

**Physical Geology
GEOL 1403 Section N1
Blinn College, Bryan Campus
Course Information Sheet
Fall 2009**

Instructor: Dr. Amanda Julson

Office Hours: Tu-W-Th 9:00-10:30 a.m.

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Office: G-246

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General Course Information:

Course Description: General principles of physical geology. An introduction to the origin, composition, structure and dynamics of planet Earth. Topics are explored within the general context of plate tectonic theory and include: minerals and rocks, weathering and erosion, geological time, earthquakes, volcanoes, mountain building, oceans, landforms, and natural resources. Laboratory work involves the practical application of geological principles such as rock and mineral identification, geologic and topographic map interpretation, and geological data analysis. Three class hours and three laboratory hours per week. Credit: Four semester hours.

Prerequisites: None.

Core Curriculum Course: This is a course in the 42-hour Core Curriculum of Blinn College. As such, students will develop proficiency in appropriate intellectual competencies, exemplary educational objectives and general perspectives. The URL of the Blinn College Core Curriculum Web Site is: <http://www.blinn.edu/corecurriculum.htm>.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of the course, the student will have an overall average of >60% of the combined lecture and laboratory components of the course. This includes at least 3 major exams and quizzes given at the discretion of the Instructor. In the laboratory, the student will demonstrate an understanding of the lab activities through analysis of materials presented in lab and by being able to use these materials to solve problems and explain geological processes.

These learning outcomes will include the student demonstrating competence in the course objectives listed below:

1. Examine and analyze rock and mineral specimens and their occurrence and determine their context within the rock cycle.
2. Comprehend plate tectonic theory and evaluate its significance to geology. Relate the nature of Earth's internal structure and tectonics to geological phenomena (e.g., volcanoes, earthquakes, deformational structures, etc.).
3. Understand geologic time and the rock record, including formation of Earth and Solar System. Be able to apply principles of relative and numerical dating.
4. Recognize the role of surficial processes (water, wind, ice and gravity) and identify resulting landforms; identification and interpretation of landforms based on topographic maps.
5. Relate geology to human affairs; assess geohazard risk (earthquake, volcanoes, floods), and natural resources.

Course Requirements:

The student should do each of the following:

- Read the assigned chapters in the textbook and complete the weekly questions
- Participate in weekly online class discussions and visit during instructor office hours as needed
- Attend the on-campus orientation and review meetings (see class schedule for dates)
- View audiovisual materials on selected topics
- Learn to use and/or analyze geological materials and maps as needed to successfully complete each laboratory exercise
- Complete the exams on the assigned dates; the exams may include essay questions

Class Policies:

Attendance: The College District believes that class attendance is essential for student success; therefore, students are required to promptly and regularly attend all their classes. Each class meeting builds the foundation for subsequent class meetings. Without full participation and regular class attendance, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in college. Class participation shall constitute at least ten percent of the final course grade. It is the

responsibility of each faculty member, in consultation with the division chair, to determine how participation is achieved in his or her class. Faculty will require students to regularly attend class and will keep a record of attendance from the first day of class and/or the first day the student's name appears on the roster through final examinations. If a student has one week's worth of absences during the semester, he/she will be sent an e-mail by the College requiring the student to contact his/her instructor and schedule a conference immediately to discuss his/her attendance issues. If the student subsequently accumulates two weeks' worth of absences, he/she will be administratively withdrawn from class.

Note: For internet classes, this means that if a student fails to log into ECampus for TWO WEEKS during the semester (not necessarily consecutive) they will be dropped from the course (unless the situation has been discussed in advance with and approved by me).

There are three forms of excused absence officially designated by Blinn College: (1) Observance of religious holy days: The student should notify his/her instructor(s) not later than the 15th day of the semester concerning the specific date(s) that the student will be absent for any religious holy day(s); and (2) Representing Blinn College at an official institutional function and (3) official involvement in a high school activity for "dual credit" students. Other excuses will be considered and may be considered excusable at the instructor's discretion, with documentation. Missing lecture or lab or both will count as one absence.

Campus Visits: Unlike many other internet classes, online Science courses involve visits to campus. Attendance at the Orientation and Review Meetings is optional, but most students who have attended in past semesters have found these meetings to be quite valuable.

Saturday On-Campus Lab Meetings (attendance optional) (**Note: We do NOT meet every Saturday!**)

Held in Rm. G-216 (second floor of Bookstore Building, Bryan Campus) starting at 10:00 a.m

Sept. 5: Orientation and Overview of Physical Geology

Oct. 17: Review for Lab Midterm Exam - Bring your rock kit to review!

Dec. 5: Review for Lab Final Exam

Saturday On-Campus Lab Tests (attendance required; alternate dates can be arranged - contact me ASAP for this

Held in Rm. G-216 (second floor of Bookstore Building, Bryan Campus) starting at 10:00 a.m sharp - **BE ON TIME!**

Oct. 24: Lab Midterm Exam (Rock and Mineral Test)

Dec. 12: Lab Final Exam (Geologic and Topographic Maps/Geologic Problem Solving and Data Analysis Lab Test)

On-Campus Exams

At a Blinn College Testing Center (on the Bryan Campus go to the Learning Center, Room 258 - Library Building)

As noted below (see "Exams"), the three major exams and the Comprehensive Final Exam are regular paper tests that will be taken at a Blinn College testing center or another college's proctored testing center (if arranged with me well in advance); check their days and hours of operation, and plan your visit during the availability period for each test.

Oct. 9-12 (Fri.-Mon.): EXAM 1 (Ch. 1-5, Weeks 1-5)

Nov. 13-16 (Fri.-Mon.): EXAM 2 (Ch. 6-10 and 10, Weeks 6-10)

Dec. 8-10 (Tues.-Thurs): EXAM 3 (Ch. 13-18, Weeks 11-14)

Dec. 11-15 (Fri.-Tues.): COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM (all chapters except Ch. 11 and 19; all weeks of semester)

Dropping: If a student chooses to drop the course, it is that student's responsibility to complete a drop order at the Office of Enrollment Services. Failure to do so could result in a grade of F in the course. The last day to withdraw with a "W" is Nov. 20th.

Eating/Drinking, Electronic Devices Neither eating nor drinking is allowed in classrooms or laboratories. Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off. Laptop computers may be used for note-taking ONLY.

Dishonesty Statement: Blinn College does not tolerate cheating, plagiarism or other acts of dishonesty. Definitions of these acts and procedures for dealing with them are described in "Scholastic Dishonesty" in the [Blinn College Student Handbook](#), copies of which are available at the information desk in the administration building.

Civility Statement: Members of the Blinn College community, which includes faculty, staff and students, are expected to act honestly and responsibly in all aspects of campus life. Blinn College holds all members accountable for their actions and words. Therefore, all members should commit themselves to behave in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every member of the College community, including respect for College property and the physical and intellectual property of others. Civility applies to attire as well as language and behavior. Please dress appropriately for the academic classroom and laboratory.

If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference.

ADA Policy: Students needing special accommodation due to a disability must obtain authorization from the Disabilities Counseling Office in room 157 of the Blinn science building.

The above requirements and policies are discussed more fully in the [Blinn College Student Handbook](#) which, by reference, is incorporated into this information. Please obtain and read.

ECampus Support: Office of Distance Learning, Blinn College: <http://www.blinn.edu/disted/index.htm> , support@blinn.edu , or (979) 209-7298.

Criteria for Determining Final Grade:

Lecture Exams (three 100-pt exams):	30%	(300 out of 1000 points)
Weekly Reading Assignment Questions (average of scores):	10%	(100 out of 1000 points)
Weekly Lab Exercises (average of scores):	10%	(100 out of 1000 points)
Weekly Discussion Postings (average of scores):	10%	(100 out of 1000 points)
Lab Exams (two 100-pt lab exams):	20%	(200 out of 1000 points)
Comprehensive Final Exam:	20%	(200 out of 1000 points)

The grading system of Blinn College recognizes the following grade values:

A = 90 – 100% mastery of course material

B = 80 – 89% “

C = 70 – 79% “

D = 60 – 69% “

F = less than 59% “

Exams: The Lecture Exams and Final Exam are regular paper tests to be completed at the Blinn College Learning Centers (or another college's proctored testing center, as approved by me). **Please notify me as to which Learning Center you plan on using for your exams.** Please bring a long green Scantron form, a #2 pencil, and your photo ID to these exams. Exams 1-3 may contain a variety of question formats including multiple choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, etc. The Final Exam is a multiple choice test that does NOT contain old questions from Exams 1-3.

The two Lab Exams are practical "hands-on" exams. They will be administered at the Blinn College Bryan Campus, Room G-216. If you cannot take the exams at the Bryan Campus contact me so that other arrangements can be made.

The final exam must be completed by the date indicated on the class schedule.

Lab Exercises and Weekly Assignments: Assignments, discussions and lab exercises will be due weekly on Sundays (they are submitted using the ECampus "assessment" tool). Late work will be accepted the following day with a 10-point penalty.

Make-ups: There will be no make-ups for major exams, labs, or assignments. If a major exam is missed, the grade will be replaced with the grade (%) on the Final Exam **if an acceptable explanation is presented to me in a timely manner**; otherwise you will receive a zero for the exam. I will only allow this for ONE of the three major exams. If a Lab Test is

missed you must discuss the situation with me ASAP and arrange to make up the test; an acceptable explanation for missing the test must be presented to me or you will receive a zero for the lab test.

There will be no make-ups for labs or assignments. Missed items will be given a grade of zero.

Required Textbooks:

Essentials of Geology (3rd ed.); by Marshak, Norton & Co., 2009.

Required Laboratory Materials:

Blinn College Rock Kit for Distance Education (available for purchase from Blinn Bookstore or on-site use at Bryan Learning Center)

Weekly Lab Exercises will be posted in ECampus (no separate lab manual needed)