 7 Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;Complete Module 7 Quiz</td>
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Note: all times in course calendar are local time at Stephen F. Austin State University (US Central Time Zone)
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>October 5, 2021</td>
<td>Module 8</td>
<td>Read through Module 8 content, Complete Module 8 Discussion Board, Complete Module 8 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 12, 2021</td>
<td>Module 9</td>
<td>Read through Module 9 content, Complete Module 9 Discussion Board, Complete Module 9 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 21-22, 2021</td>
<td>Lecture Exam 2</td>
<td>Review all &quot;Geologic Time and the Fossil Record&quot; lecture modules and materials covered in Unit 2, Lecture Exam 2 will open on October 21, 2021 at 11:00 AM, Lecture Exam 2 will close on October 22, 2021 at 11:00 AM</td>
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**Unit 3 - Earth Through Time**

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<th>Content/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 19, 2021</td>
<td>Module 10</td>
<td>Read through Module 10 content, Complete Module 10 Discussion Board, Complete Module 10 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 26, 2021</td>
<td>Module 11</td>
<td>Read through Module 11 content, Complete Module 11 Discussion Board, Complete Module 11 Quiz</td>
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<td>November 2, 2021</td>
<td>Module 12</td>
<td>Read through Module 12 content, Complete Module 12 Discussion Board, Complete Module 12 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 9, 2021</td>
<td>Module 13</td>
<td>Read through Module 13 content, Complete Module 13 Discussion Board, Complete Module 13 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 16, 2021</td>
<td>Module 14</td>
<td>Read through Module 14 content, Complete Module 14 Discussion Board, Complete Module 14 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2-3, 2021</td>
<td>Lecture Exam 3</td>
<td>Review all &quot;Earth Through Time&quot; lecture modules and materials covered in Unit 3, Lecture Exam 3 will open on December 02, 2021 at 11:00 AM, Lecture Exam 3 will close on December 03, 2021 at 11:00 AM</td>
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