

**ES407 SENIOR SEMINAR
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Spring 2005 Term - Western Oregon University
1 CR W 11:00 AM - 12:50 PM Natural Sciences Bldg, Rm 218

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. S. Taylor
OFFICE HOURS: MW 3-5 PM
By Appointment

OFFICE: RM 210 Natural Sciences Bldg
Phone: (w) 838-8398 (cell) 541-760-9216
e-mail: taylor@s.wou.edu
Web Site: www.wou.edu/taylor

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students will conduct in-depth study and research on a broad-ranging topic in Earth Sciences. The topic for Spring Term 2005 is: "The Effects of Dams on River Processes and Riparian Ecosystems". Students will also develop a resume and participate in an exit exam to assess their knowledge level in the Earth Sciences.

THE PROFESSOR'S PHILOSOPHY ON UPPER DIVISION EARTH SCIENCE / GEOLOGY COURSES:

The upper division Earth Science / Geology course sequence is designed for mature, serious students who are willing to work hard, play hard, have fun, and learn in-depth skills / concepts in a professional academic setting. By default, our student population is very diverse with a wide array of skills, interests, and career goals. The student population ranges from serious Earth Science majors with focused career objectives, to Environmental Studies minors to Science Education majors. As such, the professor is charged with serving a diverse array of student interests and career goals in the most professional manner possible. The problem-solving and technical skills acquired via training in the Earth Sciences are highly valuable (and marketable), regardless of career track. Students are expected to actively participate in the learning process and make a significant contribution to the academic integrity of the Earth Science program at Western Oregon University. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide graduates with the academic skills that will enable them to be highly competitive in graduate school or the career marketplace. *GO TEAM!*

REQUIRED READING:

Journal and assorted text readings to be provided by the instructor on an as-needed basis. Students will participate in weekly discussion sessions, it is absolutely imperative that all participants keep up on the reading assignments and be prepared for class each week.

CLASS WEB SITE:

All course materials will be posted on the class web site is at URL <http://www.wou.edu/taylor> ... and follow the links to the "ES407 Senior Seminar" home page.

The class notes, readings, instructions, and study guides are available as Adobe Acrobat Reader files (*.pdf file). Acrobat Reader is free and is installed on many campus PC's. For home installation, Acrobat Reader is also available for download at the class web site, but you will be responsible for properly installing the software (and will do so at your own risk!). Class materials will also be posted on the web site as the term progresses; check the web site weekly for new listings.

FIELD TRIPS

A tentative field trip is planned, attendance is mandatory, however alternative assignments can be arranged on an as needed basis for students with irreconcilable time conflicts. The University policy on field trips is that attendees must pay out-of-pocket for vehicle rental and mileage costs. Please be aware that additional class expenses will be required for field trips, these are typically charged administratively to student accounts. Given the close proximity of the class field trips, we may also opt for use of personal vehicles.

EVALUATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS:

Student performance will be evaluated on the basis of lab exercises, writing assignments, and two (2) exams. The following is a breakdown of evaluation points and letter grades:

Exit Exam	50 pts	20%
Weekly Class Participation	50 pts	20%
Article Summaries / Class Assignments	60 pts	24%
Seminar Presentation	90 pts	36%
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Total	250 pts	100%

Final Grading Scale

Percent Range of Total Points	Letter Grade	Percent Range of Total Points	Letter Grade
94-100%	A	77-79%	C+
90-94%	A-	73-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-72%	C-
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+
80-82%	B-	63-66%	D
		60-62%	D-
		<60%	F

Exit Exams: A capstone standardized exit exam will be administered at midterm. The exam is based on national standards established by the Educational Testing Service, and was formerly part of the Graduate Record Exam used to evaluate entrance qualifications into grad. school. Students will be provided with practice exams to prepare for this test.

Make-Up Exams: Under NO circumstances will make-up exams be administered without prior arrangement (at least five days) and good reason. Please show up on exam day!

Class and Lab Assignments: Class and lab assignments will be worked BOTH during class time and outside of class time each week. You will have reading and homework assignments that **may** take up to 3 or 4 hours to complete outside of class time, maybe more in some cases, depending on your skill levels and ability. Please plan your schedule accordingly. Due dates for class exercises will be prescribed by the instructor. Late work will be accepted up to 1 week after the due date, but will be automatically assessed a penalty of -20% off the point total.

A Note About Incompletes: No incomplete grades will be given during the last week of class. If you have a problem that warrants an incomplete, make arrangements prior to the last week (no exceptions!!).

Journal Articles and Writing Assignments: Students are required to write a 500-800 word (~1-2 typed pages) summary for each of the assigned journal articles. This exercise is designed to enhance the writing skills of students. The format should include: (1) Introduction to the Problem / Issue, (2) Summary of Main Points, (3) Final Discussion of the Relevance of the Presentation / Field Trip to Environmental Issues in the State of Oregon, (4) References Cited, and (5) pertinent figures and tables (items 4 and 5 are in addition to the 1-2 type-written pages). It is important that you complete these weekly assignments, as you will be sharing your work with the other class members for follow-up discussion. Each student will take turns serving as "seminar leader", presenting a summary of their assigned paper, and leading discussions.

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Students will also need access to a pentium-class desktop computer. The Natural Sciences Computer Lab will be available for student use during class time and at other times during the day. Weekend use of the computer lab is possible, with prior arrangement.

STUDENT HONOR POLICY:

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Cheating includes copying others work and using cheat sheets on exams. However, students are encouraged to interact in small groups during class assignments, i.e. you can freely discuss concepts in all portions of the class, except exams.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Any student who has a disability that requires accommodation, please make an appointment to see me.

A NOTE ABOUT THE LAST WEEK OF CLASS:

Given that the Oregon University System employs the "quarter method" of academic scheduling, upper division courses are by nature "compressed" with much detailed information to cover in a relatively short period of time.

Please note that most upper division text books are geared for courses at universities with a 16 week semester system (i.e. we are truly trying to pack 10 pounds of dirt in a 5 pound bag). As such, the 10th week of class is as critical to content coverage as the 1st week. Students should anticipate a full slate of "normal" activities during the last week of class, including lectures, lab exercises, written reports, etc. The class is not over until after the final exam! **Plan your schedule accordingly!**

CHANGE OF SYLLABUS - UNANNOUNCED HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus and class schedule at any time during the term. Students will be notified of such changes in a timely manner. The instructor also reserves the right to assign unscheduled homework / class assignments at any time. All students will be responsible for completing this work and it will comprise part of the final class grade.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE: This outline should be considered tentative at best. The following schedule may be modified as class ideas evolve throughout the semester.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Class Content</u>
1	Mar 30	Class Introduction / Seminar Activities
2	Apr 6	Seminar Activities / Exam Prep.
3	Apr 13	Seminar Activities / Exam Prep.
4	Apr 20	Seminar Activities / Exam Prep.
5	Apr 27	Seminar Activities / Exam Prep.
6	May 4	Midterm Exit Exam
7	May 11	Seminar Activities / Exam Prep.
8	May 18	Student Seminar Presentation Practice Day
9	May 25	Student Seminar Presentations to Natural Science Division Faculty and Students
10	June 1	Student Seminar Presentations to Natural Science Division Faculty and Students
11	Week of June 6	No class / no final
