

COURSE SYLLABUS

**GEL 133-04**  
**PHYSICAL GEOLOGY (ONLINE)**  
**3 CREDIT HOURS**  
**SPRING 2008**

**Professor: Dr. Charles Shaw**  
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**You are responsible for knowing the information on this syllabus. Please read through it carefully.**

**GEL 133 Physical Geology (online)**

**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the materials, processes, and structure of the earth. Topics include earthquakes, volcanoes, plate tectonics, mountain building, weathering and erosion, glaciation, oceans and mineral resources, among others. Goals include honing an ability to form testable questions and an understanding the nature of scientific hypotheses and their testing.

**Course Requirements**

**1. Textbook:** *Essentials of Geology*, Lutgens, F. & Tarbuck, E., 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Prentice Hall, Inc. You may use the 8<sup>th</sup> edition, if you wish, but check to see that used books have the CD attached on the inside back cover.

It is essential do the assigned readings in order to fully understand the concepts presented. The textbook has a CD inside the back cover, and Prentice Hall has an excellent companion website at ([www.prenhall.com/lutgens/](http://www.prenhall.com/lutgens/)).

**3 Credit Hours**

**Spring 2008**

**Professor:** Charles Shaw  
**Office:** LDB 314  
**Telephone:** (936) 294-1560  
**email:** ces023@shsu.edu

**Office Hours: 11:00 – 1:00 MWF**

I have an open door policy, so you're welcome to drop by whenever you have a question, if you're near Huntsville. My office hours are when I'll definitely be in my office, so if you want to be sure to catch me at other times please call or email ahead of time. You are also welcome to ask questions via telephone or email.

I'll be making extensive use of the Blackboard, where I'll post reading assignments, notes, external links, tests, and so on for the entire course. That way you will be able to work at your own pace and move ahead when you have a block of time available. I will regularly upload any changes or additions to your reading. You will also be making use of a companion website provided by the publisher of the text book.(see below).

**Homework Exercises** on Blackboard are being revised and will be posted as we go along. Grading policies will be posted later.

## Grading and Assessment

**Exams:** 4 @ 100 pts each: **400 points**

**Homework:** See above. A separate study guide will be available to help you prepare for tests. See course schedule.

**Exercises:** Total of 100 points. Exercises are problems that will assist you in learning to think like a scientist. They are being prepared as we go along and will be posted as soon as they are ready.

**Total points: 500**

## Grading Scale:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
0-59%	F

Grades for each test and for assigned exercises will be available online on Blackboard, accessible through the SHSU website.

Your final grade will be rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Final grades will NOT be curved. If any of the four tests are not taken, the final course grade will be F. If any of the exercises are not completed you will receive a grade of zero for that exercise.

**No grades will be given out by telephone or individual e-mail.**

**Exams** will cover material from your reading assignments, Powerpoint lectures, and exercises

- The exams will be multiple choice (50 questions, 2 points each).
- Tests may be taken when you are ready. This freedom requires self-discipline on your part.
- Tests will be timed (50 minutes).
- Grades are determined by earned point totals as shown above.

- The final exam (#4) is not comprehensive.
- All exams must be completed to receive course credit.

### **Academic Conduct**

SHSU expects all students to do their work in an honest manner. Cheating on an exam will be penalized, at the minimum, with an automatic F on that exam. If there is strong evidence for academic dishonesty, the University may initiate disciplinary or legal action.

University policy: *"All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on examinations or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and abuse of resource materials."*

### **Disabled Student Policy**

SHSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to ensure full learning opportunities for students with disabilities. If you have a disability which may affect your academic performance, please request assistance from the Counseling Center, located on campus in the Lee Drain Building Annex (phone 936-294-1720), in a timely manner. All disclosures will be kept in strict confidentiality

### **Americans with Disabilities Act:**

**University Policy:** *"It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under and academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request assistance with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities by contacting the Director of the Counseling Center in the Lee Drain Annex or by calling (936) 294-1720. Any student seeking accommodations should go to the Counseling Center and Service for Students with Disabilities in a timely manner and complete a form that will grant permission to receive special accommodations."*

## **GEL 133 ON-LINE EXAM POLICIES**

### **System Errors**

The material below is provided to define the term "System Error" as I will use it in this class, and to let you know the importance of removing those conditions that increase the possibility of you receiving a

system error. If you generate a system error, there will be no grade to log to my roll. **YOU** will need to make sure that you take the exam again. The System Error policy is described below.

### Policy

Any computer is subject to system errors (you are thrown off the system). Most system errors are the result of internet system provider problems, bad weather (electrical storms and the like) or you resizing the screen after you have begun to take one of the online tests. Except in the latter instance, system errors are just part of doing business with computers -- and I certainly recognize this as the case. Blackboard will indicate to me that a system error has occurred on your exam. **You** will know you have a system error because when you check your grade after taking the exam (and you are advised to check your grade after you take **EACH** exam), you will see a black "lock" in the slot for the exam instead of a numerical grade. This symbol is telling you that you have generated a system error, and you need to re-take the exam right then -- if you are up to it -- while the material is still fresh on your mind.

For additional information on re-taking an exam on which you have received an overtime or system error, see the sub-menu under Exams/Grade Policies entitled: [ReTake Exam Folders on Blackboard](#).

### Overtime

As is the case with on-campus classes, online class exams are **TIMED**. Before you take one of the online exams for this class, you are encouraged to thoroughly familiarize yourself with the way test instruments are administered in Blackboard. Please read the following

**What is an overtime?** The class policy as regards is very simple: if you exceed the time allotted for an exam for *any* reason, you are overtime and the exam will need to be retaken. You will know if you are overtime when you check your gradebook on Blackboard -- which you are required to do after taking **EACH** exam. If you have run overtime, there will be no numerical grade visible. Instead a small exclamation mark will be displayed. This is your key to retake the exam. You are reminded here, as you will be in other sections of the site, that **ALL** work must be successfully submitted for a grade by specific deadline date also spelled out elsewhere on this site. If you log an overtime a **THIRD** time on a specific exam, a **ZERO** will be entered automatically into the gradebook.

For additional information on re-taking an exam you have received an overtime or system error on, see the sub-menu under Exams/Grade Policies entitled: [ReTake Exam Folders on Blackboard](#)  
**It is best to submit your exam as soon as the One Minute Message Box appears.**

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**All exams in this class are due  
no later than midnight of the last day  
of University-scheduled Final Exams**

**Policy:** ALL exams required in this class **MUST** be completed by 11:59 pm of the last day of University-scheduled exams. Consult the University Final Exam schedule to see what that specific date is. This policy will give you maximum flexibility to manage your time. Remember, any work required and not turned in by that date will result in a **ZERO**. Note as well that the deadline is the **END** of the semester. There is no time for any kind of adjustment of a grade. Once mid-night passes, the semester is over. The course schedule is in your control.

If you have some legitimate crisis that prevented you from completing the work by the deadline, then you will need to discuss it with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.. If he accepts your explanation, he will most likely allow you to take an "X" in the class and you can complete it next semester.

## **Lecture Outline    Fall 2007**

All chapters listed below refer to the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the textbook. You may use similar material found in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Make sure the 8<sup>th</sup> edition has the CD attached inside the back cover. The schedule below is subject to change. Check with "Course Materials" on Blackboard for the current version of the topics list and assigned readings. .

### **Week 1 (August 20-24)**

Origin of the Earth and Earth Structure (Ch 1)

### **Week 2 (August 27-31)**

Plate Tectonics (Ch 15,16)

### **Week 3 (September 3-7)**

Minerals (Ch 2), an introduction to the rock cycle

**No Class-Labor Day, September 3**

### **Week 4 (September 10-14)**

Igneous rocks and volcanoes (Ch 3 and 4)

**\*\*\*EXAM 1 (Note: You are encouraged to take the exam at the point indicated. Whenever you decide to do the exam, all exams must be submitted by midnight of the last day of Final Exams for the semester)**

### **Week 5 (September 18-19)**

Sedimentary Rocks (Ch 6)

### **Week 6 (September 26-28)**

Metamorphic Rocks (Ch 7)

### **Week 7 (October 1-5)**

Rock Deformation and Mountain Building (Ch 17)

**Week 8 (October 8-12)**

Earthquakes (Ch 14)

**\*\*\*EXAM 2** (Note: You are encouraged to take the exam at the point indicated. Whenever you decide to do the exam, all exams must be submitted by midnight of the last day of Final Exams for the semester)

**Week 9 (October 15-19)**

Geologic Time (Ch 18)

**Week 10 (October 22-26)**

**Week 11 (October 29-November 2)**

Weathering and Soils (Ch 5)

**Week 12 (November 5-9)**

Mass Movement (Ch 8)

**\*\*\*EXAM 3** (Note: You are encouraged to take the exam at the point indicated. Whenever you decide to do the exam, all exams must be submitted by midnight of the last day of Final Exams for the semester)

**Week 13 (November 12-16)**

Ground water (Ch 10), Streams and Surface Water (Ch 9)

**Week 14 (November 19-20)**

Glaciers (Ch 11)

**No Class-Thanksgiving Recess (November 21-25)**

**Week 15 (November 26-30)**

Deserts and Wind (Ch 12)

**Week 16 (December 3-6)**

Shorelines (Ch 13) and the Ocean Floor (Ch 16)

**\*\*\*EXAM 4 (FINAL)** (Note: You are encouraged to take the exam at the point indicated. Whenever you decide to do the exam, all exams must be submitted by midnight of the last day of Final Exams for the semester)