CSPS218G: Earth, Life, and Time Colloquium
Fall 2009
CCC1100 Mon, 3:30-4:50 pm
ELT Website: http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/
Course Website: http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/syl218GF09.html
ELMS Blackboard Website: http://elms.umd.edu/ Course ID: 200908_CPSP218G_THOLTZ

INSTRUCTORS:
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TEACHING ASSISTANT
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NOTE: It is your responsibility as a student to completely read through and understand this syllabus. If you have questions about it, please contact Dr. Holtz or Dr. Merck. You will be held responsible for following all requirements of this syllabus.

COURSE ORGANIZATION: One meeting per week, five weekend field trips (one required).

REQUIRED READINGS: This semester there are two required texts:
Reading assignments must be done by the classtime listed.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND PHILOSOPHY: This semester explores the interactions of natural history and Humanity, including the influence of the natural world in shaping ancient and modern cultures; the impact of human technologies (ancient and modern) on the living and non-living world; and the influence of our understanding (and often misunderstanding) of Science upon contemporary society. Throughout this course, consider how our readings, lectures, and activities address the following question:
• How is the scientific understanding of the physical world and its living components (including our own species, our behavior, and our society) more completely comprehended when we take into account time (whether the “deep time” of evolution and geology, or the smaller scale of human history)?

CLASSROOM POLICIES: You should bring the following to every single colloquium meeting:
• A writing implement
• A notebook (containing this syllabus)
• The text for that section of the course
• A willingness to participate constructively, both in small groups and in the class as a whole
• A readiness and ability to discuss the readings for that week

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This semester we will have a number of small-group in-class projects. We expect everyone to help move tables and chairs when necessary for a particular project, and to help restore the tables and chairs to the “neutral” position when we are done. Many hands make light work!

During classtime:

- **PLEASE** be courteous to your fellow students and your faculty, and do not engage in side conversations. Even what you might think are hushed whispers in the back row can be heard all the way up front, and are disruptive to the attention of your classmates who are interested in getting a good grade in the class.
- All electronic modes of communication (mobile phones, pagers, etc.) must be turned “off” or be in silent mode.
- Laptops may be used **ONLY** for taking notes and/or following along with webnotes for the class. If you are found to be using your laptop for other purposes you will be asked to shut it down. If you fail to do this, you will be considered “absent” for that day.
- No personal electronic listening devices (e.g., CD players, MP3 players, personal radios, etc.) will be allowed.
- No reading of material not germane to the class activity will be allowed.

Finally, please do not leave any debris behind: pick up all food/beverage containers, papers, newspapers, etc. near your seat and on your desk when you leave.

**ATTENDANCE**: Given the nature of the course and program, participation in colloquium meetings is **MANDATORY**. It is up to you to make certain that your presence has been recorded for every class.

- **Recording Your Presence**: On days with quizzes and/or group projects, your presence will be taken from these items. On other days, there will be a sign-up sheet. It is your responsibility to make certain that you have signed the quiz, project report, or sign up sheet.
  - Students observed leaving the colloquium before 4:50 or before it is formally dismissed will be counted absent.
  - **NOTE**: We expect students to adhere to proper academic decorum during colloquia. This means focusing your attention on presentations, refraining from conversations or activities that are not relevant (e.g., reading newspapers, doing homework for other classes, etc.), and showing proper respect for student, faculty, and guest presenters. *We reserve the right to count you absent from colloquium if you fail to uphold this standard!*

- **Excused Absences**: If you have a legitimate reason for being absent, such as a family emergency, unavoidable academic conflict, or other excuse according the University’s guidelines, we will usually excuse your absence. However you must notify us in a timely fashion. Requests for the excusing of an absence **will not be considered** after two workdays from the absence. Please use the Excused Absence Report form from http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/rtfs/absence.pdf. **NOTE**: the next colloquium meeting is **too late** for requests for excuses.
  - Even if you miss a class from an excused absence, you are still held responsible for material during that class, included graded assignments such as quizzes and small group projects. See the faculty about arrangements for a make up. If the small group project is such that it cannot be done alone, it will not be factored into your grade if you have an excused absence that you informed the faculty about within two workdays from the absence.
  - **Religious Observances**: The University System of Maryland policy provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs, students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. **Notice should be provided as soon as possible but no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period (September 14).**

- **Unexcused Absences**: All other absences are considered unexcused absence. You may have one unexcused absence that does not directly affect your grade (except for missed quizzes or small group projects: see below). Each subsequent unexcused absence lowers your final course grade by 10 points.
  - If you miss a quiz or small group project because of an unexcused absence, you will not be allowed to make it up.
POLICY ON GRADES: There are eight components to the grade, each of which is worth a certain percentage of the total. These are Field Trip Report (15%), Small Projects (20%), Quizzes (20%), Mini-Poster Project (5%); Media Report (10%), Practicum Proposal (10%), Practicum Learning Contract (10%), and ELT 3-Semester Review (10%). Here are the details:

1) Field Trip Report: (15%) This semester there will be five (5) field trips. It is mandatory that every student participates in one (1) of these trips. These trips have only minimal expenses; typically the Metro fare and/or lunch. These trips are:
   a) Oct. 3 (Saturday), Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Edgewater, MD
   b) Oct. 25 (Sunday), Maryland Science Center, Baltimore, MD
   c) Nov. 8 (Sunday), National Museum of Natural History “Western Cultures Hall” and National Museum of American History “Science in American Life”, Washington, DC
   d) Nov. 15 (Sunday), National Air & Space Museum “Looking at Earth”, “Explore the Universe”, and “Exploring the Planets”, Washington, DC
   e) Nov. 21 (Saturday), Koshland Museum of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C.
   If you do not go on any field trip, this part of your grade will be a 0. However, you may go on all field trips if you like. You may NOT use a report on a field trip that you also did last year for CPSP 118G to fulfill this grade requirement and/or extra credit!

2) Small Projects: (20%) Throughout the semester there will be a series of small assignments; some in-class, some take home. Those in-class will be conducted in small groups (to be created on those dates), with your results handed in at the end of that classtime. Everyone in each small group receives the same grade for that day’s work.

3) Quizzes: (25%) To verify that you are, in fact, mastering the material of the course, six (6) scheduled quizzes will be administered during the semester. We will automatically drop the lowest of the six grades.
   NOTE: Quiz materials will cover both the classes and the readings.

4) Mini-Poster Project: (5%) In the mid-semester we will have a small workshop teaching the basics of raster and vector graphics. You will be responsible for creating a small poster concerning your ELT experiences using these software packages; successful completion of this project is worth 5% of the total.

5) Media Report: (10%) How faithfully does the news media transmit scientific information? In this project you will choose a news report based on a particular new scientific study, find the original paper on which that report was based, and compare and contrast what is said in the original paper against what is said in the news report. Your report will be a web-based project.

6) Practicum Proposal: (10%) All ELT students must participate in a practicum in order to complete their Citation. While the work for the practicum will be done after this semester, we use this semester to help you organize your projects. By November 9 you will have to turn in a proposal for your practicum work, giving a preliminary view of a) where you will be doing your work; b) what that work will likely entail; and c) what you expect to get out of this project. Failure to provide a proposal will not only mean loss of 10% of your grade, but it will also prevent you from receiving any credit from the practicum!!

7) Learning Contract: (5%) The second practicum-related portion of your grade this semester is the Learning Contract. This is a formal agreement between you, your site supervisor, and our office, making clear the tasks and hours for which you will be responsible and the credit level to which your practicum course will be given. The Learning Contract is due on the last colloquium day of the semester (December 7). Failure to provide a proposal will not only mean loss of 10% of your grade, but it will also prevent you from receiving any credit from the practicum!! You can download the Learning Contract from http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/pracforms.html.

8) ELT 3-Semester Review: (10%) Also due the last day of classes, you should write up a short report detailing your experiences with the Earth, Life & Time Program so far. This will be mounted as a unique webpage linked to your ELT site. Specifics about the review will be given later, but your target audience
will be prospective incoming students. A template is available at http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/templates/threesemester.html.

GRADE SCALE (Course): ≥90, A; 80-89, B; 70-79, C; 60-69, D; <60, F. “+” and “-” grades are given to the top and bottom two-point range, respectively, within each grade.

GRADE SCALE (Small Projects): +, 100; √+, 90; √, 80; √-, 70; -, 60; 0, 0 points

EXTRA CREDIT: ELT offers several different means of earning extra credit this semester. You earn 5 points maximum extra credit per item, up to a total of two items (i.e., 10 points total). Below are the options and requirements for Academic and Service extra credit. You may do two items in one category, or one in each.

Academic: You may write an additional report on colloquium-related academic material, and mount this report as a separate page on your website. Topics could include:

- A second field trip report beyond the one required.
- A reaction paper based on any full-length chapter from the course books.
- A reaction paper to any of the Supplementary Readings for the semester listed on the website http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/readings.html
- A reaction paper to a non-classroom academic presentation on campus, such as a departmental seminar.
- A reaction paper to some other academic event: check with the ELT faculty to make sure it qualifies.

Reports for field trips should follow the format assigned for that trip, including the specific questions required. Reaction papers are reports that would address both a summary of the material encountered as well as your thoughts and comments on this material and how it relates to related matter you may have encountered (in colloquium, other classes, etc.) Reaction papers require you to show insight into the matters concerned, not a simple retelling of what was there nor your “feelings” about it. See the Reaction Paper template at http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/templates/reactionpaper.html.

Full extra credit will only be earned if all format issues are properly completed (sufficient length, proper html coding, no spelling or factual errors, etc.). Problems with these issues will result in a decrease in the extra credit grade received, as per field trip and other web-based reports. All Academic extra credit assignments must be online by the end of classes (i.e., before finals).

Service: College Park Scholars seeks to promote civic responsibility among its students and faculty. To help fulfill Scholars’ commitment to community service, we offer extra credit to your grade total for students who participate in some form of community service this semester.

- You cannot be paid for this service activity, nor be receiving credit for it in any other classes, nor be doing this service for disciplinary purpose for some other entity on campus (i.e., no “double-dipping”)
- This service must be conducted between Move-In Day and the last day of exams this semester
- This activity must be approved by the Faculty Directors of ELT, or else you will not receive credit for it. Your best bet is to get it pre-approved, so you know in advance if it will count for extra credit!
- You must turn in an Activity Report form (see http://www.geol.umd.edu/~jmerck/eltsite/rtfs/activityreport.pdf) signed and dated by yourself and a site/activity supervisor in order to get credit
- This extra credit can be earned by any of a number of activities. The list below is by no means exhaustive, but gives you an example of some of the sorts of activities that would count:
  - Serve as the ELT sophomore representative on the Scholars Student Advisory Board
  - Serve as a Scholars Ambassador, or in Student Program Council, or in the Residence Halls Association
  - Go to a high school to promote Scholars, and UMCP
  - Participate in a Voting Drive
  - Donate blood
  - Volunteer at a clinic, shelter, or other similar institution
  - Volunteer at a non-profit organization
  - Serve as an officer in an SGA group
  - Serve as a Student Representative on Service Day
  - Volunteer for Scholars on the Hill
COMMUNICATION: Because many of our communications will be by e-mail, all students are required to maintain e-mail accounts and arrange for access to the Internet. Although not a course requirement per se, students should get into the habit of checking their e-mail daily. Failure to do so may cause you to miss crucial course information. A list of available computer labs on campus can be found at http://www.oit.umd.edu/wheretogo/seeTable.cfm.

At your earliest convenience, log on to http://www.testudo.umd.edu/apps/saddr/ and update your electronic and mailing addresses. This will help ensure that important information from College Park Scholars faculty and staff reach you in a timely and accurate manner.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The University of Maryland has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html

The University of Maryland is one of a small number of universities with a student-administered Honors Code and an Honors Pledge, available on the web at http://www.jpo.umd.edu/aca/honorpledge.html. The code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The University Senate encourages instructors to ask students to write the following signed statement on each examination or assignment: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).”

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have a documented disability, you should contact Disability Support Services 0126 Shoemaker Hall. Each semester students with documented disabilities should apply to DSS for accommodation request forms which you can provide to your professors as proof of your eligibility for accommodations. The rules for eligibility and the types of accommodations a student may request can be reviewed on the DSS web site at http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html.

COURSE EVALUATIONS: CourseEvalUM will be open for students to complete their evaluations for Fall 2009 courses between Tuesday, December 1, and Sunday, December 13. Students can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete their evaluations, beginning December 1. You will be alerted about these dates and provided more information closer to that time, and students will be alerted via their official University e-mail account.

Students who complete evaluations for all of their courses in the previous semester (excluding summer), can access the posted results via Testudo’s CourseEvalUM Reporting link for any course on campus that has at least a 70% response rate. You can find more information, including periodic updates, at the IRPA course evaluation website: https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/CourseEval/fac_faq.shtml

The expectation is that all students will complete these. This is YOUR chance to anonymously evaluate this class: please use this opportunity!
MAIN SYLLABUS

8/31/09  Introduction & Class Logistics; Introduction to the Practicum
         Why Everyone (Not Just Scientists) Should Know About Science

9/6/09   ELT BBQ (after Freshmen Metro Scavenger Hunt)

9/7/09   LABOR DAY (Campus Closed)

9/14/09  How Farmers Conquered the Earth pt. 1
         Reading: Diamond Prologue & Part I (Chaps. 1-3)

9/21/09  Quiz 1
         How Farmers Conquered the Earth pt. 2; Workshop: Graphics
         Reading: Diamond Part II (Chaps. 4-6)

9/28/09  You Can Take the Hominid Out of the Savanna, But…; Human Evolutionary Biology meets the
         Demands of Civilization
         Reading: Diamond Part II (Chaps. 8-10)

10/3/09  (Sat.) Field Trip I: Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Edgewater, MD

10/5/09  Quiz 2
         Natural Resources: “Farming”, “Mining”, and the Cycles of Nature
         Reading: Diamond Part III (Chaps: 11-12)

10/12/09 Energy Resources [Please bring a calculator!]
         Reading: Diamond Part III (Chaps. 13-14)

10/19/09 Quiz 3
         Climate Change: The REAL High Cost of Fuel!
         Reading: Diamond Epilogue

10/25/09 (Sun.) Field Trip II: Maryland Science Center, Baltimore, MD

10/26/09 Produce, Plagues & People
         DUE: Graphics Project
         Reading: Park Chaps. 1-2

11/2/09  Quiz 4
         The Biodiversity Crisis
         Reading: Park Chaps. 3- 4

11/8/09 (Sun.) Field Trip III: National Museum of Natural History “Western Cultures Hall” and National
         Museum of American History “Science in American Life”, Washington, DC

11/9/09  Who Pays for Science?
         DUE: Practicum Proposal
         Reading: Park Chaps. 5-6

11/15/09 (Sun.) Field Trip IV: National Air & Space Museum “Looking at Earth”, “Explore the Universe”,
         and “Exploring the Planets”, Washington, DC

11/16/09 Communicating Science: Real Science and the News Media
         DUE: Media Report
         Reading: Park Chaps. 7-8
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>11/21/09</td>
<td><strong>Field Trip V: Koshland Museum of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC</strong></td>
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<td>11/23/09</td>
<td><strong>Quiz 5</strong></td>
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<td>Mad Scientists in Media and History: Science Done Badly and Bad Science</td>
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<td>Reading: Park Chaps. 9-10</td>
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<td>11/30/09</td>
<td>Science as a Defense Against Tyranny</td>
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<td>12/1/09 (Tues.)</td>
<td>Online Course Evaluations available</td>
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<td>12/7/09</td>
<td><strong>Quiz 6</strong></td>
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<td>Grandeur in This View of Life</td>
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<td><strong>DUE:</strong> Learning Contract &amp; ELT 3-Semester Review</td>
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<td>12/13/09 (Sun.)</td>
<td>Online Course Evaluations ends: please complete your evaluations before this date</td>
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