

FIRST YEAR

FAQ

FALL 2023

GEOL 1200

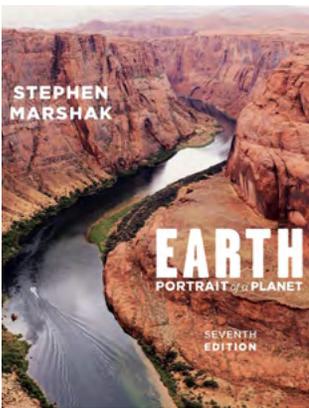
Understanding
The Earth



Professor: Dr. Mitchell Kerr

The Course Textbook

"**Earth: Portrait of a Planet,**" by Stephen Marshak, 7th edition, ISBN-13: 978-0393882742, Norton Publishing. **This book is highly recommended but not mandatory.** It is also available as an e-text from the SMU bookstore. The same book is used for GEOL1201. We will also use a variety of open texts that are freely available such as openpress.usask.ca.



Is it okay to buy an older edition of the textbook?

There are usually only small changes made to successive editions of particular textbooks, so if you can get an older version of the Marshak (Norton) book or any version of "Earth: An introduction to Physical Geology" (Pearson) by Tarbuck et al, then feel free to do so.

Lab Materials

Geology is a field-based discipline, so some labs are held outside (weather permitting), either on-campus, or at Point Pleasant Park. Others are held in a teaching lab (S411 or S408).

The course syllabus contains a list of labs. Weather permitting, one of the labs will be held outside. Wear suitable clothing and footwear, including a jacket and shoes with non-slip soles.

The majority of Geology labs are formatted such that personal protective equipment (PPE) is not required; there is no need for a lab coat or safety glasses.

Labs held inside focus on (1) investigating hand samples of rocks, minerals and fossils, and (2) studying geological maps, which display rock types, geological structures, ore deposits, and geological ages. Studying hand samples in detail requires making use of a hand lens (loupe). You can borrow an inexpensive x10 magnification loupe from your lab instructor for use during the lab, but if you plan on taking more Geology courses, you should consider buying a professional-quality loupe. You can purchase one on-line for a few tens of dollars. Geology labs often make use of high magnification stereomicroscopes as well.

You should bring a ruler, protractor, pencil and eraser to map-based labs. Square protractors are much better for our purposes than half-moon ones.

Some labs depend on making some calculations as well, so a calculator is encouraged, or the use of a phone calculator is often sufficient.