Geology 499 – Professional Preparation in Geology

SPRING SEMESTER 2009

Instructor: Dr. Fred Siewers

Office and Office Hours
Office: EST, Room 309; phone: 745-5988; fred.siewers@wku.edu
Office Hours:
MW: 10:00 am – 11:30 am
TTh: 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
All other times available by appointment

Purpose of the Course: Geology 499 is a capstone course in geology that includes preparation for the required senior assessment, résumé writing, college-to-career transition, professional ethics and selected seminar topics. Outside speakers from industry and academics will be included.

Class Meeting time: 338 EST; 12:40-2:30 p.m. Fridays

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student shall:
• have demonstrated overall content knowledge in Geology.
• be prepared for beginning a professional career or entering graduate school
• understand geoscience career options
• understand the expectations placed on geoscience professionals including ethical issues.

Text: None required. Readings and review materials will be provided as appropriate.

Grading: This course is valued at 2 credit hours and will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. In order to earn a ‘Pass’ for the course, you must wholly and satisfactorily complete each of the following as instructed in class:

• Develop a résumé and cover letter – due date TBA
• Attend at least three departmental seminars and provide typed 1-2 page summary (some of the seminars can be outside the Department, but must be approved; see some potential dates below)
• Give a peer-reviewed, 15-20 minute oral presentation on a topic in geology
• Successively pass 5 essential knowledge in geology assessments (short quizzes, dates TBA)
• Actively participate in all class discussions
• Complete the ACAT Senior Assessment in Geology

Attendance: Your timely, regular attendance is required. There are thirteen scheduled two-hour class meetings this semester. If you miss three times for any reason, you will not pass!

University Policies
• Plagiarism: The academic work of a student must be his/her own. To represent written work taken from another source as one’s own is plagiarism. Plagiarism also includes lifting content directly from a source without giving credit. Plagiarism is a serious offense and a failing grade will be given on any course work where plagiarism is detected.
• **Schedule Change Policy**: It is the sole responsibility of the student to meet all deadlines with regard to adding, dropping, or changing the status of a course. Only in exceptional cases will a deadline be waived. The Student Schedule Exception form is used to initiate all waivers. This form requires a written description of the extenuating circumstances involved and the attachment of appropriate documentation. Poor academic performance, general malaise, or undocumented general stress factors are not considered as legitimate circumstances.

• **Disabilities/Special Accommodations**: Students with disabilities who require special accommodation (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must first contact the Office for Student Disability Services located in the Student Success Center, DUC A201. Phone: (270) 745-5004 voice or (270) 745-3030 TTY. Please do not request accommodations directly from me without first having obtained the appropriate letter of accommodation from that office.

• **Miscellany**: University policies, procedures, and deadlines will be followed in all matters without exception.

**Geology 499 – Preliminary Semester Schedule**

*Note*: This schedule is preliminary as I am waiting on firm commitments from outside speakers and organizations. All Essential Knowledge Quiz dates TBA. A more definite schedule is forthcoming.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>Résumé Preparation; Job Searches; Interview Preparation – 12:45 pm DUC Annex, Room A230</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2); TBA</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2); TBA</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2); TBA</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td>ACAT Review</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td>ACAT Review</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td>ACAT Review</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>Ethics in Professional Practice; ACAT Review</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>April 17</td>
<td><strong>Senior Assessment – ACAT Exam</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2); TBA</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2); TBA</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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Semester Presentation

Everyone in the class is required to give a 15-20 minute PowerPoint Presentation on a geological topic. All topics will be based on papers read by the entire class. A CD containing those potential papers from the magazine *Elements* or *Scientific American* will be passed out on the first day of class. Presentation topics and dates will be decided on the first day of class (note that presentations can be based on readings other than those on the CD but must be approved).

Everyone in the class is required to read the paper behind the presentation topic before the day when a particular paper is given. All presentations will be evaluated by me and by your class peers. The idea behind this is to gain experience presenting orally, to gain new knowledge (or re-gain old knowledge) about a particular topic in geology, and to learn how to provide a fair and constructive critique of other people's work. This will take a bit of work, but it should be an enjoyable part of the course – one where you stand to learn a lot!

Spring 2009: Departmental Seminars and Presentations

Other presentation times TBA

**Feb. 2 (Mon), 2 pm EST 337, Dr. Ryan Fogt, National Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow, NOAA Earth System Research Laboratory, Boulder, CO.**
Talk Title: *Using the Past to Understand the Future: Assessing and Attributing Antarctic Climate Change*

**Feb. 4 (Wed), 2 pm EST 337, Dr. Zhuo Wang, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Meteorology Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.**
Talk Title: *Tropical Cyclogenesis in a Tropical Easterly Wave Critical Layer*

**Feb. 9 (Mon), 2 pm EST 337, Dr. Xingan Fan, Assistant Research Professor - Atmospheric Sciences Geosystems Research Institute, Mississippi State University**
Talk Title: *Land Surface and Its Impact on Weather and Climate: Numerical Modeling*

**Feb. 27 (Fri), 3 pm EST 260, Chris Groves and Eric Stowe,**

**March 20 (Fri), 3 pm EST 260, Chinese Visiting Professors**

**April 17 (Fri), 3 pm EST 260, MS Thesis Presentation, Jess Cary**

**May 1 (Fri), 3 pm EST 260, MS Thesis Presentation, Matthew Brunt**