

# Course Information - ESC1000: Earth Science

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## 1. Welcome

Welcome to the GLY 2100 Online Course Information page. Please read this page carefully if you are considering registering for this course. This course is intended to increase your knowledge of the Earth-system and to inspire you to continue your science education beyond the confines of the (electronic) classroom. The course material is not "dumbed-down" and you will be expected to cover a lot of material in the course. The vast majority of students in this course rise to the challenge and finish the course with a deeper and broader understanding of the Earth-system in a way that they can apply to their everyday lives - whether it be by looking

at the rocks under their feet with a new found understanding, digging for fossils at every road cut they come across, or understanding the nasty political debates about climate change or evolution to which we are exposed daily.

Some anonymous reviews that this course has received in the past are:

- "...the coursework offered thought provoking questions and discussion formats that were real, relevant and that offered additional insight" Aug 2012
- "....discussion topics and projects were well-planned and well-thought out.... a focus on learning and thinking was apparent rather than piles of assignments meant to "seem" to require thought...." June 2012
- "....promotes a deeper understanding of the subject material as opposed to just boring recitation and memorization. Some of the things I learned will stay with me for ages....." Dec. 2011

If you are registered for this course and you need information that is not available on this page please email the instructor: [goddard.ethan@spcollege.edu](mailto:goddard.ethan@spcollege.edu). Once the course has officially started please use the LMS email tool for all course related communication.

## **2. Course information**

Course Title: The History of Earth and Life Course ID: GLY 2100

Course Number(s): 1385, 2761 Course Term (Session): Spring 2015 (0495)

Course Dates: 1/12/15 - 5/8/15

Course Term Format: Regular (16 weeks)

## **3. Important Dates (make sure you remember these dates)**

Mid-Term Exam: 3/20/15 - 3/22/15 (Students must be available to take the midterm exam during this period. Do not plan vacation/optional travel during this period)

Last Day to Withdraw with a grade of "W": 3/25/15 - Students who withdraw after the deadline will receive a "WF". Students receiving Federal financial aid who withdraw before the deadline may be subject to repayment penalties

Final Exam: 5/1/15 - 5/3/15 (Students must be available to take the final exam during this period. Do not plan vacation/optional travel during this period)

Final Deadline for all submissions: 5/4/15 (Monday)- anything submitted after this deadline will not be graded or included in your final grade determination without prior approval - no

exceptions

## 4. Instructor Information

Name: Ethan Goddard

Primary email: [goddard.ethan@spcollege.edu](mailto:goddard.ethan@spcollege.edu)

Instructor Web Page: <http://www.spcollege.edu/instructors/id/Goddard.Ethan>

Because I teach entirely through eCampus I do not have office hours. During the course term students should contact me via the D2L email tool.

## 5. eCampus Administration Contacts

Dean: John Chapin

Office Location: UP 337 - Seminole Campus

Office Number: 727-394-6995

Email: [Chapin.John@spcollege.edu](mailto:Chapin.John@spcollege.edu)

Academic Chair: Dr. Amanda Gilleland

Office Location: UP 337F - Seminole Campus Office Number: (727) 394-6024

Email: [gilleland.amanda@spcollege.edu](mailto:gilleland.amanda@spcollege.edu)

eCampus Web Page Link: <http://www.spcollege.edu/ecampus/>

## 6. Proctored Testing

St. Petersburg College eCampus science courses require that 40% of a student's final course grade is determined by proctored exams. Some non-science courses do not have the same requirement. SPC offers proctored testing services for students living in Pinellas County. Students living outside of Pinellas County, or who are unable to travel to one of the SPC testing centers for proctored exams are required to coordinate alternative testing arrangements through the SPC Distance Testing office. Full details are available within the course however a general overview can be found here:

<http://www.spcollege.edu/ecampus/cyberadvisor/testing.htm>

**The Mid-term and Final exams must be taken during the official exam periods per the St. Petersburg College Academic Calendar.** SPC policy prohibits students from taking proctored exams outside of the official exam period except in rare cases of health and/or family emergency (e.g. hospitalization, death or serious injury of a family member), or mandatory work- or military-related travel. Vacation and/or optional travel (even if planned well

ahead of the term) are not valid reasons for an alternative exam arrangement.

**Please see the official SPC Academic Calendar (<http://www.spcollege.edu/calendar/>) for official exam dates. Students who are unable to take the mid-term exam and/or the final exam during the official exam period(s) should not register for the course**

## 7. Technology Requirements

Each student is expected to have reliable access to the internet and should plan to log into the course at least every other day. A computer with an internet connection, web browser, word processing software (or text editor) and PDF viewing software (such as Adobe Reader) is required. Reasonable familiarity with web-browsing, email and word-processing is also required. Contact the instructor with specific software, hardware or computer skill questions.

Each student must be able to generate text documents on a computer and cut and paste content into defined fields within the D2L LMS (it's much less complicated than it sounds). It is each student's responsibility to assure that her work can be read and graded by the instructor.

## 8. Course Objective & Format

This course is designed to give you a broad spatial and temporal (through time) understanding of our home - the Earth. This course will explore how the earth has evolved through time and how the organisms that inhabit the earth have evolved along with it. In particular, we will examine how the evolution of the earth has influenced the evolution of the organisms that inhabit it. More interestingly, we will examine how the evolution of the organisms that inhabit the earth have influenced the evolution of the physical planet itself.

By the end of this course you can expect to have an awareness of the complexity inherent in the study of the earth's past, present and future. You will also possess the fundamental knowledge required to grasp and contribute to the current and intense debates regarding global climate change and evolution.

This on-line survey course will cover material rapidly. It is expected that all students will maintain currency with the material, including the assigned text chapters, discussions and projects.

Success within the on-line context of this course is highly dependent on the student's ability to self-direct her learning experience. It is imperative that each student keep pace with the content and utilize the discussion and email tools to communicate within the learning community. Students should plan to spend at least 15 hours per week on this course - the same amount of time that they would spend attending and working on a traditional summer-

term lecture-based course. The on-line format can be time consuming and is highly dependent on each students' commitment to self-directed learning. Please do not register for this course if you are unwilling to commit to the same time-expectations as a regular lecture-based course where attendance is mandatory. Students who fail to meet the official eCampus attendance requirement will be automatically dropped from the course.

The format of this course is based on Content Modules (CMs). There are nine modules which roughly correlate to the concurrent textbook chapters. Students are encouraged to work through the content modules at a pace faster than two content modules per week. Every content module ends with a quiz that has a firm deadline. All quizzes, graded discussions, exams and projects have firm deadlines - they must be completed by the due date in order for the student (1) to confirm attendance per the SPC eCampus attendance policy and (2) to avoid the 20% late-penalty. Failure to meet the attendance requirements will get you automatically dropped from the course. The pace of this course should not be taken lightly. Students who are unwilling to commit to the rapid pace should withdraw.

## 9. Textbook Information

Students are required to obtain the course textbook quickly however it is perfectly acceptable to purchase a non-current edition of the text as a cost-saving measure. Please try to acquire a reasonably recent version (2nd or 3rd edition) if possible.

The official text for this course is:

Stanley, Steven M. Earth system history. 4th Edition ISBN 9781429255264. New York: W.H. Freeman, 2014. Print. ([publisher information page for Earth System History 4th Edition](#))

The text is available from the [St. Petersburg College Bookstore](#)

NOTE - The SPC Bookstore offers a standard text AND a "package component" "Looseleaf" version of the text. Students only need one of the two.

Alternative Textbook Options:

1. eBook @ [\[CourseSmart.com - Stanley - Earth System History 4e\]](#)[\[URLCourseSmart3e\]](#)
2. Rent @ [BookRenter.com - Stanley - Earth System History 4e](#)
3. Buy a used version from another SPC student @ [SPC BookSwap](#)
4. Used: Click on the following links to search for previous/used editions of the course text.

- Earth System History 3e (softcover): ISBN 13 9781429205207
- Earth System History 2e (hardcover): ISBN 13 9780716739074

## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT TEXTBOOK PURCHASING

- **Recent, but not current, editions of the text are perfectly acceptable for this course.** Students are encouraged to save money by purchasing previous editions or renting the text. Students who do opt for a previous edition must be aware that there are slight differences between the current and previous editions. Where possible, these differences are indicated in the unit modules. Users of previous editions should also be aware that there are a few instances where quiz content will be based on information that is only in the current edition. Realistically, however, those differences are minute and, in the instructor's opinion, the cost savings that can potentially be realized by acquiring a non-current edition far outweighs the risk of getting a quiz answer wrong for lack of information.
- **Students do not need to purchase any supplementary materials for this course** - all that is required is a version of the printed text. Added electronic resources (website "Access Codes", bundled CD or DVD discs, for example) are not required.
- The SP-Gibbs bookstore is purported to have the largest selection of texts, in general, and the Tarpon Springs SPC Bookstore is near to the bookstore warehouse. **If you are having trouble acquiring the text you may want to contact the -SP/Gibbs or -TS stores directly:** [St. Petersburg College Bookstore Hours, Locations and Contact Info](#)
- **All students will be expected to maintain regular access to the text.** The text can be purchased at the St. Petersburg College Bookstore, on-line at the St. Petersburg College Barnes & Noble Online Bookstore or from any re-seller of this text. It is each student's responsibility to acquire the textbook by the end of the first week of the course.
- **Students who purchase the text from an "unofficial" source must make every effort to confirm availability and shipping time** Some used book vendors have very long shipping times (in some cases several weeks!). Students who do not acquire a textbook within the first two weeks of the course are at significant risk of not completing the required coursework.
- **Students who are unsure if a particular version of the text is acceptable should contact the instructor using the LMS email tool as soon as possible for approval.** Contact the instructor via the email tool with questions about using other editions of the text or if you are having problems acquiring it promptly.
- **The St. Petersburg College Bookstore pre-orders a quantity of text books sufficient**

**to satisfy only ~50% of the expected enrollment in a course.** Presumably this policy assumes that many students will acquire their textbooks through other sources. Students who intend to purchase the course text from the SPC bookstore are strongly advised to do so as quickly as possible to avoid having to wait for a back-ordered text. Students who have unavoidable had to order an out-of-stock text from the SPC bookstore should call the bookstore at least every two days for an update.

## 10. Attendance & Participation Requirements

It is expected that all course participants take an active roll in their own learning and that they actively participate within the course community. Some of the section projects will be interactive in nature and will be partially be graded on participation. The online instructional environment has very distinct advantages over traditional classroom learning environments in regard to accessibility, diversity and resource availability. It suffers, however, from a lack of face-to-face interaction and physical community. Because of this, it is imperative that course participants make every effort to communicate often and respectfully so that the learning goals of every member of this community are realized.

The college-wide attendance policy is included in the Syllabus Addendum. The policy notes that each instructor is to exercise professional judgment and define “active participation” in class (and therefore “attendance”), and publish that definition in each syllabus.

The official eCampus attendance policy requires online instructors to verify that students are in attendance at least once each week during the first two weeks of class. Students classified as “No Show” for both of the first two weeks will be administratively withdrawn.

Immediately following the 60% point of the term, each instructor will verify which students are actively participating in class as defined in the course syllabus. Students classified as not meeting the criteria for active class participation will be administratively withdrawn with a “WF”. Students will be able to withdraw themselves at any time during the term. However, requests submitted after the 60% deadline will result in a “WF”. Students and instructors will automatically receive an e-mail notification to their SPC email whenever a withdrawal occurs.

### THE SPECIFIC ATTENDANCE CRITERIA FOR THIS COURSE IS

- Week 1: Each student must complete the Week 1 Attendance Requirement Assignment (located in the /Lessons tab) by the specified deadline. Please refer to that assignment link for full details.
- Week 2: Similar to Week 1, each student must complete the Week 2 Attendance Requirement Assignment (located in the /Lessons tab) by the specified deadline. Please

refer to that assignment link for full details.

- 60% Attendance: Each student must complete and submit SP-1, SP-2, and the Mid-term Exam by the 60% point of the term (which is the same as the last day to withdraw with a grade of "W"). Failure to submit these three required assignments by this point (without prior approval from the instructor) will result in automatic withdrawal from the course.

## 11. Assessment

Students will be evaluated as follows:

### **- Quizzes (open-book, 9 total, 20% of final grade, lowest quiz score will be dropped)**

- The quizzes will be challenging insofar as to require reasonable understanding of the content module material but not so hard as to require studying. The quizzes are "open-book" and it is allowable to refer to the text during a quiz but keep in mind that they are timed and require preparation before you take the quiz. They are specifically designed to verify that each student has read and reviewed the required reading. As long as you read the required reading and review the supplementary materials the open-book quizzes should be easy. Because there is a time limit for each quiz, failure to read the material ahead of time will likely cause you to run out of time before completing the quiz. If you have already read the material then finding the answer to each question will be quick and easy.
- IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT QUIZZES: The D2L LMS is a very stable platform however technical problems occasionally arise which result in incorrect, incomplete or premature submission of quizzes. If you are closed out of a quiz before you have completed it you should first try to immediately log back in to D2L and resume your quiz. If you cannot resume your quiz then please contact the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor will inspect the user logs related to your quiz attempt and, if appropriate, will reset the quiz for you to re-take as soon as possible. All students are allowed 1 "technical reset". If you continue to have technical problems which require a reset you must take subsequent quizzes at one of the four official SPC testing centers.

### **- Projects (4 total, 30% of final grade)**

- Projects will be require that you apply your knowledge of earth science to specific problems and/or explore current cutting edge research. Specific instructions will be given for each project. Projects requiring submission must be created using your word processing program or text editor and entered into pre-defined fields within each project folder.



**- Discussions (3 total, 10% of final grade)**

- It is the intent of the instructor to facilitate several discussions in this course that will expose you to advanced ideas and topics that fall directly within the realm of earth system history as well as some ideas that are outside what you might think of as the scope of this course. Specific guidelines will be explicated for each discussion and the grading protocol will be clearly explained. Discussions will be graded on how well each student extends their knowledge of course content to the discussion subject in addition to how well each student benefits the discussion by asking probing questions or providing interesting insight.

**- Mid-Term (closed-book, 20% of final grade)**

- The Mid-Term exam will be administered during the official SPC eCampus Mid-Term Exam period. The exam is proctored and cannot be taken from home - it must be taken at an official SPC Testing Center or, for students who do not live in Pinellas County, FL, at a pre-approved location. Please make sure that you understand this and refer to the Proctored Exam Information Page in the /Lessons tab for the most current information about exam dates and approved testing locations. A Mid-Term Exam Review will be available to all students in the two weeks prior to the Mid-Term Exam Period. All students must complete the mid-term exam in order to receive a final grade in the course. The mid-term exam is closed-book: notes, calculators, phones, textbooks, etc are not allowed.

**- Final Exam (closed-book, 20% of final grade)**

- The Final exam will be administered during the official SPC eCampus Final Exam period. The exam is proctored and cannot be taken from home - it must be taken at an official SPC Testing Center or, for students who do not live in Pinellas County, FL, at a pre-approved location. Please make sure that you understand this and refer to the Proctored Exam Information Page in the /Lessons tab for the most current information about exam dates and approved testing locations. A Final Exam Review will be available to all students in the two weeks prior to the Final Exam Period. All students must complete the two-hour exam in order to receive a final grade in the course. The final exam is closed-book: notes, calculators, phones, textbooks, etc are not allowed.

## **12. Late Submissions**

Any assignment that is submitted after the due date has passed will be subject to a 20% penalty. Failure to submit an assignment will result in a zero for that assignment which will be factored into your final grade consistent with the guidelines set forth in the assessment portion of this syllabus. Assignments will not be accepted, under any circumstances, after the last day of class.

## **13. Final Grades**

Final grades for this course are determined using a modified bell curve procedure that ensures that students are not unfairly punished by unreasonably difficult exam questions or other structural problems associated with the course. Put another way, grades are not assigned on a strict numerical scale. A complete description of the grading procedure used in this course is available in /Lessons/Course Resources. Please read it before contacting the instructor with grade related questions.