

# Introduction to Physical Geology-Online

**Geological Sciences**  
**Univ. of Texas at El Paso**  
**UGLC 346**

**Spring 2020 • GEOL 1313**  
**Syllabus**  
**Tues./Thurs. 1:30-2:50 PM**

CRN: 15721

**Instructor: Aaron A. Velasco**  
**Office: 227B Geological Sciences**  
**Phone: 915-747-5101**  
**TA: TBD**

**Office Hrs.: Tu/Th 10:30-11 AM; 3-3:30**  
**PM**  
**E-mail: [aavelasco@utep.edu](mailto:aavelasco@utep.edu)**

---

## **Course Goals and Objectives: (Has not changed!)**

This course will expose students to the wonderful world of the geological sciences and also will demonstrate the impact of geology on your everyday life. Also, you will also be exposed to how geological processes created the landscape that is El Paso. A student should leave this course with a basic understanding of the concepts and vocabulary of the geosciences. Scientists need a common language through which to communicate ideas; thus, vocabulary is a very important component of this course. You will also be exposed to how scientists approach a scientific problem: observe, question, and analyze. The lectures and tests will all work toward these goals.

We live in one of the most geologically interesting places on earth, and I will try and include examples from El Paso about most things we do. Finally, geology is a fun subject. This should be a class where you learn a lot and also have a good time.

**If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).**

---

## **Moving Online:**

The rest of this course will be delivered online. Because of challenges with technology, I will pre-record lectures and also provide Discussion Boards, assign small groups of 4 to work together on some simple exercises, and will be online for questions during normal lecture hours. I will post the lectures on Blackboard, and will only test you on full Chapters covered in lecture (see **Schedule** below).

---

## **Textbooks and Online Material:**

Exploring **Geology** Reynolds, Johnson, Morin, Carter (ISBN: 9781260702019)

REYNOLDS access card EXPLORING  
GEOL (ISBN: 9781260702057)  
You will need access to **LearnSmart**

The above textbook for the course comes in both paper form and online. Please bring books to class.

---

## **Grading: (Reduced to 2 midterm exams and a final; Homework now accounts for 25%)**

Grades will be calculated on the basis of participation (**iClicker Cloud and Blackboard**, see below), homework, **2** mid-term exams, and a final exam. Participation will account for **10%** of the grade, homework at **25%**, **two** mid-term exams at **20%** each, and a final exam at **25%**. The grades are not curved. They are based on your ability to learn the vocabulary and concepts of physical geology.

If you score less than 90% on midterm exams, you have the opportunity to improve your test scores by turning in your old exams with corrections to missed questions (due one week after the test). You can earn ½ credit for all questions missed that will be counted toward your exam grade.

Since over half the class was using iClicker, I will separate participation into the first half of the course and the second, online course.

---

## **Attendance: (Slight changes)**

For many of you, this may be your first exposure to science. Your success in this class depends on your willingness to work and your attendance. Thus, in order to help you be successful, I am instituting an attendance policy, which will be tracked using **Blackboard**. Your attendance will be checked throughout the semester.

---

## **Homework: (Remains the Same as Before)**

Homework will be assigned (weekly) using Blackboard that will be due one week from when it is assigned. I will be using **Connect LearnSmart** for your homework, which is an intelligent learning system based on cognitive mapping that diagnoses students' knowledge of a particular subject then creates an individualized learning path geared towards student success in your course. It also offers individualized assessment by delivering appropriate learning material in the form of questions at the right time helping students attain mastery of the content.

---

## **Classroom Exercises: (Changes to Discussion Boards)**

We will have short cooperative exercises in Discussion Boards. These have two purposes. (1) To help teach you how to observe, to think scientifically and to ask questions. (2) To test your understanding and help you learn. Many of the exercises will use the book, so please use your books.

---

## **Conduct: (Replaced!) Online Etiquette and Effective Communication Policy**

**Language:** Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language, all capital letters, and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

**Respect:** A web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom would also be inappropriate in a web-based course as well. Treat your professor and your fellow students with respect. Remember that members of the class and I will be reading any postings.

**Be Forgiving:** If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the professor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the professor.

**Think First, Write Later:** Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what you or anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.

**Edit Your Work:** The grammar, spelling, and punctuation of a message are part of the grading criteria – you should not expect your professor and peers to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor and proofread before posting them.

**Test for Clarity:** Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly unclear to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

**Follow the Parameters and Stick to the Point:** Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. You need to stick to the point. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents. Also keep in mind that no credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.

*Continued enrollment in this course constitutes acceptance of these terms.*

---

## **Extra Credit (Changed)**

### ***Other events***

I will assign extra randomly during the semester.

***Peers Assisting Student Success (PASS) – Stay Tuned for possible online sessions***

PASS is a free tutoring program that consists of student led review sessions from someone who has previously taken the course and is working closely with the professor to help provide individualized academic support to students. **The PASS leader is not a TA (teaching assistant), but a peer leader.** They cannot extend deadlines, inform you of your grades or give you extra credit.

At the beginning of the semester you will receive an email from Miner Learning Center (MLC) asking for your availability during the semester to attend PASS sessions. *Answer by the second class* in order to best provide you with sessions that will fit your schedule. Normally, **there will be two scheduled group sessions per week via Zoom, so you can attend as many sessions as you would like. You also have the choice to attend the scheduled one on one tutoring via Zoom. More information on how to sign up for tutoring will be posted soon on blackboard.**

You are highly encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible, especially before exams. These sessions will add 5 extra credit points to your exam scores (up to 10 points per exam).

---

**iClicker Cloud: (No longer will use, unless notified)**

I may continue to use this for the exam. However, it is likely that I will administer the final exam on Blackboard. I will post updates on this as the semester progresses.

We may still be using the iClicker Cloud Classroom Response System (CRS) for any live online lecture, which allows instructors to ask questions, gather student responses, display those responses in real-time. **For exams, will be using this tool instead of scantrons. Therefore, you must register.** This system is free to use, and students setting up their iClicker Reef accounts for the 1<sup>st</sup> time will see a message about a “14 day free trial”. As long as you have selected UTEP as their institution, you will not have to renew their subscription after the 14 day trial is over. See: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74573>

## Schedule (Changes in Exam and in Chapters covered)

Week	Date	Topic	Chapter	LearnSmart HW Assigned/Due
1	Jan. 21, 23	Intro. to Geology	Ch. 1, 2	Jan. 21/ <b>Jan. 28</b>
2	Jan. 28, 30	Plate Tectonics	Ch. 3	Jan. 28/ <b>Feb. 4</b>
3	Feb. 4, 6	Earth Materials	Ch. 4	Feb. 4/ <b>Feb. 11</b>
4	Feb. 11 <b>Feb. 13</b>	Igneous Environments <b>Midterm Exam I</b>	Ch. 5	Feb. 6/ <b>Feb. 13</b>
5	Feb. 18, 20	Volcanoes Sedimentary Rocks	Ch. 6 Ch. 7	Feb. 13/ <b>Feb. 20</b> Feb. 13/ <b>Feb. 20</b>
6	Feb. 25, 27	Sedimentary Rocks Deformation and Metamorphism	Ch. 7 Ch. 8	Feb. 13/ <b>Feb. 20</b> Feb. 20/ <b>Feb. 27</b>
7	Mar. 3 <b>Mar. 5</b> <b>Mar. 5-6</b>	Deformation and Metamorphism <b>Midterm Exam II</b> <b>Geology Colloquium – Extra Credit</b>	Ch. 8	Feb. 20/ <b>Feb. 27</b>
8	Mar. 10, 12	Geologic Time <del>Continental Margins</del>	Ch. 9 <del>Ch. 10</del>	Mar. 3/ <b>Mar. 31</b> Mar. 5/ <b>Mar. 31</b>
9	Mar. 16-20	<b>Spring Break</b>		
10	Mar. 24, 26	<del>Mountains, Basins, Continents</del>	<del>Ch. 11</del>	Mar. 10/ <b>Apr. 7</b>
11	Mar. 31, Apr. 2	Earthquakes	Ch. 12	Mar. 24/ <b>Apr. 7</b>
12	Apr. 7, 9	Climate and Geology	Ch. 13	Mar. 31/ <b>Apr. 16</b>
13	Apr. 14, 16	Weathering	Ch. 13 Ch. 15	Mar. 31/ <b>Apr. 16</b> Apr. 9/ <b>Apr. 21</b>
14	Apr. 21, 23	Streams and Flooding	Ch. 16	Apr. 14/ <b>Apr. 21</b>
15	Apr. 28, 30	Water Resources	Ch. 17	Apr. 21/ <b>Apr. 28</b>
16	May 5, 7	Energy and Resources	Ch. 18	Apr. 28/ <b>May 5</b>
17	<b>May 14</b>	<b>Final Exam; Thur. 1:00 – 3:45 pm</b>		