The options available in the undergraduate program in geological sciences are geology and geophysics and lead to the BA degree. Both options provide a strong basis for understanding the functioning of the Earth system. Students who are uncertain as to which option best suits their needs should contact a departmental advisor or faculty member. In each option, the undergraduate program emphasizes coursework in theoretical, laboratory and field-oriented aspects of the geological sciences. The nearby Rocky Mountains provide a natural laboratory for many of these courses.

Students interested in the geological sciences may also wish to consider the Baker Residential Academic Program (see the Undergraduate Residential Programs (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/academic-enrichment-programs/undergraduate-residential-programs/) section). Students who do not wish to pursue a career in the geosciences, or who would like to combine a basic knowledge of geologic sciences with that of some other field, should consider a minor in geological sciences. Students who intend to pursue graduate study in the geological sciences are encouraged to consider developing an honors thesis as part of their undergraduate studies.

The two options available in the undergraduate major offer different focus areas of instruction. Both options offer excellent preparation for students interested in pursuing professional careers, or graduate study, in the geological sciences.

Each option emphasizes knowledge in:

- The ways in which Earth responds to internal and external forces; the physical, chemical and biological evolution of Earth; and the nature of the materials of which the Earth is made.
- The role of physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology in understanding geological processes.
- The history of discoveries and ideas that have contributed to our current knowledge of Earth and the planetary system.

Course code for this program is GEOL.

Geology Honors Program

Opportunity is provided for qualified geology majors to participate in the geology honors program and graduate with honors (cum laude, magna cum laude or summa cum laude) in geology. Students interested in the honors program should contact the departmental honors advisor during their junior year.

Professional Licensure

The State of Colorado does not require individuals working in Geology or the Geological Sciences to obtain Professional Geology Licensure, however many states require professional geologists to pass the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology (FG) and/or Practice of Geology (PG) examinations. Information regarding ASBOG examination specifications can be found at the ASBOG (https://www.asbog.org/) website.

Students planning to seek professional licensure or certification for employment in a state other than Colorado, are strongly recommended to contact the appropriate licensing entity in the state in which they are, or plan to be, located in order to seek information and guidance regarding licensure or certification requirements and how the education received at CU Boulder may assist the student in their efforts to gain licensure in that state.

Bachelor's Degree

- Geology - Bachelor of Arts (BA) (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/geological-sciences/geology-bachelor-arts-ba/)

Minor

- Geology - Minor (catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/geological-sciences/geology-minor/)

Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member's home department.

Abbott, Lon D. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145044/) Senior Instructor; PhD, University of California, Santa Cruz

Anderson, Robert S. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_130117/) Distinguished Professor; PhD, University of Washington

Arthurs, Leilani A. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145087/) Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Notre Dame

Budd, David A. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_101963/) Professor; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Chin, Karen (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_122666/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of California, Santa Barbara

Clark, Alisha (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_164457/) Assistant Professor

Eberle, Jaelyn J. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_126544/) Professor; PhD, University of Wyoming

Farmer, G. Lang (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_100498/) Professor; PhD, University of California, Los Angeles

Flowers, Rebecca M. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_144054/) Associate Professor; PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Ge, Shemin (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_101387/) Professor, Chair; PhD, Johns Hopkins University

Hynek, Brian Michael (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_130622/) Associate Professor; PhD, Washington University

Jakovs, Bruce M. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_105845/) Professor; PhD, California Institute of Technology

Jones, Craig H. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_105590/) Professor; PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Kopf, Sebastian H. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_155295/) Assistant Professor; PhD, California Institute of Technology

Mahan, Kevin H. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_143975/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Courses

GEOL 1010 (3) Exploring Earth
Introductory geology for majors and non-majors. Studies Earth, its materials, its characteristics, its dynamic processes, and how it relates to people. Separate lab (GEOL 1030) is recommended. Degree credit not granted for both GEOL 1010 and GEOL 1012.

Additional Information: GT Pathways: GT-SC2 -Natural Physical Sci:Lec
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 1012 (3) Exploring Earth for Scientists
Studies Earth, its materials, its characteristics, its dynamic processes, and how it relates to people. This course is an introductory geology course suitable for geology and other STEM majors. Like GEOL 1010, but taught at a higher intellectual level with a greater amount of quantitative analysis. Separate lab (GEOL 1030) is recommended. Degree credit not granted for both GEOL 1010 and GEOL 1012.

Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 1020 (3) Dodos, Dinos, and Deinococcus: The History of a Habitable Planet
Examines how the solid, fluid, and living Earth interact, how changes in the oceans, atmosphere and life reflect that interaction over the immensity of geologic time, and how the rock record is analyzed to reconstruct the co-evolution of Earth and life.

Additional Information: GT Pathways: GT-SC2 -Natural Physical Sci:Lec
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Sequence
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 1030 (1) Introduction to Geology Laboratory 1
Features field trips to local points of geologic interest. Studies rocks and topographic and geologic maps. Meets the MAPS requirement for natural science lab, if taken with GEOL 1010 or GEOL 1012.

Recommended: Requisite Concurrent registration in any 1000-level geology course is beneficial but not required.

Additional Information: GT Pathways: GT-SC1 - Natural Physical Sci:Lec
Crse w/ Req Lab
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Lab
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science Lab or Lab/Lec

GEOL 1040 (3) Geology of Colorado
Reviews the geologic evolution and history of Colorado. It first develops the basic concepts needed to interpret the geology and then systematically shows how the state evolved through geologic time. Designed for those who enjoy understanding the beauty and splendor of the state.

Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science
GEOL 1060 (3) Global Change: An Earth Science Perspective
Focuses on evidence for planetary warming, climate change, glacier and ice-sheet melting and sea level rise both now and in the recent past. Attempts to develop understanding of the interactions within the coupled Earth system that regulate such changes. Utilizes examples from the geological and instrumental records, and evaluates the global warming forecast.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ATOC 1060
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Sequence
Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 1150 (3) Water, Energy and Environment: An Introduction to Earth Resources
Explores how geological processes and human populations together affect the quantity, quality and availability of Earth resources. Includes examination of the water cycle and how humans use and modify water; fossil-fuel and mineral resources, and renewable energy options. Sustainable versus non-sustainable use and population growth is considered.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 1170 (3) Our Deadly Planet
This course investigates those events so dramatic and catastrophic that they have left evidence in the geologic record that suggest they significantly impacted life on the planet. These include, but are not limited to, violent volcanic eruptions, mega-earthquakes and associated tsunamis, landslides and sector collapse on volcanoes, megafloods, rapid climatic change, superstorms, and impacts from asteroids and comets. The intent is to use examples from recent events and processes to frame and interpret evidence for these types of events observed in the rock record.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 1180 (3) Our Microbial Planet
Examines how microorganisms shape the world around us, both throughout the Earth's history and today. Major topics include the origin and evolution of life, the interplay between microbes and the environment, roles of microbes in global change, and applications of microbiology in biotechnology and energy.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
MAPS Course: Natural Science

GEOL 2001 (4) Planet Earth
Explores the dynamics of planet Earth with particular emphasis on the factors that make the planet habitable. Includes examination of heat balance, hydrology, geomorphology, biogeochemistry and climate history through both lecture and lab-based activities. Required for the Geology major; introduces students to the major concepts in contemporary Earth system science.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOL 1010 or GEOL 1012 or GEOL 1020 or GEOL 1040 or GEOL 1060 or GEOL 1150 or GEOL 1170 or GEOL 1180 or GEOL 2100 or ENV 1000 (minimum grade D).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 2040 (3) The Search for Life in the Universe
Introduces the scientific basis for the possible existence of life elsewhere in the universe. Includes origin and evolution of life on Earth and the search for evidence of life in our solar system, including Mars and Jupiter's moon Europa. Discusses the conditions necessary for life and whether they might arise on planets around other stars.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ASTR 2040
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 2100 (3) Environmental Geology
Introduces the influences of geologic processes on human lives and the changes human actions cause in geologic systems. Uses examples and case studies from Colorado and the West.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 2700 (2) Introduction to Field Geology
Introduces basic field techniques necessary to collect geologic data and samples, and necessary to map geologic units.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 1030 and GEOL 2005 (all minimum grade D).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3010 (3) Introduction to Mineralogy
Covers origin, occurrence, identification, classification, and uses of minerals with emphasis on applications of mineralogy to economic geology and petrology. Two lectures and one lab per week.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of CHEM 1113 and CHEM 1114 and GEOL 2005 and MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 (all minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisite GEOL 2005.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab

GEOL 3020 (3) Petrology
Studies field relations, petrography, petrology, chemistry, and origins of igneous and metamorphic rocks by means of lectures, reading, and lab and field experience. Labs include instruction in the fundamentals of optical petrography and the study of rocks in thin section.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOL 2005 or GEOL 3010 (minimum grade D).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
GEOL 3023 (4) Statistics and Geographic Data
Introduces computational and statistical tools to solve problems in the geographic domain. Provides an understanding of introductory statistical concepts and applies them to real world problems through lab exercises. Emphasizes spatial data, which requires specialized descriptive and predictive analysis techniques. Demonstrates how to manipulate and visualize data, and make inference using state-of-the art statistics software, applied to various social and earth science problems.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOG 3023
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3030 (3) Introduction to Hydrogeology
Introduces groundwater flow concepts, hydrologic cycle, physical and chemical properties, flow net, hydraulic potential, geologic controls on heterogeneity and anisotropy, aquifers and aquitards in a geologic system, saturated and unsaturated flow, flow to a well, pumping tests, and role of groundwater in geologic processes.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 1150 or GEOL 1010 or GEOL 1012 and MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 (all minimum grade D-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3040 (3) Global Change: The Recent Geological Record
Geological records in lakes, oceans, deserts, and around glaciers indicate the significant changes in the global systems that have taken place over the last few hundred or thousand years. Explores the timing and nature of these changes. Department enforced prerequisites: any two-course sequence of natural science core courses.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3050 (2) GIS for Geologists
Provides an introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques focused on geological applications. Covers GIS analyzing, mapping and GPS use. Basic computer skills are a plus before entering the class.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab

GEOL 3070 (3) Introduction to Oceanography
Explores Earth's dynamic oceans. Discusses the disciplines of oceanography including marine geology, chemistry, biology and physical oceanography with emphasis on global change. Specific topics may include: tectonics, currents, biogeochemical cycles, ecology and global warming.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ATOC 3070
Recommended: Prerequisite any 1000-level ATOC or GEOL course or ATOC major.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Natural Science Non-Sequence
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3080 (3) Developing Scientific Writing Skills
Focuses on the development of scientific writing skills. Enhances student ability to write professionally, revise text and review the work of others. Writing assignments integrate the subject matter of different topics in earth science. Department enforced prerequisites: a lower division writing course and two of the following: GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2005 or GEOL 2700 or GEOL 3010 or GEOL 3030 or GEOL 3120 or GEOL 3320 or GEOL 3430 or GEOL 3820.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Core Curr: Written Communication
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Written Communication-Upper

GEOL 3120 (4) Structural Geology
Introduces the basic principles and processes involved in deformation of natural rocks and minerals and the techniques used to analyze a variety of common geological structures (e.g., fractures, folds, fault zones).
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOL 2005 (minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisite GEOL 2001.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3181 (3) Experimental Geomicrobial Diversity
Provides laboratory experience working on a microbiology research project. Students will study novel non-pathogenic microorganisms they isolate from natural environments. Topics covered include microbial isolation & culturing, metabolic diversity, microbial physiology, antibiotic discovery, molecular phylogeny, lipid profiling, and light microscopy.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of CHEM 1113 and CHEM 1114 or CHEM 1400 and CHEM 1401 (all minimum grade C-).
Recommended: Prerequisite GEOL 1180 or MCDB 1150 or EBIO 1210.

GEOL 3300 (3) Extraterrestrial Life
Discusses the scientific basis for the possible existence of extraterrestrial life. Includes origin and evolution of life on Earth, the possibility of life elsewhere in the solar system, including Mars; and the possibility of life on planets around other stars. Department enforced prerequisite: one-year sequence in a natural science.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ASTR 3300
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3320 (3) Introduction to Geochemistry
Students build upon principles introduced in general chemistry in order to predict and interpret chemical dynamics in Natural environmental systems. We explore the formation and chemical differentiation of the early Earth, how chemical weathering and mineral dissolution and precipitation modifies the Earth's surface, and how redox biogeochemistry shapes aquatic environments.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of CHEM 1113 and CHEM 1114 and MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 (all minimum grade D-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3330 (3) Principles of Geophysics
Provides an introduction to fundamental geophysics including seismology, geomagnetism, gravity, and electromagnetic methods with applications to plate tectonics and exploration of the subsurface.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 and PHYS 1110 or PHYS 1115 and GEOL 2001 (all minimum grade D).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3340 (3) The Cryosphere: Earth's Icy Environments
Serves as an advanced introductory course in to the cryosphere for science majors. The course covers the nature of ice and the icy component of the Earth System, and how changing ice affects society. The course will not cover sea ice.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3410 (3) Paleobiology
Surveys morphology, ecology and evolution of ancient animal and plant life and their interactions on Earth. Fossils used to solve geological and biological problems. Department enforced prerequisites: GEOL 1010 and GEOL 1020 or GEOL 2005 or EBIO 1030 and EBIO 1040 or EBIO 1210 and EBIO 1220.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
GEOL 3430 (4) Sedimentology and Stratigraphy
Introduces the study of sedimentary rocks emphasizing their origin, characteristics, and interpretation; and the principles and techniques for establishing the temporal order and spatial distribution of sedimentary layers.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOL 2005 (minimum grade D).

GEOL 3520 (3) Energy and Climate Change: An Interdisciplinary Approach
Examines sources of energy and other resources in light of their availability, use, environmental impact, as well as their impact on policy, economics and values. As fossil fuels are the dominant energy source today, particular emphasis is placed on climate impacts and the carbon cycle. All material is assessed through the lenses of the physical sciences, policy, ethics and economics. Department enforced prerequisite: a two-course sequence in any natural science.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ENVS 3520
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

GEOL 3540 (3) Introduction to Petroleum Geology
Discusses the origin and distribution of conventional and unconventional petroleum resources, source rocks, types of traps and seals, reservoir rock properties, exploration methods (seismic data analysis and interpretation, formation evaluation, subsurface mapping), reservoir characterization and modeling, reserves calculations. Department enforced prerequisite: GEOL 1010.
Recommended: Corequisite GEOL 3430.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 3720 (3) Evolution of Life: The Geological Record
Discusses the evolution of life on Earth, beginning with the earliest origins and surveying the major steps that led to the rise of higher plants and animals. Covers modern ideas on the causes of periodic mass extinctions in both the marine and terrestrial realms. Emphasizes geologic evidence for the pathways of evolution, using examples from the ordinary to the bizarre.

GEOL 3820 (4) The Fluid Earth
Examines the myriad forms of fluid behavior found on Earth, from the atmosphere to the inner core. Explores how basic principles of fluid physics may be used to understand a broad range of earth processes, including mantle convection, atmosphere and ocean dynamics, stream flow, lava spreading, and glacier motion, among others. Covers fundamental fluid concepts such as viscosity, pressure, convection, friction, and free-surface flow. Department enforced prerequisites: MATH 1300 or APPM 1340 and APPM 1345 or APPM 1350.
Recommended: Prerequisites Any 1000 level GEOL class and PHYS 1110.

GEOL 3910 (4) Earth and Planetary Inference
Introduces modern ways to interpret earth science observations in the context of conceptual models. We will learn how earth and planetary scientists synthesize geological, geochemical, and geophysical measurements and theoretical knowledge to make new discoveries and predictions. The tools that will be introduced in the course range from order-of-magnitude estimation techniques to a gentle intro to inverse thinking.

GEOL 3950 (3) Natural Catastrophes and Geologic Hazards
Surveys historic and prehistoric natural disasters, their cause and potential for recurrence. Meteorite impact, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, landslides, floods, magnetic reversals and major extinction events. Department enforced prerequisite: one year of science.

GEOL 4001 (1) Geology Majors Research Seminar
Reading and discussion seminar to enhance students' critical evaluation of research design, assumptions, and presentation of results in the geosciences. Readings will focus on the events involved in the geologic evolution of the American West and its timing. Papers read will employ a variety of geologic and geophysical techniques. Geared towards students completing independent research and interested in pursuing a research-focused career. Development of career/graduate school plan and application materials is covered.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 4.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Requires Prerequisites of GEOL 2005 or GEOL 2001 (all minimum grade C). Restricted to Geology majors only.
Recommended: Prerequisite or corequisite GEOL 2700.

GEOL 4060 (4) Oceanography
Examines the ocean as a system influencing the Earth's surficial processes and climate. Composition and properties of seawater, ocean circulation, waves, tides, coastal, shallow-, and deep-water processes, biogeochemical cycles, deep sea sediments. Laboratory emphasizes the use of oceanographic data. Department enforced prerequisite: one semester chemistry or physics or geology.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5060

GEOL 4070 (3) Paleoclimatology
Covers the primary forcings and feedbacks that determine Earth's energy balance and the resultant climate system on decadal to millennial time scales. Covers ocean/atmosphere circulation, the role of ice sheets in the climate system, monsoons, Holocene climate change and 20th Century warming. Includes coverage of the proxies available to reconstruct climates of the past and the archives that contain these proxies. Department enforced prerequisite: environmental science or geology introduction sequence courses.
Recommended: Prerequisite natural science majors only.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4093 (4) Remote Sensing of the Environment
Covers acquisition and interpretation of environmental data by remote sensing. Discusses theory and sensors, as well as manual and computerized interpretation methods. Stresses infrared and microwave portions of the spectrum.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5093 and GEOG 4093 and GEOG 5093
GEOL 4120 (3) Advanced Structural Geology and Tectonics
Provides valuable exposure to theory and applications related to deformation (rheology) of solid Earth materials as well as the structural and geophysical characteristics of the world’s major orogenic belts. The processes that will be covered span a wide range of Earth's depths, from compaction in sedimentary rocks and flow of ice/salt near Earth’s surface to cataclastic mechanisms in fault rocks to plastic flow of deep crust and mantle rock. The course will involve lectures, some in-class and take home problem sets, some local field exercises and field data analysis, classic and modern paper discussions, and a research term project (written and oral presentation).
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5120
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOL 3120 (minimum grade C).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

GEOL 4150 (2) Planetary Field Geology
Provides an overview of the geology, age and origins of the solid (rocky) planets, dwarf planets and moons of our solar system and the processes that form them from comparative studies from comparative geology. Includes modules on volcanism, rifting, aeolian processes, fluvial erosion, impacts, climate change and paleontology.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5150
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4160 (3) Introduction to Biogeochemistry
Covers fundamentals of biogeochemical cycling, emphasizing water, carbon and nutrient dynamics in terrestrial ecosystems; chemical interactions of atmosphere, biosphere, lithosphere and hydrosphere; natural and human-managed environments. Department enforced prerequisites: GEOL 3320 or EBIOL 3270 and CHEM 1011.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: EBIOL 4160 and ENVS 4160
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4185 (3) Geomicrobiology
Examines how microbial and chemical processes interact on the Earth's surface today and have shaped the planet throughout its history. Emphasis will be placed on how the life styles and chemical ingenuity of microorganisms drive key biogeochemical processes including weathering and transformations of carbon, oxygen, sulfur, iron and nitrogen. Towards this goal, major geologic and evolutionary events will be examined through the lens of microbial diversity, metabolic energetics, microbe-mineral interactions, and molecular biomarkers.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5185, ENVS 4185, and MCDB 4185
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of CHEM 1113 and CHEM 1114 or CHEM 1400 and CHEM 1401 (minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisites GEOL 1180 or MCDB 1150 or GEOL 3320 or EBIOL 3400 or ENVS 4160 or EVEN 4484.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

GEOL 4215 (2) Geochronology and Thermochronology
Constraining the timing of events and rates of processes is fundamental to earth science research. The field of geochronology and thermochronology is rapidly evolving. Cutting-edge aspects of geochronologic methods and emerging techniques will be especially emphasized. Lectures will emphasize the principles and assumptions of each technique. Seminar discussions will focus on recent papers that demonstrate state-of-the-art applications to diverse problems.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5215
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2001 and GEOL 2005 (minimum grade D-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4241 (4) Principles of Geomorphology
Studies weathering, mass-wasting, fluvial, wind, and marine processes and the resulting landforms.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOG 4241
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of GEOG 1011 or GEOL 1010 and MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 or APPM 1340 and APPM 1345 (all minimum grade D-).

GEOL 4270 (3) Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry
Examines the chemical, biological, geological and physical processes affecting (and affected by) the chemistry of the oceans. Topics include: chemical cycling in seawater; the marine carbon cycle and its long-term control on atmospheric CO2; the large-scale interdependence of nutrient distributions and biological productivity, chemical tracers of ocean circulation; the chemistry of marine sediments, including early diagenesis.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5270
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Recommended: Prerequisites introductory chemistry, introductory geology, introductory oceanography.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4330 (3) Cosmochemistry
Investigates chemical and isotopic data to understand the composition of the solar system: emphasis on the physical conditions in various objects, time scales for change, chemical and nuclear processes leading to change, observational constraints, and various models that attempt to describe the chemical state and history of cosmological objects in general and the early solar system in particular. Department enforced prerequisite: upper-division undergraduate standing in physical science and upper-division undergraduate chemistry or physics or math courses.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5330 and ASTR 4330 and ASTR 5330
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences

GEOL 4380 (3) Fundamentals of Stable Isotope Geochemistry
This course teaches students the fundamental principles of stable isotope fractionation during physical and biological processes, and the application of these behaviors to a wide range of important geologic questions. The course will use classic case studies from the geologic record to illustrate these principles.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5380
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 (minimum grade D-).

GEOL 4474 (4) Vertebrate Paleontology
Discusses the history and evolution of the vertebrates, including the phylogenetic relationships and evolutionary patterns of the major groups. Lab focuses on comparative vertebrate osteology and fossil representation of major groups. Department enforced prerequisites: GEOL 1020 and GEOL 3410 (or permission from the instructor).
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5474
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
GEOL 4611 (3) Organic Geochemistry
Explores the biomarker concept as a tool to elucidate microbial, biogeochemical, and climatic processes in natural systems through three fundamental goals: a) characterization and classification of organic molecules in complex, natural mixtures; b) biosynthesis, transport, transformation, preservation and destruction of organic matter in nature; c) application of lipid biomarkers and their stable isotopes composition to study biological, biogeochemical, and climatic processes in modern and ancient systems.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of CHEM 1113 or CHEM 1400 (minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisite GEOL 3320 or GEOL 4270.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
GEOL 4670 (3) Isotope Geology
Introduces principles of stable and radiogenic isotope systematics in inorganic and organic geochemistry. Emphasizes application of isotope data to problems in igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary petrology, geobiochemistry, and petroleum genesis.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5670
Requisites: Requires prerequisite a course of MATH 1300 or APPM 1350 (minimum grade D-).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
GEOL 4675 (3) Stable Isotopes in Paleoclimate and Paleoecology
Explores the use of stable isotope geochemistry for research questions in paleoclimatology and paleoecology. Covers physical and biological drivers of isotopic fractionation, systematics and applications of light elements such as carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, sulfur and boron and some less traditional isotopic systems. Applications include marine and terrestrial paleoclimate proxies and some uses for ecology and paleoecology.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5675
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
GEOL 4700 (1-4) Special Geological Topics
Studies in selected geological subjects of special current interest (for undergraduates).
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
GEOL 4711 (2) Igneous and Metamorphic Field Geology
Applies field techniques to interpretation of igneous and metamorphic rocks. Field exercises and lectures focus on collecting data required to map igneous and metamorphic rock units.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 3020 and GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2700 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4712 (2) Structural Field Geology
Explores methods of field study of structure of rocks, including observations, data collection and interpretation to understand geometry of deformation and causative processes and kinematics. Field projects are mapped using different scales, air photos, topographic maps and compass and tape.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3120 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4714 (2) Field Geophysics
Applies geophysical field techniques and data interpretation to studying geological and engineering problems. Fieldwork includes seismic, gravity, magnetic, and electrical measurements.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3330 and MATH 1300 and PHYS 1110 or PHYS 1115 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4715 (2) Field Techniques in Hydrogeology
Introduces various field techniques and data analysis methods in hydrogeologic studies for students in geology, environmental studies, geography, and civil engineering. Exercises include mapping groundwater levels, conducting slug and pumping tests, measuring stream flows, interpreting aquifer parameters from geophysical measurements, and using field data for water budget analysis.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 3030 and GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2700 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4716 (2) Environmental Field Geochemistry
This is a critical thinking course that makes use of field and laboratory environments. Students learn methods and develop hands-on expertise needed to identify, characterize and interpret the reactions that govern the quality of water in natural systems, through activities in local watersheds.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3320 and CHEM 1011 and CHEM 1031 or CHEM 1113 and CHEM 1133 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4717 (2) Field Seminar in Geology and Tectonics
Studies geologic features in and around Colorado to gain an overview of the geologic and tectonic evolution of the western U.S.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2001 or GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3120 or GEOL 3320 or GEOL 3430 or GEOL 4241 (all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4719 (2) Field Analysis and Tectonics of Crystalline Rocks
Introduces basic and advanced mapping tools and concepts for structural and tectonic analysis of solid-state and magmatic deformation, metamorphism, and fluid flow in igneous and metamorphic rocks. Includes some digital mapping concepts using smartpad and smartphone applications, and computer-based analysis of structure data. Includes multi-day mapping projects in the Front Range, and in western Colorado, southern Wyoming, or northern New Mexico. Also includes introductions to Precambrian tectonic history of western North America and mineral resources of Colorado.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5719
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3120 (all minimum grade D).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
GEOL 4721 (2) Field Methods in Active Tectonics
Analysis of active geologic structures, including strike slip fault systems, secondary structures in stepovers and related erup
tive centers. Includes the use of digital imagery, elevation models, offset geomorphic features and Quaternary deposits to determine local deformations and their
relation to plate motions.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3120
(All minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisite GEOL 4712.
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sci Lab
GEOL 4723 (2) Field Studies in Sedimentology
Provides students experience in observing and interpreting sedimentary
rocks in the field. We will visit outcrops in CO and UT spanning a range
depositional environments, including eolian, lacustrine, fluvial, and
marine. Developing observational and notetaking skills will be
emphasized; students will be responsible for contributing to a group field
guide based on their guided field observations at each site.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3430
(all minimum grade D-).
GEOL 4725 (1-4) Field Based Special Topics in Geoscience
Explores selected geological subjects of special interest in a field setting.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5725
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 8.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple
enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or
Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
Additional Information: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Natural Sciences
GEOL 4755 (2) Field Geobiology
Provides students technical fieldwork skills in the interdisciplinary field of
giobiology, spanning modern environments and to ancient environments
preserved in rock record, and spanning techniques from geochemistry,
environmental microbiology, and sedimentology.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5755
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 8.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of GEOL 2700 and GEOL 3430
(all minimum grade C-).
GEOL 4840 (1-3) Independent Study in Geology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4841 (1-3) Independent Study-Economic Geology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4842 (1-3) Independent Study-Petrology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4843 (1-3) Independent Study-Sedimentology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4844 (1-3) Independent Study-Structure/Tectonics
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4845 (1-3) Ind Stdy-Geochemistry
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4846 (1-3) Independent Study-Geophysics
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4847 (1-3) Independent Study-Hydrology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4849 (1-3) Independent Study-Paleontology
Time and credit to be arranged. For advanced undergraduates who have
high scholastic standing. Open only upon consultation with department
advisor. May be repeated for a total of 7 credit hours.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4851 (1-3) Independent Study in Geoscience Education
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 3.00 total credit hours.
GEOL 4862 (1-4) Geology Independent Study
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: GEOL 5862
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple
enrollment in term.
GEOL 4990 (1-3) Honors Thesis
Supervised project involving original research in any area of the
gеological sciences. The thesis is submitted to the Honors Program
of the College of Arts and Sciences and is orally defended. Must be
accepted by the departmental honors committee. Department enforced
prerequisite: minimum cumulative GPA of 3.30.
Additional Information: Arts Sciences Honors Course