Geology of Death Valley and the Mojave Desert
March 4-12, 2016

PROFESSOR
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COURSES
GEOL 452 – Mojave Field Experience

ACCOMMODATIONS
Camping/Hotel

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
This course is centered on a geology field course to Death Valley and the Mojave Desert during Spring Break, March 4-12, 2016. Geology is a field-based discipline, yet the opportunities for a broad range of field experiences are limited in the region surrounding WKU. This field course will include several two-day field mapping exercises in the Mojave desert, in addition to field exercises examining igneous and metamorphic rocks (neither of which is present in the WKU region), young volcanic centers, and “classic” field locales in Death Valley and the surrounding area.

These experiences are necessary to set a context for core geology courses in Structural Geology, Geomorphology, Igneous and Metamorphic Petrology, and Mineralogy. Furthermore, this field course will provide a geological context that students at WKU literally cannot experience anywhere else. Students will camp in parks or in the open, and travel by rented vans to field sites for work.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. To introduce students to the geology of Death Valley and the Mojave Desert, and a set of geological processes and conditions very different from those of western Kentucky.
2. To introduce students to field evidence for large-scale tectonic forces. Death Valley is a “classic” field site for studying the effects of large-scale extension of the Earth’s crust and for processes of erosion and geomorphological change in an arid environment.
3. To provide a setting for enhanced student research opportunities in the geosciences.
4. To provide a new field experience in science for the students at Western Kentucky University.
PROGRAM DETAILS

LOCATION: Death Valley National Park and locations in the Mojave Desert, CA

ACADEMIC TERM: Spring 2016: March 4 – 12

ITINERARY: (Subject to change)

March 4  Students travel to Las Vegas, NV
March 5  Drive to Death Valley National Park, set up campsites, explore the norther portion of park – Ubehebe Crater, etc; spend night at Furnace Creek and Texas Springs campgrounds
March 6  Explore structural/tectonic features of middle and north Death Valley Park; start at Mosaic Canyon (approx. 4 hour hike) and move southward through the Park – classic Death Valley; Artist’s Palette; Dante’s View; Badwater; Golden Canyon (2 hour hike); extensional tectonics
March 7  Leave Death Valley through the southern exit: more on Lake Manly: alluvial fans, faults in the southern portion: discuss erosion and effects of the rain in 2004; Lake Tecopa sediments and “castles;” welded ash layers; drive to Tecopa Hot Springs – spend the night at Tecopa Hot Springs Campground
March 8  Drive to Barstow – Rainbow Basin – Start mapping geology of Rainbow Basin – Spend night at Rainbow Basin – Owl Creek Campground
March 9  Finish mapping at Rainbow Basin – Independence Dike Swarm & granites by Fry Mountains
March 10 Drive back to Mojave Wilderness Area. Cima volcanic field – Cima dome – Kelso Dunes – Vulcan Iron Mine- Spend night in Mojave Preserve by Kelso Dunes
March 11 Mitchell Caverns; Hole-In-the-Wall; Cima Dome/Teutonia Peak – Spend night in Cima wilderness or perhaps in Las Vegas depending on the flights
March 12 Explore and drive back to Las Vegas; Hoover Dam and back to Kentucky
ELIGIBILITY

Student Eligibility - Program leaders may determine stricter eligibility requirements, but at a minimum, all applicants earning credit in a program would meet these requirements:

- Current WKU student eligible to enroll in WKU courses OR students from outside WKU may participate as visiting student,
- Good academic standing as defined in the Undergraduate Catalog or Graduate Catalog,
- A minimum of 16 years of age at time of departure (parental/legal guardian expressed, written consent required for those under 18 at time of departure) Refer to program green sheet for program specific details,
- No current disciplinary sanctions as verified by Judicial Affairs,
- Complete Study Away application and pay deposit,
- Complete pre-departure program,
- Full payment prior to departure, and
- Permission of instructor.

If a student completes a program without full payment prior to the departure, the student should receive an incomplete until the obligation is paid. DELO will inform faculty leaders if a student is in this situation prior to the Study Away term grade deadline.

BASE PACKAGE

Cost: TBD

Included in Base Package
- All lodging/camping accommodations during program
- Entrance fees for all program related activities and tips
- Group groceries
- Course-related ground transportation

Excluded from Base Package
- Items not explicated list in package
- Independent travel (non-program travel)
- Regular semester tuition
- Transportation to/from Las Vegas

Study Away courses are not eligible for employee tuition waivers or discounts.
Final program fee subject to change due to travel arrangements.

Green Sheet subject to change due to adjustment in program or pricing.
LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

TERMS & CONDITIONS

The student must inform Study Away directly and in writing (email accepted) if he or she chooses to withdraw from a program. No other statements of withdrawal will be considered as notification of withdrawal, therefore, the student will still be considered a program participant until this written notification is received. Program leaders are asked to direct students wishing to withdraw to the Study Away web site at www.wku.edu/studyaway/student/study-away-withdrawal-request.php. Penalties will be based on the notification date as listed in the Terms and Conditions section of the program details (Green Sheet).

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<th>Your TopNet Account will be billed according to the following Payment Schedule:</th>
<th>Penalty for Withdrawal or Non-payment:</th>
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| January 29, 2016– Application deadline. Program fee balance must be paid prior to program departure. Student applying after this date will be billed on a rolling basis. | Before January 1: 25% of program cost  
After January 15: 50% of program cost  
After February 1: 75% of program cost  
After February 10: 100% of program cost (No refund)  
If a balance remains after the payment due date, the participant may be dropped from the program. A student may remain in the program by providing an award notification from WKU's Student Financial Assistance that verifies ability to pay the program fee immediately after aid is received. |

* This is paid by student directly with a credit card. Not billed to student account.

The total amount due in your semester invoice may reflect the combined charges for multiple terms (i.e. Fall and Winter or Spring and Summer) and includes program fees for your Study Away program. Please see your TopNet account for a breakdown of amounts due per term. Refer to your Study Away program’s Green Sheet for final payment due dates and billing information. If you have any questions, please email study.away@wku.edu

LIABILITY DISCLAIMER

Western Kentucky University and its associates are not responsible for any loss due to theft, personal injury, flight or weather delays, negligence, or default of suppliers, or suppliers changing of itineraries. They and their associates are not responsible for any loss due to travel/flight delays or changes in travel plans due to Acts of Nature or other unforeseen circumstances, nor are we responsible for accidents and medical care. Tour services are furnished by independent contractors who are not agents or servants of Western Kentucky University. Refunds are not available for unused portions of the package.