

GEOL 5101 – Graduate Seminar

Fall - 2023

Lecture Times: Th: 1-1:50 pm
Room: WSB 223
Instructor: Dr. Tom Shiller
Office: WSB 319

Office Hours: MWF, 11-12:00 pm;
Tuesday, 11-2:00 pm; or by appointment
e-mail: thomas.shiller@sulross.edu

Course Purpose:

This course will focus on the topic of forensic geology. Students will learn the basic methods used by professional criminologists who use Earth materials to solve crimes. The course will also cover forensic techniques used to interpret the geological record including taphonomy, biostratinomy, and ichnology.

Geology Graduate (MS) Student Learning Objectives (SLO's):

1. The student will be able to apply diverse bodies of Geologic information in the area of advanced sedimentary geology.
2. The student will be able to apply diverse bodies of Geologic information in the area of advanced igneous/metamorphic processes, structure and tectonics.
3. The student will be able to apply diverse bodies of Geologic information to field and lab research and techniques.
4. The student will be able to communicate diverse bodies of Geologic information through the standard scientific format of an oral presentation based on a written paper.

Discussion: Students will be graded on their participation in class discussions.

Homework: There will be two homework assignments given during the semester, each pertaining to topics discussed in recent lectures.

Report: Students will be required to write a short research report on a given topic.

Field Trip: There will be a weekend field trip (date d.b.d) during the semester. Students will be required to attend and complete a short post-field-trip assessment.

Points:

Participation = 20%
Class Discussions = 20%
Homework = 20%
Report = 20%
Field Trip = 20%

Your accumulated grades will be recorded on Blackboard in the Grade Center.

Letter Grading: Final course grade will be based on a percentage of the total points as follows:

90.00-100% = A
80.00-89.90% = B
70.00-79.90% = C
60.00-69.90% = D
Less than 60.00% = F

Attendance and Make-up Policy:

The only acceptable excuses for missing class are those due to illness, approved Sul Ross sanctioned events, and observation of religious holidays. All excused absences **must** be documented on paper. Please inform the professor at least 1 week prior to missing class (e-mail, note on office door, etc...). With an appropriate excuse, you must make up missed quizzes/exams **within 10 days** of the last day of the absence or you have failed to meet your course responsibilities and will receive a zero.

University policy dictates that your instructor can drop you with an F from the course after 6 absences from TR classes or after 9 absences from MWF classes.

Classroom Conduct:

The Student handbook states under Student Misconduct, number 21, "Such prohibition includes disorderly classroom conduct that obstructs, interferes with, inhibits and/or disrupts teaching and/or classroom activities." Behavior which is included in this category: 1) persistent talking to ones' neighbors during lecture, 2) coming to class late or leaving early, 3) the use of cellular phones or MP3 devices in the classroom. **CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF IN CLASS.** This includes texting, emailing and social networking. (*If you are a member of an EMS/VFD group or have a child in day care and they must be able to reach you, let me know and we will discuss.*) Offenders of this policy will be asked once to stop and 5 points will be taken from their grade. If it occurs a second time, the offender will be instructed to leave the classroom, and there will be a meeting with the Dean of Student Life. If there are further incidents, UDPS will be called and offenders will be physically ejected from the classroom and will likely be expelled from the University.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED:

Any student caught cheating on an exam or quiz will receive an automatic **zero** on that assignment. If a student is caught cheating second time, additional disciplinary actions will be taken. Any student plagiarizing information on an assignment will receive an automatic zero for that assignment.

Students Needing Special Accommodations:

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartz@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

List of topics for the Fall 2023 Semester:

- Review of sediment and common framework minerals
- Introduction to forensic geology
- Forensic methods
- Forensic geology cases
- Taphonomy, biostratigraphy, and ichnology ("forensic paleontology")