

GEOL 102 Historical Geology:

The History of Earth and Life



Spring Semester 2022

Instructor

Dr. Thomas R. Holtz, Jr., Principal Lecturer, Department of Geology

Office: GEO 4106 Office Hours: Wed 11 am-noon or by Appointment

Email (preferred): tholtz@umd.edu Phone: 301-405-6965

Classrooms

PLS 1146 9:00-9:50 am MWF (Lecture)

GEO 2107 2:00-5:00 pm W (Lab)

Texts

Textbook: *Earth System History 4th Edition* by Steven M. Stanley & John A. Luczaj (2015, W.H. Freeman & Co., ISBN-13 978-1429255264)

Supplementary Text: *Maryland's Geology* by Martin F. Schmidt, Jr. (2010, Schiffer Publishers, ISBN-13 978-0764335938)

Website: <https://www.geol.umd.edu/~tholtz/G102/>

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, every student should be able to:

- Identify the major techniques used by geologists to assess the paleoenvironments and sequence of events found in the rock record
- Recognize the sequence of and interrelationships between major events in the history of the Earth, its surface, and its life forms
- Properly classify different types of sedimentary rocks & structures and major groups of fossilizing organisms from hand samples
- Correctly interpret geological cross-sections, fence-diagrams & other stratigraphic charts, and geologic maps

Course Organization

Lectures: 3 per week (MWF 9-9:50 am, PLS 1146); Labs: 1 per week (W 2-5 pm, GEO 2107); 1 optional field trip

COURSE GRADES

Grade Scale

The numbers given represent the thresholds that must be passed in order to reach that grade (for example, A+ is 97.000... and any number greater). There is no rounding for letter grades; the thresholds must be passed. F is any grade below D-. Thresholds: 97, A+; 93, A; 90, A-; 87, B+; 83, B; 80, B-; 77, C+; 73, C; 70, C-; 67, D+; 63, D; 60, D-; < 60, F.

The Final Grade is the algebraic sum based on the numerical grades.

Grade Components

ITEM	PERCENTAGE
Midterm Exam 1	20%

Midterm Exam 2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Labs	25%
Pre-Course Knowledge Survey	2%
Quizzes	13%

Midterm Exams (20% each): Two online exams on Feb. 28-Mar. 2 and April 11-13, respectively. For each of these there will be a section comprised of true/false, matching, multiple choice, and similar type questions, as well as a few short answer questions and an essay. These exams are open note but timed (60 minutes) and are subject to the University's Honor Pledge; you may not seek help from students or other people in doing these. If you encounter a technical problem, please contact ELMS@umd.edu for help (and Dr. Holtz so that he is aware of your situation).

Final Exam (20%): The online final exam during the regularly scheduled exam season. It is cumulative for the entire course, although it focuses on material from the second exam onward. Format is similar to the mid-term exams, but will be timed for 120 minutes. The exam will be available **SUNDAY to TUESDAY MAY 16-18**: please plan your end-of-semester travel (if any...) accordingly!! (It that means informing your parents about this now, please do so!).

Labs (25%): Essentially every week there will be a lab. Labs are due the week after they are assigned, allowing students time to examine specimens over the course of the week if they wish. There is no separate lab manual for this course: lab materials (pdfs and videos) are provided on ELMS. Labs are turned in on ELMS: either as entries or uploads in an ELMS "quiz". There will be a video to watch **PRIOR** to each lab: you are responsible for watching this in advance.

Pre-Course Knowledge Survey (2%): In order to assess your current knowledge and memory of the pre-requisite knowledge for this course, an ELMS survey is assigned covering issues of basic physical geology. This must be completed by the end of the first Tuesday of classes (**Jan. 25**). The goal here is to see what you know and remember: you are graded for having completed the survey, not your answers on the survey. **DO NOT PANIC!** But do not use outside sources: the task here is to see what you remember of previous geology courses.

Quizzes (13%): Weekly quizzes will be given on ELMS, starting in the second Friday of classes (except for weeks in which there is also a mid-term exam). The quizzes might include information from the labs but emphasizes the material from the lectures. These will

typically be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, or true/false. The lowest **two** (2) quizzes will automatically be dropped: this is how missed quizzes will be accommodated.

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Expectations & Attendance

Historical Geology is a foundational course for the major. Many of your later courses—Sedimentology & Stratigraphy, Structural Geology, Geochemistry, Field Geology, and perhaps even your Senior Thesis—will draw upon methods, concepts, and terms derived from this class.

If you hope to earn a good grade for the class, and to retain the information for future classes, make sure that you keep up with the readings (from the textbooks and the online lecture notes), and make sure you that you understand the concepts and information. If you are having problems, feel free to ask questions (in class, by email, or in Office Hours)

NOTE: Attendance means more than mere presence: it means “paying attention”. Please take out your ear buds and refrain from texting/web-browsing/doing homework/etc. in class and in lab.

Mask Policy

President Pines provided clear expectations to the University about the [wearing of masks for unvaccinated students](#). KN95 masks over the nose and mouth are required while you are indoors at all times. There are no exceptions. Students not wearing a mask will be given a warning and asked to wear one, or will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. Students who have additional issues with the mask expectation after a first warning will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for failure to comply with a directive of University officials.

Communication

Communication in this course will primarily be by means of the ELMS Inbox email system. Even given its online nature, there is the possibility that due to inclement weather or other unexpected emergencies, the University may close. Please consult the University main webpage (<http://www.umd.edu>) or call 301-405-7669 (SNOW) to confirm such cancellations. Dr. Holtz will contact students via ELMS in order to inform them concerning delays of due dates for projects to be handed in or for exams: typically, these will be shifted until the next available day.

Memorization

As part of the nature of the course, there will be a lot of memorization (less than a foreign language class, but more than that found in more mathematically-oriented introductory science classes). This will include lots of anatomical, geological, and paleontological terms, as well as evolutionary and temporal relationships. If you have difficulty memorizing, this may not be the class for you. Also, if there are words or concepts with which you are not

familiar, feel free to ask Dr. Holtz (in class, after class, over email, etc.) for an explanation or clarification.

General Policies

The University has provided a page on Academic policies at <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>. Each student is responsible for reviewing this page with regards to issues of Academic Integrity; the Code of Student Conduct; Sexual Misconduct; Discrimination; Accessibility; Attendance, Absences, or Missed Assignments; Student Rights Regarding Undergraduate Courses; Official UMD Communication; Mid-Term Grades; Complaints About Course Final Grades; Copyright and Intellectual Property; Final Exams and Course Evaluations; and Campus Resources.

Laptop/Smartphone/Tablet Use

You will need to upload documents to ELMS, take online quizzes, and occasionally watch online lectures this semester, so please make certain that you have access to appropriate hardware, software, and Internet connections. If you are concerned about your ability to connect remotely for this course, please consult the following information about solutions provided by the Division of Information Technology:

- General Technology Information, including laptop loaner requests: <https://it.umd.edu/tech-resources>
- Network Resources: <https://it.umd.edu/tech-resources#network>

Course Evaluations

CourseEvalUM will be open for students to complete their evaluations during the last two weeks of the semester. Students can access CourseEvalUM through ELMS to complete their evaluations. 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.

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Lecture Schedule

DATE	TOPIC
<i>Week of Jan. 24</i>	1/24 Lecture: Introduction: It's About Time
	1/25: Pre-Course Knowledge Survey due on ELMS

	<p>1/26 Lecture: Every Rock is a Record of History: Historical Approaches to Lithology</p> <p>1/26 Lab: Introduction to Lab</p> <p>1/28 Lecture: Terrestrial Sedimentary Environments</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 1, 2, 5</p>
<i>Week of Jan. 31</i>	<p>1/31 Lecture: Fluvial & Deltaic Environments & Walther's Law</p> <p>2/2 Lecture: Coastal & Marine Environments; Transgressions & Regressions</p> <p>2/2 Lab: Sedimentary Rock Classification</p> <p>2/4 Lecture: Physical Stratigraphy</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 5, 6</p> <p>2/4: Quiz 1 due</p>
<i>Week of Feb. 7</i>	<p>2/7 Lecture: Index Fossils, Correlations & Radiometric Dating</p> <p>2/9 Lecture: Lithostratigraphy</p> <p>2/9 Zoom Lab: Sedimentary Structures & Depositional Environments</p> <p>2/11 Lecture: Biostratigraphy & the Geologic Timescale</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 6</p> <p>2/11: Quiz 2 due</p>
<i>Week of Feb. 14</i>	<p>2/14 Lecture: Another Geography: Plate Tectonics</p> <p>2/16 Lecture: Every Valley Shall Be Exalted...: Orogenesis I</p> <p>2/16 Lab: The Ordering of Geological Events</p> <p>2/18 Lecture: ...And Every Mountain & Hill Made Low: Orogenesis II & Geochemical Cycles</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 8, 9, 10</p> <p>2/18: Quiz 3 due</p>
<i>Week of Feb. 21</i>	<p>2/21 Lecture: Fossils & Fossilization</p> <p>2/23 Lecture: Evolution I: On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection</p>

	<p>2/23 Lab: Biostratigraphy, Geochronology, Magnetostratigraphy</p> <p>2/25 Lecture: Evolution II: Patterns, Processes & Phylogeny</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 3, 4, 7</p> <p>2/25: Quiz 4 due</p>
<i>Week of Feb. 28</i>	<p>MIDTERM EXAM 1: Available online 2/28-3/2</p> <p>2/28 Lecture: Strange Eons: Introduction to the Precambrian & the Hadean Eon</p> <p>3/2 Lecture: The Archean Eon I</p> <p>3/2 Lab: Physical Stratigraphy</p> <p>3/4 Lecture: The Archean Eon II</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 11</p>
<i>Week of March 7</i>	<p>3/7 Lecture: The Proterozoic Eon I</p> <p>3/9 Lecture: The Proterozoic Eon II</p> <p>3/9 Lab: Introduction to Paleontology: Fossils and Fossilization</p> <p>3/11 Lecture: The Proterozoic Eon III</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 12</p> <p>3/11: Quiz 5 due</p>
<i>Week of March 14</i>	<p>3/14 Lecture: The Early Paleozoic Era I</p> <p>3/16 Lecture: The Early Paleozoic Era II</p> <p>3/16 Lab: Common Fossilizing Organisms</p> <p>3/18 Lecture: The Middle Paleozoic Era I</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 13, 14</p> <p>3/18: Quiz 6 due</p>
<i>Week of March 21</i>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>
<i>Week of March 28</i>	<p>3/28 Lecture: The Middle Paleozoic Era II</p>

	<p>3/30 Lecture: The Middle Paleozoic Era III</p> <p>3/30 Lab: Geologic Map Interpretation</p> <p>4/1 Lecture: The Late Paleozoic Era I</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 14, 15</p> <p>4/1: Quiz 7 due</p>
<i>Week of April 4</i>	<p>4/4 Lecture: The Late Paleozoic Era II</p> <p>4/6 Lecture: The Late Paleozoic Era III</p> <p>4/6 Lab: Precambrian Geology</p> <p>4/8 Lecture: The Late Paleozoic Era IV</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 15</p> <p>4/8: Quiz 8 due</p>
<i>Week of April 11</i>	<p>MIDTERM EXAM 2: Available online 4/11-13</p> <p>4/11 Lecture: The Early Mesozoic Era I</p> <p>4/13 Lecture: The Early Mesozoic Era II</p> <p>4/13 Lab: Appalachian & Other Paleozoic Geology</p> <p>4/15 Lecture: The Early Mesozoic Era III</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 16</p>
<i>Week of April 18</i>	<p>4/18 Lecture: The Cretaceous Period I</p> <p>4/20 Lecture: The Cretaceous Period II</p> <p>4/20 Lab: Cordilleran Geology</p> <p>4/22 Lecture: The Cretaceous Period III</p> <p>Readings: Chap. 17</p> <p>4/22: Quiz 9 due</p>
<i>Week of April 25</i>	<p>4/25 Lecture: The Paleogene Period I</p> <p>4/27 Lecture: The Paleogene Period II</p> <p>4/27 Lab: Post-Paleozoic Geology</p> <p>4/29 Lecture: The Neogene Period I</p>

	<p>Readings: Chaps, 18, 19</p> <p>4/29: Quiz 10 due</p>
<i>Week of May 2</i>	<p>5/2 Lecture: The Neogene Period II</p> <p>5/4 Lecture: The Quaternary Period I</p> <p>5/4 Zoom Lab: Quaternary Geology and Climate Change</p> <p>5/6 Lecture: The Quaternary Period II: To the Anthropocene and Beyond!</p> <p>Readings: Chaps. 19, 20</p> <p>5/6: Quiz 11 due</p>
<i>Week of May 9</i>	<p>5/9 Lecture: Historical Geologic Tour of North America</p>
<i>Week of May 16</i>	<p>FINAL EXAM: Available online 5/15-17</p>

GEOL102 Laboratory Information: GEO 2107 2:00-5:00 pm

Lab Supplies

- **Lab Manual:** There is actually no separate lab manual to buy this semester. You will be provided with background readings and videos on ELMS, as well as a packet of questions to answer. The answers for the lab are due online on ELMS; some will be entered as online quiz questions; others will require you to scan and upload charts, maps, etc.
- **Hand Lens:** A 10x hand lens for observing specimens is very useful, although you can go with higher magnification if you wish. There is a very reasonably priced set of hand lenses you can get on Amazon.com at https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07KLPJ1PG/ref=dp_prsubs_2, but you can find them at other sources, too.
- **(Recommended) Drawing Tools:** A colored pencil set, and a ruler/straight edge will be helpful in some of the labs.
- **Recommended:** Access to a scanner to make uploadable versions of your maps and charts.

Lab Policies

- The point of the lab is to hone your skills as an observer and to teach you the methods of the field. It is vital that you actually examine the specimens yourselves so that you can discern the various features and attributes of the rocks and fossils.
- Please watch the introductory video and read the introductory material on ELMS by the time we meet in lab.
- Labs are due the next lab meeting (1 week later). If they are turned in by the next class time after that (Friday) there will be a 10% grade reduction; on the following Monday, a total of 30% grade reduction; and a full week late will garner a 50% grade penalty. Labs won't be accepted for a grade later than 1 week overdue (barring legitimate extenuating circumstances.)
- You are encouraged to collaborate and interact with each other and with Dr. Holtz while working on the labs. However, all work you turn in must be your own.
- If you are having problems, don't be shy; ask for help!
- DON'T be a specimen hog! Make sure that others get adequate access to the hand samples.
- ALWAYS return specimens to their appropriate boxes.
- We have limited samples, so please be careful with them. Doubly so with the fossils!!
- Use the dilute HCl wisely:

- Use small drops, only leave it on long enough to validate whether there is effervescence or not; and wipe it up afterwards.
 - Leaving acid on the hand samples will allow the reaction to run its course and leave a reaction rind on the rock. This will mislead students in the future)
- In general, only use acid on fresh surfaces
- In general, don't drop acid on the fossils.