GEOL110 – Cultural Geology
Spring Semester 2017

CLASS TIME: TTh 11:40-12:55, BTW 201
INSTRUCTOR: Tom Owens, 777-4530, EWSC 502 (email via Blackboard)
Office Hours: Wednesday, 11:30-1:00
ASSISTANT: Cari Ryan, EWSC 301 (email via Blackboard)
Office Hours: Monday, 1:30-3:00 and Friday, 9:00-10:30
Max Siegrist, PSC 715 (email via Blackboard)
Office Hours: Tuesday, 10:00-11:30 and Thursday 1:15-2:45.

TEXTBOOK: none, but an “REEF” app for your phone/tablet/laptop is required

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Make informed decisions about geological and environmental issues that impact their daily lives.
- Understand how scientific data is used to assess global climate change.
- Be aware of the role scientific data plays in personal and public policy decisions.

Course Grading:

4 Quizzes, dates noted on schedule 20 points each, drop lowest score (so 60 points total)
Geology in the News “Scrapbook” 25 points
“REEF Polling” participation 15 points

That totals 100 points. Anyone receiving 90 points or higher in the course will get an A. Anyone getting 80-90 points in the course will get no worse than a B, and so on. Exact grade boundaries are determined by distribution of scores in the class.

REEF questions will be given in every lecture. You must be in the lecture hall to get the REEF points. You get 50% if you just try to answer and 50% for answering correctly. Your percentage score on the REEF portion of the course will be multiplied by 15 to determine your course points for the REEF segment of the course. Anyone with 85% or more on REEF points will receive 15 points for this segment.

There will also be occasional surveys and bonus point opportunities. These points will be added to your score before your grade is determined. Take advantage of the bonus points.

As per University Policy, “Absence from more than 10 percent of the scheduled class sessions, whether excused or unexcused, is excessive and the instructor may choose to exact a grade penalty for such absences.” If you must miss class, you will need to get any material or announcements from a classmate. If you have a reasonable, documented, reason for an absence on a Quiz date, and you let us know in advance, we will arrange for you to take the quiz early. No-shows or those who notify us late will get a zero for that Quiz. We drop one quiz score, so missing more than one quiz will seriously impact your grade.

Topics Covered: see attached tentative schedule
Approach:

Due to the size of the class, most material will be presented in a lecture format. Occasional videos will supplement the lecture material. However, Questions and Discussions are highly encouraged! So, speak up.

The nature of this topic is not covered in one individual textbook. We will distribute some handouts, make many suggestions for readings and Internet investigations, and go over a lot of topics in class. The quizzes will be based on the material presented in class, but you will get the most out of the class if you follow up on the suggested readings from time to time.

Office hours are listed above. Any changes will be posted on Blackboard. In a large class, a lot of people will not be able to visit during scheduled office hours. So, we have an “open door” policy … if you come by, we’ll talk to you! Its best to schedule in advance if you suspect that you might have lengthy questions.

Use of Blackboard

You should all have a blackboard account (http://blackboard.sc.edu). Get on to that ASAP. It will be a primary source of communication and information. Many lectures, or summary info, will be posted on Blackboard as well. I will communicate with the class through the email function of Blackboard, so be sure your address is up to date.

This syllabus, the tentative schedule, the descriptions of the Scrapbook and Presidential paper and the first day powerpoint file outlining the course will be posted on Blackboard under Course Information.

Use of REEF Polling

You will need to sync your REEF app with the GEOL110 course. Details on this will be reviewed in class, but you can get started at: http://support.reef-education.com.

Then, each class, you will need to confirm in your app that you are participating in GEOL110 before the first question.

Snow Days and other complications

We have class every Tuesday and Thursday that the university is open at 11:40am. Occasionally, due to weather or other emergency situations, USC cancels part or all of some days. Those decisions are widely announced via email, twitter, and text and at: http://carolinaalert.sc.edu. Whatever they say, goes. If schedule changes are required based on USC-wide cancellations, we will communicate with you via Blackboard.