

GEOL 105 – Introduction to Environmental Geosciences

Lecture: Synchronous/Asynchronous

Instructor: Dr. Paul M. Feinberg
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Office: virtual
Office hours: Tuesday 12:53-1:53PM in person

Brief description/purpose of course:

Geology 105 is an introductory interdisciplinary course focusing on the various aspects of global changes and interpretations of the interrelationship of earth systems. The course will review the origin, evolution and potential future development of environments as well as their sustainability. The first focus of the course is on the environment from a human perspective: a balanced study of environmental science, matter, energy and ecosystems. Students will be presented with general environmental problems such as environmental hazards, pollution, ozone depletion, climate change, urbanization and the consequences of our quality of life.

The second concentration on the course involves looking more deeply into the current debate on two current issues being debated rather vehemently in the United States: hydraulic fracturing (or fracking) and climate change and the evidence behind the current claims being made on the two different sides of each of these issues. Two essays will be done on each of these topics where students, after evaluating each of the claims on each side will write about their own conclusions.

Textbook

Jay Withgott & Matthew Laposata, 2017, *Environment: the Science Behind the Stories*,
(Masteringenvironmentalscience Sixth Edition)

ISBN-13: 978-0134204888

ISBN-10: 0134204883

Course objectives: Upon completion of this course students will gain a balanced perspective in each of the subtopics which are covered. The field trips are designed to augment the topics discussed in the lecture session, giving the student more demonstrative examples of real world applications of environmental geoscience.

Course evaluation:

Individual student grades will be determined as follows:

Essays (1)	= 30%
Exams	= 40%

Final exam

= 30%

The assigned chapters are set out to give you an idea of the pacing of the course. The exams will potentially cover any of the material presented previously according to the chapter pacing. The due dates for each of the two essays are given as well as the posted times for the 2 films for each of the topics. The access to the films will be explained sometime during the first week of class. If you prefer to access the film another way, that is also acceptable.

Classroom policies: Since this is an asynchronous format, there is nothing to post here except that you check and adhere to the due dates as follows: Each exam, including the final exam is to be submitted via email to me at feinbergpaul@yahoo.com by that evening. If there is an issue which prevents you from submitting this on time, then an email must be sent the same day as the exam is given, explaining the difficulty.

Similarly, the due date of the essays should be handled in the same way.

Hunter College statement on Academic Integrity: Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures. Plagiarism, dishonesty, or cheating in any portion of the work required for this course will be punished to the full extent allowed according to Hunter College regulations.

Tentative Syllabus

#	Day	title 7/14 - 8/17	Chapter	Homework
1	07/10/25	Introduction by Eryln Mendez		
2	07/14/25	Film "Gasland"		
3	07/15/25	Humans and Sustainability	1	
4	07/16/25	Film "Gasland"		
5	07/17/25	Terms and Ecosystems	TBA	
6	07/21/25	Film: "Fracknation"		
7	07/22/25	Quiz #1 Science, Matter, Energy and Ecosystems	2	

8	07/23/25	Biodiversity and Evolution	3	
9	07/24/25	American Museum of Natural History field trip: Biodiversity		
11	07/28/25	Species Interactions and Community Ecology	4	
12	07/29/25	Quiz #2 Environmental Ecosystems and Ecosystem Ecology	5	
13	07/30/25	Biodiversity and Conservation Biology	11	
14	07/31/25	Central Park		
13	08/04/25	Film: "An Inconvenient Truth"		
14	08/05/25	Urbanization and Solid and Hazardous Waste	13	
14	08/06/25	Economics, Politics, Worldwide view and the Environment	14	
15	08/07/25	Sterling Hill Mining Museum Field Trip		Essay Due
16	08/11/25	Film: "Not Evil, Just Wrong"		
17	08/12/25	Quiz #3 Earth's Lithosphere and Plate Tectonics	TBA	
18	08/13/25	Atmosphere and Hydrosphere	TBA	
18	08/13/22	Film: "Truthland"	TBA	
19	08/14/22	Final exam	TBA	