

Fall 9-2015

# GEO 211.01: Earth's History and Evolution

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**GEO 211 01, EARTH'S HISTORY AND EVOLUTION  
FALL SEMESTER 2015 SYLLABUS**

**LECTURE:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; 11:10 AM to 12:00 Noon; CHCB # 304

**LABORATORY:** Tuesday; 11:10 AM to 1:00 PM; CHBC # 348

**PROFESSOR:** James R. Staub; office hours are from 2:10 to 3:00 PM on Monday and Tuesday; other times by appointment. Office is CHCB # 363; phone 243-4953;  
[james.staub@umontana.edu](mailto:james.staub@umontana.edu)

**TEXT:** *Earth System History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition by Stephen M. Stanley, 2009, ISBN 1-4292-0520-2, W.H. Freeman and Company

**LABORATORY MANUAL:** *Interpreting Earth History*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition by Scott Ritter and Morris Peterson, 2015, ISBN 1-4786-1145-6, Waveland Press, Inc.

**COURSE GOAL:** The goal is to provide you with a basic understanding of the processes responsible for evolution of the Earth System through time. The development of the Earth's physical features and environmental systems are examined from a process perspective. The course is divided into two parts. The first, which represents about 60% of the lecture time, focuses on examining modern Earth processes and developing a basic knowledge of the concepts, methods, and evidence geoscientists use to understand these processes. The second is applying these concepts and methods to examine evidence concerning specific issues related to the evolution of the Earth through time, starting with Earth's formation approximately 4.6 billion years ago and its evolution into the world we know today. During this phase the focus is placed on using process interpretation to decipher ancient tectonic and depositional settings as well as changes in climate and biodiversity to ascertain global change through time.

**PREREQUISITES:** There are no prerequisites for this class per se. Basic knowledge of algebra and the introductory principles of physics and chemistry, however, is helpful as well as basic computer skills.

**LECTURE ATTENDANCE AND FORMAT:** Attendance is required. Ideas and materials are presented in the lectures that are not covered in the course text. You will be held accountable for all ideas and materials covered in the text and presented in lecture. The format is a traditional lecture with a caveat; the lectures are interactive to an extent. I will ask you questions during the course of lectures in an attempt to verify that you understand/comprehend materials as they are being presented.

**LABORATORY ATTENDANCE:** Attendance is required. Laboratories are interactive and graded exercise will be turned in each week at the beginning of Friday morning lecture.

**FIELD TRIP:** There is a required Saturday field trip on October 3rd. We will leave from the south side of CHCB at 9:00 AM and return by ~ 5:30 PM.

**MOODLE SUPPLEMENT:** Lecture PowerPoints will be posted on Moodle.

## **LECTURE, TEXT ASSIGNED READING, and CONTENT**

### **Part 1: Materials, Processes, and Principles**

8/31	<i>Earth as a System</i>	Chapter 1
9/2	<i>Minerals and Rocks</i>	Chapter 2
9/7	<i>Labor Day</i>	No Class
9/11	<i>Diversity of Life</i>	Chapter 3
9/18	<i>Environments and Life</i>	Chapter 4
<b>9/25</b>	<b>First Exam</b>	
9/28	<i>Sedimentary Environments</i>	Chapter 5
<b>10/3</b>	<b>Field Trip</b>	Garrison Junction (leaves 9 AM)
10/5	<i>Correlation and Dating of the Rock Record</i>	Chapter 6
10/9	<i>Organic Evolution</i>	Chapter 7
10/14	<i>Plate Tectonics</i>	Chapter 8
10/19	<i>Tectonics and Mountain Chains</i>	Chapter 9
10/21	<i>Chemical Cycles</i>	Chapter 10
<b>10/26</b>	<b>Second Exam</b>	

### **Part 2: The Story of the Earth**

10/28	<i>The Hadean and Archean</i>	Chapter 11
11/2	<i>The Proterozoic</i>	Chapter 12
11/4	<i>Early Paleozoic</i>	Chapter 13
11/9	<i>Middle Paleozoic</i>	Chapter 14
11/11	<i>Veterans Day</i>	No Class
11/13	<i>Late Paleozoic</i>	Chapter 15
<b>11/16</b>	<b>Third Exam</b>	
11/18	<i>Early Mesozoic</i>	Chapter 16
11/20	<i>The Cretaceous</i>	Chapter 17
11/25-27	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	No Class
11/30	<i>The Paleogene</i>	Chapter 18
12/4	<i>The Neogene</i>	Chapter 19
12/9	<i>The Holocene</i>	Chapter 20
12/11	<i>Summary and Review</i>	
<b>12/17</b>	<b>Final Exam, 8:00 to 10:00 AM</b>	

### **LABORATORY EXERCISES**

9/1	<i>No Laboratory</i>	
9/8	<i>Relative Dating and Unconformities</i>	Exercise 1

9/15	<i>Analysis of Sedimentary Rocks</i>	Exercise 3
9/22	<i>Analysis of Sedimentary Rocks</i>	Exercise 3
9/29	<i>Fossils and Fossilization</i>	Exercise 8
10/6	<i>Fossils and Fossilization</i>	Exercise 8
10/13	<i>Evidence of Evolution</i>	Exercise 9
10/20	<i>Depositional Environments</i>	Exercise 4
10/27	<i>Stratigraphy</i>	Exercise 5
11/3	<i>Physical Correlation</i>	Exercise 6
11/10	<i>Facies Relationships and Sea-Level ...</i>	Exercise 7
11/17	<i>Index Fossils and Depositional Sequences</i>	Exercise 12
11/24	<i>Interpretation of Geologic Maps</i>	Exercise 13
12/1	<i>Paleozoic Orogenies of Ancestral ...</i>	Exercise 15
12/8	<i>Cordilleran Orogeny</i>	Exercise 16

**COURSE GRADE:** Individual exam letter grades and final letter grades will be based on the following percentages of correct responses: 100-90% A, 89-80% B, 79-70% C, 69-60% D, 59% and below F. Plus and minus scores will be assigned to letter grades following university guidelines. **All exams, laboratory exercises, and the field trip will be counted in determining the final grade in the course.** The weighting of the review questions, field trip, and exams to determine the final letter grade is as follows:

% of Final Grade	
28	Laboratory Exercises (14 at 2% each)
13	First exam
03	Field trip (required)
13	Second exam
13	Third exam
30	Final exam
100	Total %

**EXAMS:** All exams except the final exam will be given during the scheduled class period. The days that they occur are marked in **bold face** type. **Midterm exams are not comprehensive.** Failure to take a midterm exam at the scheduled time will result in a grade of **zero (0)**, unless prior arrangements are made with the professor or a signed medical excuse from the attending physician is presented to the professor.

**The final exam is comprehensive** from the beginning of the course and the exam period will last for two (2) hours. It is scheduled for **Thursday, December 17, 2015, from 8:00 to 10:00 AM.** Failure to take a final exam at the scheduled time will result in a grade of **zero (0)**, unless prior arrangements are made with the professor or a signed medical excuse from the attending physician is presented to the professor.

**Exam questions** types are true or false, fill in the blank, matching, short answer/essay, diagram and graph analysis, and short problem solving.

**LABORATORY EXERCISES:** All laboratory exercises are graded. Each exercise counts at 2% of your final grade. Each exercise must be turned in at the beginning of Friday morning lecture each week to receive credit. The exception is the laboratory exercise on 11/24 which is due at the beginning of lecture on Monday morning 11/30.

**STUDENT CONDUCT CODE:** Please be familiar with the UM Student Conduct Code. The Student Conduct Code can be found on the Vice President for Student Affairs [website \(http://life.umt.edu/vpsa\)](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa)

**COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS (DDS):** Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations in this course. To request course modifications, please contact me as soon as possible. I will work with Disability Services in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the Disability Services [website \(http://life.umt.edu/dss\)](http://life.umt.edu/dss) or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text).