# Historical Geology – Syllabus for Lecture

**INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Benjamin Brunner  
Office: 404A Geology Building  
E-mail: bbrunner@utep.edu  
Associate Professor, Geological Sciences  
Office hours: preferred appointment via email to bbrunner@utep.edu  
*online presence* (may be subject to change due to COVID-19 situation)  
Tuesday & Thursday 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm details to follow

**Please note Dr. B’s Killer Rule:**  
More than 2 missing/unexcused assingments & you are out!

## IN A NUTSHELL: Meeting pattern, location, mandatory investments, grades

**NOTE:** *Class is ASYNCHRONOUS – but you have to submit assignments at given deadlines.*

### Historical Geology Lectures

Instructor: Benjamin Brunner; Teaching Assistant: TBA

### Mandatory book

Earth System History, Steven M. Stanley and John A. Luczaj  
Introduction to Historical Geology: GEOL 1314 CRN 15120  
*NOTE: this book has an e-book from UTEP bookstore ($58.99)*

### Mandatory participation in Packback Questions

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. An email invitation will be sent to you from holla@packback.co prompting you to finish registration (more information on Packback on pages 3 and 4).

### Mandatory time sheets

You will have to submit weekly time time sheets – more information in the first week of classes

## Grades

15% Packback Questions, 40% Concept Sketches, 20% Quizzes, 25% Final Exam

## Labs associated with Historical Geology class (not mandatory for class)

Lab for GEOL 1314: GEOL 1104 CRN 14788 *(currently TBA students)*  
Lab Leader: TBA  
Class: 8:30 am – 10:20 am  
Tuesday  
Geology Building 404

Lab for GEOL 1314: GEOL 1104 CRN 19413 *(currently TBA students)*  
Lab Leader: TBA  
Class: 8:30 am – 10:20 am  
Wednesday  
Geology Building 404

Lab for GEOL 1314: GEOL 1104 CRN 19413 *(currently TBA students)*  
Lab Leader: TBA  
Class: 3:00 pm – 4:50 pm  
Wednesday  
Geology Building 404
COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the history of the Earth System. We learn about the development and interaction of physical, chemical and biological processes that lead to the today’s Earth System and explore the methods and thought concepts that lead scientists to their interpretations of Earth’s past.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
Earth System History, Steven M. Stanley and John A. Luczaj.
There will be handouts & material posted on Blackboard.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1) Obtaining an overview of Earth’s Geologic past
   a. Geological, chemical, and biological evolution of Earth
   b. Key events in Earth’s history
   c. Major global tectonic cycles (Supercontinents)
   d. Geological timescale
2) Understanding of tools and concepts that allow scientists to draw conclusions about Earth’s Geologic past
   a. Relative and absolute dating approaches
   b. Evolution
   c. Biogeochemical cycles
3) Ability to apply achievements from objectives 1 and 2 to critical evaluation of statements about Earth’ past, present, and future.
YOUR PARTICIPATION AND TIME COMMITMENT IS ESSENTIAL

Time commitment
Please do the math: the rule of thumb for a university class is that per contact hour, you have to invest 3 hours of self-study (homework, reading, preparing of exams, interacting with other students etc). The class meeting is twice a week for a duration of one hour and twenty minutes, which results in a total of 2 hours and 40 minutes. Multiply this by three, and you obtain 8 hours of self-study. In other words – your time investment of should be a full workday per week for the Historical Geology class!

Your participation
You can only retain knowledge and skills if you truly engage in using them. To foster this, we use Packback. Packback Questions is an online discussion platform powered by artificial intelligence. This platform is specifically designed to encourage curiosity and increase critical thinking & writing skills. On Packback, you’ll be encouraged & rewarded for asking complex questions about how what we’re studying relates to the real world. As it relates to this specific course, my goals for using Packback are to engage you in a critical evaluation of statements about Earth’s past, present, and future (course objective 3). Academic dialogue on Packback will:

● deepen your understanding of the course content by gaining diverse insights and perspectives from your peers;
● give you a space to relate what you are learning to real-life examples and personal experiences;
● help you develop writing skills necessary for any career path;
● reinforce the skill of justifying thoughts and claims with credible evidence.

How to Register on Packback
If you were on the original roster for this course, your account has already been created by Packback & added to the correct community!

1. Search your inbox for an email from holla@packback.co with the subject line “Finish registration for Instructor Brunner’s course” - This may be hiding in spam, so search thoroughly!
2. Click “set account password” to get started! (If you already have a Packback account, just log in)
3. Once you’re logged in, click “join a community”. When this course’s community appears, click “join community”
4. Input payment information & follow the prompts to complete checkout.
5. Enter the community & start asking questions!

If you did not receive a welcome email, head to packback.co, create an account (use your school email!), and find our community with the community look-up key: d403d622-caf5-47fb-ad06-c2558b4ade0b (Note: this is not a payment or free access code!)

Packback Posting Requirements:
Every week, you must ask 1 Question and post 2 Responses by Saturday at 11:59 pm. Note: On Packback you can’t post early or late, you must post within the designated posting interval.

Packback Grading:
Packback is 15% of the overall course grade

● Each post per week accounts to 1/3 of 100%, totaling 100% per week.
What is the Pricing?

- Packback costs $25 per Packback community (course)
  - However, every time a student purchases access to a Packback Community, that student will receive a $3 discount, which continues to grow with time!

If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding Packback registration or throughout the semester, please contact the customer support team at help@packback.co!

Links
Packback FAQ ◆ Coaching & Question Tutorial Video ◆ Curiosity Score FAQ ◆ Terms of Use

YOUR ARE IMPORTANT TO US, AND WE KNOW THAT “SHIT HAPPENS”
Please contact Dr. Brunner about any concerns, schedule conflicts, etc. in advance or otherwise as soon as possible! Valid excuses include illness, absence with the instructor's prior approval, official University business, etc.

Accommodations are possible for active duty military and others, but arrangements must be made in a timely manner. If you are in the military with the potential of being called to military service and/or training during the course of the semester, you are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible.

If you think you may have a disability or if you are experiencing learning difficulties, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS), East Union Bldg. Room 106:
Office: 915-747-5148 / Email: cass@utep.edu / https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/

Course Drop Deadline: Friday, October 30, 2020
The College of Science will not approve any student- or faculty-initiated drop requests for a course after that date, except under circumstances of complete withdrawal of all courses due to medical or non-medical reasons.

Grades: 15% Packback Questions, 40% Individual Concept Sketches, 20% Quizzes, 25% Final Exam

Never swim alone!

Cheating/Plagiarism:
Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording: it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm for further information.

This is important for your Individual Concept Sketches – make sure that they are ‘yours’, even if you work in teams.
**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS – *subject to change!***

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<th>Date:</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignments</th>
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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>• Why are you here? – Expectations for this class&lt;br&gt;• Time sheets&lt;br&gt;• Concept sketches – Examples:&lt;br&gt; 1) A traffic accident&lt;br&gt; 2) A geological event: extinction of dinosaurs</td>
<td>Syllabus Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>• Earth as a System, Minerals and Rocks, Diversity of Life</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Chapter 3</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>• Environments and Life, Sediments</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>• Proterozoic Eon, Early Paleozoic</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>• Middle and Late Paleozoic</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>• Early Mesozoic, Cretaceous</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>• Review of class</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
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<td>EXAM</td>
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