

Instructor: Dr. Yuting Li

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Office: ENV 310R

Virtual office hours: T TH 10:00 am – 10:30 am (zoom) or by appointment

We have two Teaching Assistants:

TA: Caralyn Calabrese

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Virtual office hour: M W 3:00–3:30 pm (zoom)
or by appointment

TA: Charissa Work

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Virtual office hour: T Th 2:30–3:00pm (zoom)
or by appointment

Access to virtual office hours is through the zoom link on Canvas course page (Introduction module) during the above times.

Required Textbook

Foundations of Earth Science by Lutgens and Tarbuck (9th edition)

ebook available through

<https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/foundations-of-earth-science/P200000006997>

Supplementary open source books:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-earthscience/>

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-geophysical/>

<https://slcc.pressbooks.pub/physicalgeography/>

Broad Course Goals

GEOG 1710 is designed primarily for non-geoscience majors and provides a brief introduction to Planet Earth including the following geoscience subjects: atmosphere (air), hydrosphere (water), lithosphere (rock), and biosphere (life). The coursework, assignments, and examinations emphasize developing a basic understanding of geoscience processes and concepts.

Earth Science meets the General Education requirements for a Natural Science course by devoting the semester to helping students understand “energy and cycles in the dynamic earth system, and the origin and evolution of the universe and the earth system”. Within this context, a significant proportion of the class is used to describe and discuss the following core concepts and topics (see below). Strategies include active, inquiry-based learning so students will learn how to observe, think about, and understand our place in the natural environment.

- Earth scientists use repeatable observations and testable ideas to understand and explain our planet.
- Earth is 4.6 billion years old.
- Earth is a complex system of interacting rock, water, air, and life.
- Earth is continuously changing.
- Earth is the water planet.
- Humans depend on Earth for resources.
- Natural hazards pose risks to humans.
- Humans significantly alter the Earth.

Scientific methods and models are used throughout the course. This course will focus on helping students use scientific methods to understand how and when Earth formed, to understand the physical processes that control the internal structure and external shape of Earth, and to understand the changes that have occurred over Earth's long history and that change is still occurring.

Although this is an online course, we have structured the course to facilitate interaction in addition to the work you do on your own. We believe that learning and critical thinking skills are enhanced by interactions among students as they explore and discuss science and social science themes in an online environment. Contributions to group discussions count towards your final grade.

Format, Structure, and Expectations

This course has online lecture part and in-person lab part. This syllabus is only for the lecture part. Lectures are taught entirely in an asynchronous, online, computer-learning environment. All email correspondence for the lecture will be sent to your UNT university email account via Canvas. You are expected to read your @my.unt.edu email on a frequent basis. We will make daily use of the UNT Canvas system especially for course announcements, ancillary materials and web links, and grading. Office hours are held virtually through zoom. All the discussion forums, homework, and exams are online. If you are unfamiliar with using Canvas, there is an Introductory Tutorial in the "Getting Started" module of the course Canvas site.

Two heads are usually better than one in solving problems and alternative perspectives offered by your classmates may take your ideas in new directions. Even though we are unable to work in small groups or pairs within the class this time, discussion forums will be held online on *Canvas*. The discussion is to link what you are learning in class to real-life events that have been reported in the press. *I encourage you to be open, courteous, and respectful, and need everyone to contribute.*

Email Policy

- When you email, **please make sure to use "GEOG 1710 Section 401" in subject line** and sign message with your full name. This will help me tremendously in locating and responding to your emails quickly.

Grading

The lecture is worth 70% of your course final grade and the in-person lab is worth 30% of your grade.

LABS: You must be registered for an in-person GEOG 1710 lab - the lab is worth 30% of your final grade. Labs give you hands-on experience on a variety of geoscience topics. The Lab and Lecture parts are in separate Canvas sites and taught by different instructors. Teaching, testing, and grading of the lab work is the responsibility of your lab TA (Teaching Assistant). Please refer all lab questions to your lab TA.

Lecture Grade breakdown

Homework on Canvas	20 pts each (20*8=160 pts in total)
Online discussion on Canvas	40 pts each (40*4=160 pts in total)
4 Exams on Canvas	100 pts each (100*4=400 pts in total)

Your Lecture Grade is based on 720 pts (160+160+400)

No make ups! (If you have a conflict, contact Dr. Li as early as possible)

This course consists of four modules, each requiring readings, a monitored Canvas discussion, two homework, and a timed exam. Homework will be available on Canvas from the beginning of the course to their respective due dates. Online discussions will be available during each module period to their respective due dates. **Exams will only be available from 12:01 a.m. – 11:59 p.m. on their respective due dates.**

Online homework:

- Assigned on Canvas. 20 pts each, 2 homework in each module, 8 homework in total.
- 8–10 questions in each homework, multiple format (multiple choice, matching, True/False). Two attempts will be given to answer each homework question to ensure full understanding of the material. Only best score is recorded.
- Each module's homework will be available from the beginning of the course to their respective due dates at 11:59 PM CDT. The 1st homework in each module is due by the second Friday, and the 2nd homework in each module is due by the fourth Friday.
- Late homework will NOT be accepted.

Online Discussion:

- Assigned on *Canvas*. 40 pts each, 4 discussions in total.
- During each module, you will need to post one original discussion post and at least two response posts to your classmates, all of which need to be completed to get full credit. Detailed grading rubric is posted on “Introduction” Canvas page.
- Each discussion forum is open at 12:00 AM CDT on the first Monday of that module and **has two deadlines**. Please make your initial discussion post (must be at least 150 words in length) by the second Friday at 11:59 PM, and at least two response posts (at least 5 sentences in each) to your classmates by the fourth Friday at 11:59 PM in that module.
- AI should not be used to assist in writing your discussion posts, posts detected as AI-generated will get 0 pts.
- Dr. Li and TAs monitor discussions. We all know that Internet forums can be harsh environments with a lot of people feeling they can be rude because they are hidden behind a screen. Responses of this nature are not acceptable. Responses should be informative, polite, and well intentioned when you communicate with your fellow classmates. Remember, grading is based on the overall quality of your initial post and two responses – read them through and check spelling and grammar before posting.
- Late posts will NOT be accepted.

4 In-class Exams (100 pts each)

- Assigned on Canvas. Not comprehensive (only test on materials covered in each module).
- Each contains ~50 questions (multiple choice, matching, True/False).
- Timed, you will have 80 minutes to complete each exam. Once you start an exam, the countdown clock starts, so be sure to complete it within that 80 minutes of when you first started. If you are kicked offline, you will need to log back in ASAP. Please plan ahead and secure a quiet space with a **STRONG AND RELIABLE INTERNET CONNECTION**.
- Only one attempt is allowed for each exam.
- Each in-class exam will only be available from 12:01 AM to 11:59 PM CDT on their respective due dates. You have to complete the exam during this 24-hour window.
- Questions will be straightforward and reflect major concepts in the readings. For example, I might ask what processes create sediment, but would not ask you about sediment types of Texas.

Moreover, I might ask about properties of minerals, but would not expect you to recite long mineral formulas.

- You may use your textbook and notes, but no other external sources, when taking exams. Even though exams are taken online through Canvas, all exams are to be taken on an individual (not group) basis.
- Late exams will NOT be accepted.

You must take the exams by yourself. Do not share information about them with anyone else. Please be aware, Canvas has extensive cheating and plagiarism detection capability. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are completely unacceptable and have dire consequences (see section on academic dishonesty below).

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE DAY TO COMPLETE AN EXAMS OR ASSIGNMENT. GIVE YOURSELF ADEQUATE TIME IN CASE OF UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES. CANVAS WILL TERMINATE ACCESS TO THE ASSIGNMENT OR QUIZ AT THE END OF THE DAY.

STUDY BEFORE TAKING EACH EXAM, OR ELSE YOU WILL RUN OUT OF TIME TRYING TO LOOK UP UNFAMILIAR INFORMATION.

Grade Posting

All grades will be posted on Canvas. *You have 7 days after a grade has been posted to dispute an entry.* After the 7-day period, the grade stands as entered. Do not wait until the end of the course to check your grades.

One reminder here: DO NOT rely on Canvas Grade calculation to check your current grade status. Only after we grade the last assignment, you will know what the final grade for the course is. All the ungraded assignments are automatically treated as zero. For instance, if your CANVAS reports you 90%, the 90 is not the accumulated points you earned. That's how Canvas is set up and we do not have a solution yet.

Letter Grade

The grading schema for our course is:

A: 89.5% - 100%

B: 79.5% - 89.5%

C: 69.5% - 79.5%

D: 59.5% - 69.5%

F: < 59.5%

Make-up Work

You are responsible for managing your time and keeping up with the course. Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility. Online homework and online discussion **cannot** be made up. Make-up work for exams will only be allowed **before** the exam date. Students must provide **advance** notice **at least before 1 week** of the exam date and documentation for an absence to be considered excused. Exams CANNOT be made up for non-emergency, unexcused absences, or absences that occur without prior notification to the instructor.

Moreover, it is your responsibility to make sure you have a reliable Internet connection when completing an online exam. Late exams or assignments will not be accepted due to Internet issues at your location. They will also not be accepted just because you “forgot” to complete the exam or assignment.

SPOT:

The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT.

This short survey will be made available to you on Nov. 17, providing you a chance to submit course evaluation. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Once you complete the survey, you will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class. To encourage all students to do evaluations, I have made completing the course evaluation as an extra-credit. Every student who completes a SPOT and submit the screen shot of the completion confirmation through Canvas link will receive **1 actual extra point** toward your overall final grade. Just doing the evaluation without submitting your screenshot does not count. Please read the instructions in the Canvas link carefully.

Other than SPOT, no extra credit assignment will be accepted.

Diversity Statement

I want to create a safe and positive learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). To help accomplish this:

- Let me know if you have a preferred name and/or set of pronouns.
- Don't hesitate to talk with me if you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class. I can be a resource for you or direct you to needed resources.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

Accessibility and Accommodations:

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that UNT holds. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Cheating in this class is absolutely not tolerated. If you are caught you will be given a Zero for that assignment and other measures including reporting to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities may be taken at my discretion.

According to UNT's webpage on [AI, Plagiarism, and Academic Integrity](#):

a. AI should not be used to assist in writing papers, searching for sources, or creating citations. Some citations provided by AI are not reliable.

b. AI can be used to help students develop an outline for a paper, generate ideas, and learn a citation style.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Course Timeline and Due Dates:

** subject to change by the instructor as needed. Any updates will be posted on the course Canvas site.*

** Chapter number below in the table is based on **the 9th edition of the textbook**, please adjust according to the chapter title if you are using the 8th edition. Contents are similar between these two versions, only the orders of some chapters are different.*

Chapters and dates	Assignments and due dates
<i>Module 1 The Big Picture (8.17 Mon – 9.11 Fri)</i> 1. Course Intro 2. Chapter I: Introduction to Earth Science + Chapter 4.6: Earth's Interior 3. Chapter 15: The Nature of the Solar System (15.1–15.4, 15.7) 4. Chapter 11: Heating the Atmosphere 5. Chapter 13: The Atmospheric in Motion	• Homework 1 (also includes some questions about syllabus) • Canvas Discussion 1 (Initial post) Due 8.28 11:59 PM • Homework 2 • Canvas Discussion 1 (2 responses) • Exam 1 Due 9.11 11:59 PM
<i>Module 2 The Water World (9.14 Mon –10.9 Fri)</i> 1. Chapter 6: Landscapes Fashioned by Water 2. Chapter 9: Oceans, The Last Frontier 3. Chapter 10: The Restless Ocean	• Homework 3 (also includes some questions about syllabus) • Canvas Discussion 2 (Initial post) Due 9.25 11:59 PM • Homework 4 • Canvas Discussion 2 (2 responses) • Exam 2 Due 10.9 11:59 PM

<i>Module 3 The Solid Earth (10.12 Mon –11.6 Fri)</i> - Chapter 1: Matter and Minerals - Chapter 2: Rocks - Chapter 3: Plate Tectonics	• Homework 5 (also includes some questions about syllabus) • Canvas Discussion 3 (Initial post) Due 10.23 11:59 PM • Homework 6 • Canvas Discussion 3 (2 responses) • Exam 3 Due 11.6 11:59 PM
<i>Module 4 (11.9 Mon –12.4 Fri)</i> - Chapter 4: Earthquakes and Mountain Building - Chapter 5: Volcanoes and Other Igneous Activity - Chapter 8: Geologic Time	• Homework 7 • Canvas Discussion 4 (Initial post) Due 11.20 11:59 PM • Homework 8 • Canvas Discussion 4 (2 responses) • SPOT screenshot submission (Dec 3) • Exam 4 Due 12.4 11:59 PM