GEL 50 Introduction to Physical Geology Syllabus

Instructor:

Dr. Magali Billen (she/her/hers); first-gen faculty
Room 2129 Earth & Physical Sciences Building

Office hours: Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:30 pm (or by appt)

Teaching Assistant: Alex Lombardo
Office hours: TBD (see CANVAS)

Meeting Times/Locations:

Mon/Wed/Fri: 11:00-11:50 am, Roessler 55

Important Dates:

1. Midterm 1: Monday, February 3 (in class)
2. Midterm 2: Monday, March 2 (in class)
3. Final Exam: Tuesday, March 17 at 8 am

Overview:

Geology can be thought of as the CSI-science of the earth: we use all sorts of tools from physics, chemistry, biology and mathematics and a range of observations to piece together what is happening on the earth today and what has happened in the past.

The physical geology course is the first rigorous introduction to a variety of data and concepts that provide the foundation for all types of geologic study. Learning this foundational knowledge is what will eventually allow you to decipher the tectonic history of a terrane of rocks, or figure out the inner workings of volcanoes.

In this course we will focus on a variety of geological systems and processes, how they work generally and how they differ in different geologic settings. Emphasis will be placed on how different types of observations of the rocks and laboratory experiments make it possible to figure out how the systems work, what processes are occurring and how these are preserved in the rock record.

Textbook:

Understanding Earth, 7th Edition, by Grotzinger and Jordan

There is a reading document (on CANVAS) that goes over how to use the textbook to prepare for lecture, and effectively identify important information and extract it from the textbook.

The list of study questions for each chapter (available on CANVAS) will help to focus your reading. It is helpful to read questions for each chapter before doing the reading.

Grading:

In-class questions & feedback	5 %
Weekly Assignments:	20 %
Midterm 1:	25 %
Midterm 2:	25 %
Final Exam:	25 %

Weekly Assignments

These are weekly homework assignments that will be posted at the beginning of the quarter. Check the canvas syllabus for assignment deadlines. They are intended to help prepare you for the exams. Homework is submitted online via CANVAS.

Exams:

These are multiple-choice exams. Expect to see graphs and figures from the book and lectures and questions from the homework. Exams are cumulative. Examples questions from previous exams are available on CANVAS

Important Links:

- Academic Code of Conduct
- UC Student Resources - FAQ
- Aggie Compass (student food/finance/housing needs)
- Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs