INSTRUCTOR
Dr. Benjamin Brunner
Office: 404A Geology Building
E-mail: bbrunner@utep.edu
Associate Professor, Geological Sciences, Room 404A
Office hours:
preferred appointment via email to bbrunner@utep.edu
presence Tuesday & Wednesday 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm 404ABCDF

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

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

Historical Geology Lectures
Teaching Assistant: Madison Woelfel

Suggested book
Earth System History, Steven M. Stanley and John A. Luczaj
NOTE: this book is available as e-book and also used
(older editions are ok!)

Assignments such as reading of provided material is essential, the class is front-loaded

Mandatory participation in Packback Questions (~$43 including taxes)
Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics.

Grades
25% Packback Questions, 40% Concept Sketches, 35% Quizzes/Exams, NO Final Exam

In person lab associated with Historical Geology class (not mandatory for class)
Please check out Lab Syllabi
Face-to-face labs plans/schedule will be discussed in first lab
Lab Leader:
Madison Woelfel, mcwoelfel@miners.utep.edu
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.

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’s past, present, and future.
YOUR PARTICIPATION AND TIME COMMITMENT IS ESSENTIAL

Your 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 – Packback Questions
Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

Packback Requirements:
Your participation on Packback will count toward 25% of your overall course grade.
There will be a Weekly Friday at 11:59PM MST deadline for submissions. In order to receive full credit, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- **1 open-ended Question every week** with a minimum Curiosity Score of 40, worth 33.33% of each assignment grade
- **2 Responses every week** with a minimum Curiosity Score of 40, worth 66.67% of each assignment grade
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

How to Register on Packback:
Note: Only access Packback through Blackboard in order to ensure your grades sync properly
1. Click the Packback assignment link within Blackboard to access the community
2. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.
3. **In order for your grade to be visible in Blackboard**, make sure to click each Packback assignment link as you post your Packback submissions.

Packback may require a paid subscription. Refer to [www.packback.co/product/pricing](http://www.packback.co/product/pricing) for more information.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:
If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at [help.packback.co](http://help.packback.co). If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV7QmikrD68](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV7QmikrD68)
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 28, 2022
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.

And now to some legal language:

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! – always expect quizzes, and two larger exams!*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic: Other assignments include Packback and Concept Sketches!</th>
<th>Suggested Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1 08/22/22 | • Why are you here? – Expectations for this class  
• How to read a book chapter  
• Concept sketches – Examples:  
  1) Rain in El Paso  
  2) A traffic accident  
  2) A geological event: extinction of dinosaurs  
• Packback | Syllabus |
| Week 2 08/29/22 | • Concept sketches – Examples:  
  1) Rain in El Paso  
  2) A traffic accident  
  2) A geological event: extinction of dinosaurs  
• Packback | Chapter 1 |
| Week 3 09/05/22 | • Labor Day (09/05/22)  
• Earth as a System, Minerals and Rocks, Diversity of Life | Chapter 2  
Chapter 3 |
| Week 4 09/12/22 | • Environments and Life, Sediments | Chapter 4  
Chapter 5 |
| Week 5 09/19/22 | • Rock Record, Evolution, Fossil Record | Chapter 6  
Chapter 7 |
| Week 6 09/26/22 | • Plate Tectonics, Continents, Mountain Chains | Chapter 8  
Chapter 9 |
| Week 7 10/03/22 | • Geochemical Cycles, Hadean and Archean Eons | Chapter 10  
Chapter 11 |
| Week 8 10/10/20 | • Proterozoic Eon, Early Paleozoic | Chapter 12  
Chapter 13 |
| Week 9 10/17/22 | • Middle and Late Paleozoic | Chapter 14  
Chapter 15 |
| Week 10 10/24/22 | • Early Mesozoic, Cretaceous  
• Friday 10/28/22 Fall Drop/Withdrawal Deadline | Chapter 16  
Chapter 17 |
| Week 11 10/31/22 | • Paleogene, Late Cenozoic | Chapter 18  
Chapter 19 |
| Week 12 11/07/22 | • Holocene, Anthropocene | Chapter 20 |
| Week 13 11/14/22 | • Buffer time / Extra topics: Earth’s Future | Research |
| Week 14 11/21/22 | • Buffer time / Review of class / Thu/Fri: Thanksgiving | Research |
| Week 15 11/28/22 | • Review of class / Friday Dec 02, 2022: Dead Day | Don’t Panic! |
| Week 16 12/05/22 | Final Exams: GOOD LUCK! | None for us! |