GSCI 1051 Syllabus – Winter Session 2019
December 26, 2018 – January 18, 2019

About GSCI 1051

One of five introductory geoscience courses satisfying the CA3 general education requirement and serving as a prerequisite or co-requisite for the lab course (GSCI 1052).

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Earth’s Dynamic Environment
Credits: 3
Format: Online
Prerequisites: None
Professor: Stephen G. Smith

Email: stephen.g.smith@uconn.edu
Office Hours/Availability: On each morning of the class (Eastern time), I will make an early check of my email for anything requiring urgent action. For all other issues, including normal back-and-forth, I'll be available sporadically throughout the day (Eastern time), with one final check of email around 8 or 9pm. I will keep you posted of any major changes to this schedule.
**Course Materials**

Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.

Texts are available through a local or online bookstore of your choice. The [UConn Bookstore](https://www.uconnbookstore.com) carries the required text(s), which can be shipped (fees apply).

**Required Materials:**

   *Note: you do not need an access code, so any version of this text (used/new/ebook) is fine!*

2. **ProctorU** account for the online proctored Final Exam. When you access, this course in HuskyCT, navigate to the course orientation and create your ProctorU account. This account will be required when you take the final exam. More details will be provided in HuskyCT.

*Any Additional course readings and/or media will be available via the course website on HuskyCT.*

**Course Description**

This course details the origin and history of planet Earth, emphasizing how rock, air, water, and life interact at different scales to produce the Earth’s crust, landforms, life systems, natural resources, catastrophes, and climate. The course provides a scientific context for human-induced global change. This is a non-lab science literacy course meeting UConn’s CA3 General Education requirement.

Planet Earth operates like a big and beautiful machine. Humanity and all ecosystems are part of this machine, and depend on its atmospheric and crustal components. Leaving the course you will know how the Earth works as a coherent system. This will give you an enhanced sense of place and time, and a greater appreciation for how this foundation discipline contributes to human endeavors.

This course uses a variety of educational strategies to teach students how the Earth works. Activities include mini-lectures, interest group activities, virtual field trips, online homework, a focus on New England scenery, and geo-journalism. After taking the course, you will have a new sense of place, a deeper sense of time, and a greater appreciation for how this science contributes to human endeavors.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Explain that geoscience is the modern name for the historical discipline of geology broadened to include all of the materials and processes at a planetary scale.
2. Describe how geoscience plays an important role in environmental affairs at the local and planetary level. This is particularly true for adaptation to modern climate change.
3. Identify that the earth is 4.6 billion years old and be able to grasp just how stunningly long and fascinating that history has been.
4. Imagine yourselves working as a professional geologist (career options are wide open), or working with one in their future jobs, whether in business, engineering, law, or the humanities.

5. Recall that every landscape we know results from the interaction between three important subsystems: tectonic, meteoric, and organic.

6. Illustrate that you have a much better feel for what science is, how scientific inquiry takes place, and how the game is played at all levels.

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: Prologue &amp; Earth as a Planet</td>
<td>Wednesday, Dec 26 – Friday, Dec 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2: Earth as a System</td>
<td>Saturday, Dec 29 – Saturday, Jan 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3: Earth as a Story</td>
<td>Sunday, Jan 6 – Friday, Jan 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4: Earth’s Human Moment &amp; Epilogue</td>
<td>Saturday, Jan 12 – Wednesday, Jan 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 5: OYO Project &amp; Final Exam</td>
<td>Thursday, Jan 17 – Friday, Jan 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A course schedule is provided in the course (HuskyCT). The Final Exam will take place on the last day of the course, January 18, 2019.

Course Requirements and Grading

Summary of Course Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep Quizzes</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Your Own Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Preparation (Prep) Quizzes (26 Total Points)**
Each week, you will have opportunities to test your knowledge from the content provided in the modules in HuskyCT. These quizzes will include multiple-choice questions and you are allotted two attempts at each quiz. Please note: there will be a lot of quizzes (26 total) throughout this course but they are tied to the course materials and they are intended to check your knowledge and to ensure that you are conducting the activities in each module in this course. Each quiz is worth **1 point** each. See the Course Schedule in HuskyCT for due dates.

**Discussion Forums (24 Total Points)**
To generate classroom discussions in an online environment, you will be required to participate in 4 discussion threads during the course. Each discussion thread will have its own prompts started by the instructor. You will be required to post an **initial response** to the prompts in the discussion threads. By the last day of each content module, you are required to post at least **two responses** to other students who responded to the initial post. All in all, there are **12 required postings, three for each of the four discussion prompts.** To determine the quality of your posting, your instructor will use a simple rubric based on the subjective assessment of the quality of your post, which includes the relevance of your posting to the course content. The discussion rubric is provided in HuskyCT. **Each discussion thread is worth 6 points each.** See the Course Schedule in HuskyCT for due dates.

**On Your Own (OYO) Project (20 Total Points)**
Every student is required to do a small individual project, called an "On Your Own" or OYO project. *For those who wish to present the project to the online class (Performance OYOs)*, it need not be anything more than a few minutes of stand-up comedy on some geo-theme, pitching a book to the audience, or giving a mini-lecture on something that fascinates you. However, you will need technology to deliver this presentation if you choose this route. For example, you can use video applications or you can use any tool that you are familiar with to create your presentation. Yet, you are on your own when it comes to the technology. *For those who want to stay out of the limelight (non-performance OYOs),* it need not be anything more than documentation of a visit to a school classroom, a field trip to some park, or a recording of something relevant to the course material. *The possibilities are wide open.*

For those that want to conduct a Performance OYO, please provide the web link to your video (e.g., YouTube). Remember, you are on your own in regard to the technology used to deliver this presentation. So, please be sure you know the technology before you create your performance OYO.

This will be a paperless project, handled online through HuskyCT. This project will come in two parts:

- **Part 1** - Propose a project - you will provide a proposal in HuskyCT (**4 points**)
- **Part 2** - Deliver the project - you will attach your assignment in HuskyCT (**16 points**) *

*If you want to present your project to the class, please let me know and you can share it in a classroom discussion forum.

See the Course Schedule for due dates for both parts 1 and 2 in HuskyCT. A grading rubric for this assignment will be provided in HuskyCT.
Final Exam (30 points)
The purpose of the final exam is to assess the learning that has taken place, which reflects some combination of your effort, your ability, the guidance of the instructor, circumstantial factors beyond anyone’s control, and blind luck. There will be one online, proctored exam on Thursday, January 11, 2018. Most questions will be objective and scored within the HuskyCT interface.

*More details for all of these assignments are provided in the course shell (HuskyCT).

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92.5-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89.5-92.4</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.5-89.4</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.5-87.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.5-82.4</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.5-79.4</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.5-77.4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.5-72.4</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.5-69.4</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.5-67.4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.5-62.4</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;59.5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due Dates and Late Policy

All course due dates are identified on the Course Schedule which is available in HuskyCT. Deadlines are based on Eastern Standard Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.

Late assignments are unfair to those who turned their work in on time, and compromises the evaluation process. For the individual student, however, turning work in late is better than doing a less-than-satisfactory job, and far better than not doing it at all. As such, late work is accepted based on this policy:
• -20% for late work submitted within 24 hours of the due date.
• -30% for late work submitted within 48 hours of the due date.
• -40% for late work submitted within 72 hours of the due date.
• -50% for late work submitted within 96 hours of the due date.
• No work will be accepted later than 4 days (96 hours) past the due date.

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback & grades via HuskyCT within one week. I will respond to email messages within a half day. Feedback and grades for the preparation quizzes will be available after the due dates for all preparation quizzes. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important standards, policies and resources, which include:

• The Student Code
  o Academic Integrity
  o Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
• Copyrighted Materials
• Netiquette and Communication
• Adding or Dropping a Course
• Academic Calendar
• Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
• Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University’s Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from Blackboard’s website)

In this course, you will be using ProctorU, which is an online proctored exam service. If you have special accommodations visit their Accessibility statement: Click here
**Software Requirements**

The technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](https://www.blackboard.com/en/accessibility), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](https://www.blackboard.com/en/privacy-policy))
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](https://www.adobe.com/accessibility), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](https://www.adobe.com/privacy/))
- Microsoft Office ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](https://www.microsoft.com/accessibility), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](https://www.microsoft.com/privacy))
  *If you do not have access to MS Word you can access MS Office products using UConn's virtual computer lab: SkyBox*
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
- **ProctorU Account** (See more details in HuskyCT)

**Help**

[Technical and Academic Help](https://www.huskyct.uconn.edu/help/) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](https://www.huskyct.uconn.edu/). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the [Help Center](https://www.huskyct.uconn.edu/help/). You also have [24x7 Course Support](https://www.huskyct.uconn.edu/help/) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

**Minimum Technical Skills**

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.
- Navigate and use ProctorU successfully for your final exam.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](https://www.huskyct.uconn.edu/help/) page for more information.

**Evaluation of the Course**

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](https://www.oire.uconn.edu/) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.