Contact Information

Instructor- Jeanne Fromm

Email Address- Jeanne.Fromm@usd.edu
+ After the course has started, communicate with me using the email program in Desire 2 Learn (D2L)

Mailing Address- Department of Earth Sciences
University of South Dakota
Akeley-Lawrence Science Center, Room 201
Vermillion, SD 57069

Phone Number- 605/677-5649 (This is the Department phone number)

Availability- + Instructor is always online during virtual office hours on Tuesday, 7:30-9:00 PM, and Thursday, 7:30-9:00 PM and will respond to email, pager, and discussion questions promptly.

+ Students may email instructor anytime for help. Expect a response within 24 hours, except between 5:00 PM Friday & 8:00 AM Monday.

+ Communicating by Skype is an option, email instructor if interested.

Course Description

Earth and Life through Time (ESCI 103) is an introductory course that studies the origin, history, and dynamic nature of Earth through geologic time. Laboratory activities include the study of geologic maps, earth structures, fossils, and related topics. Course goals are:

• Understand geologic changes and the evolution of life through time.
• Study and interpret geologic maps, and review geological interpretation of Earth's history.
• Recognize and understand basic concepts, terminology, and theories related to origin and history of Earth.
• Examine and identify fossils.
• Recognize that biological and physical processes on the planet are dynamic, linked systems and recognize human influence.
• Understand that science knowledge is based on observation and the scientific method.
Course Requirements--------------------------------------
The following textbooks and other materials are required for the class. You must have the course materials before class begins on Monday, January 8, 2018. All students registered for the course before January 8 will receive an email from the instructor about this requirement before the term begins. Failure to have your materials will not be accepted as an excuse for missing labs, quizzes, and assignments.


**+Earth System History** online companion materials using Launch Pad Solo via the publisher

**+Laboratory Studies in Earth History**, 10th Edition, by Levin and Smith  
*Note:* Do not buy a used lab manual because it may be missing some of the tear-out worksheets that you will need.

The textbook and lab manual may be purchased from the USD Bookstore, other vendors, or as an ebook from the publisher at this link [http://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/product/earthsystemhistory-fourthedition-stanley](http://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/product/earthsystemhistory-fourthedition-stanley). If you buy the lab manual as an ebook you will need to print out some pages to complete the labs. If you register for the class after the term begins, purchasing ebooks is the best way to catch up and is highly recommended. You will also need a calculator and a metric ruler with mm-divisions.

This course is offered online by using software called Desire 2 Learn (D2L) and may be accessed through the USD student portal [http://my.usd.edu](http://my.usd.edu), or [https://d2l.sdbor.edu](https://d2l.sdbor.edu). Students will not have access to any coursework at the D2L website until the first day of class on **Monday, January 8, 2018**. It is strongly recommended that if you are new to online classes you carefully review the online orientation guide available at [Online Learning Guide](http://my.usd.edu/technology/downloads/student/office-365.cfm). The guide provides an overview of online learning and lists the recommended computer hardware and software. It's up to the student to make sure their computer and internet connection are adequate before the term starts. You will also need access to Adobe Acrobat Reader, Microsoft Word, movie players, and Google Earth™ (free download). Links to the download sites for Adobe Acrobat Reader are provided in D2L. The free download for Office 365 ProPlus is available to students with Office 365. More information can also be found on the Office 365 Student Advantage Page in the myU Portal [https://portal.usd.edu/technology/downloads/student/office-365.cfm](https://portal.usd.edu/technology/downloads/student/office-365.cfm)

Course Information--------------------------------------
ESCI 103 is entirely an online course which can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection. However, the course pace is not so flexible! The content is covered on a set weekly schedule and labs, quizzes, and exams must be completed within the offering interval.

If you are new to online courses, remember that most students report that it takes more work, more time, and better organizational skills to succeed in online courses when compared to on-campus classes. **You should take this class if you're interested in Earth science, not because you hope online science**
is the easiest way to meet your science and science lab requirement. Please be advised that the majority of students who failed this class in the classroom setting do not pass the course in the online setting. Students should have had some experience using word processing software, sending emails, and using the internet. Students also need to be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. The ability to learn by reading and to follow written instructions are essential skills.

Please do not underestimate the time commitment needed to succeed in college-level science classes with labs. Students taking this course in the classroom setting over 16 weeks would spend 6 hours in lecture and lab and be expected to spend an additional 6 hours outside of class for a total of about 12 hours per week, minimum. Online students should expect to spend more time on this course due to the independent nature of the class. Students should allow enough time to complete the reading assignments, view the topic presentation on D2L, complete the lab and quiz, and prepare for exams. Expect to spend at least 12 hours per week on this course. Be realistic about your existing personal and work commitments before taking this course.

The instructor is always available to help students learn course content and understand lab directions during office hours or within 24 hours between 8:00 AM Monday and 5:00 PM Friday. Previous experience has shown that students earning A and B grades in the course contact the instructor 10-15 times throughout the term. Starting labs well before the due date/time allows time to get help from the instructor. The University of South Dakota HelpDesk will assist students with information technology issues and problems since the instructor has no expertise in this area.

Assigned reading in the textbook and lab manual are the major sources of course content and content is organized into 20 topics. Each topic includes an overview listing the learning objectives and learning activities. Each topic includes a presentation and presentation summary covering the material in the textbook chapter. All topics are covered in a lab exercise and include a topic reading quiz. The overview, presentation, presentation summary, and lab instructions are available at Content on the D2L Course Navigation Bar.

Note from the University of South Dakota (USD) Geology Department Chair, Dr. Brennan Jordan

The USD Earth Sciences Program is pleased to offer an online version of its general education lab science sequence. Some warnings are in order, however. Although classes very similar to these (using the same textbooks) are taught at most universities, students that are not science-oriented often struggle with these courses. There are a lot of new concepts and terms to learn and a lot of details to memorize. Taking these courses online adds an additional level of difficulty, so play close attention to the time requirements outlined by the instructor. You may want to consider taking these courses in the traditional classroom setting at USD. We insist on holding the online courses to the same level of rigor as the classroom versions. If you have concerns about the content or rigor of the courses, please direct those to the department rather than to the instructor.

Grades

Letter grades are assigned based upon your performance in all course work exactly as described below. Students MUST also have a passing grade (≥55%) in both the laboratory and exams components in order to pass this course. No extra credit opportunities are offered in this course.
Table 1. Summary of Course Grade Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% of Total Course Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic Quiz</td>
<td>20 total - not proctored, 1 per week (sometimes 2), 10 questions and 15 minutes per quiz</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Exercise</td>
<td>15 total - not proctored, 1 per week</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Quiz</td>
<td>15 total - not proctored, 1 per week, 12 questions and 15 minutes per quiz</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>4 total - proctored, 1 about every 4 weeks, 75-85 questions and 60 minutes per exam</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading scale is 85-100% = A, 75-84% = B, 65-74% = C, 55-64% = D, and below 55% = F = Failing. Grades and scores will be available under Assessments>Grades on the D2L Course Navigation Bar.

The table at the right summarizes the typical grade distribution of final course grades. The main reason for D and F grades is skipping required coursework and illustrates that time management and participation are critical to student success in this course. Previous experience has shown that most students who completed ninety percent (≥90%) of the coursework got a C or better grade and most students who completed less than eighty five percent (≤85%) of the coursework on time got a D or F. The link between good grades and on-time coursework completion is also illustrated in the following list of average percent of skipped coursework by grade category: A (2%), B (7%), C (11%), D (17%), and F (35%). For example - the average student who received a “D” grade did not complete 17% of the coursework on time.

### Typical Distribution of Final Course Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percent of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Topic Quizzes:** Twenty (20) topic quizzes are scheduled, one to two per week, covering content from the assigned reading in the textbook. Topic quizzes comprise 15% of the course grade. The topic quiz is taken online and consists of ten (10) multiple-choice, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, and textbook figure/table interpretation questions. The topic quizzes are available under Assessments>Quizzes in the D2L Course Navigation Bar. Students make take the quiz any time between Monday and 10:30 PM Sunday and have fifteen (15) minutes to complete the open book/note quiz. Topic quiz score is posted at Grades in D2L within two days after the quiz interval ends. See the schedule for topic quiz offering intervals. Please note that Assignment 1 must be completed in order to take any topic quiz. Failure to complete Assignment 1 will not be accepted as an excuse for missing scheduled topic quizzes and will result in a zero quiz score.

**Laboratory Component:** The lab component comprises 25% of the course grade. Fifteen (15) labs are scheduled, one per week, and generally correspond to the weekly topic(s). Labs typically include lab manual problems, online activities, and additional material included in the lab instructions. A few labs are
mainly online activities and some require use of movie players to watch video segments. Improve your lab score by allowing enough time to contact the instructor for help with content or directions as needed. Please note that you may always work ahead if needed to avoid schedule conflicts.

Directions for all the lab exercises are available under Content, organized by topic, in the D2L Course Navigation Bar. The lab exercise is auto graded in D2L by opening the lab exercise under Assessments>Quizzes at the D2L Course Navigation Bar. Students may enter the lab for auto grading any time between Monday and 10:30 PM Sunday and have seventy-five (75) minutes to transfer their answers. Students have two attempts to enter lab exercise answers and the best score is incorporated into their grade. The lab exercise score is posted at Grades in D2L within two days after the submittal interval ends. See the schedule for lab exercise submittal intervals.

Students must take the associated lab quiz within 7 days after the lab exercise submittal interval closes and fifteen (15) lab quizzes are scheduled. The lab quiz is taken online and consists of twelve (12) multiple-choice, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, and numerical questions that are similar to lab exercise questions. The lab quizzes are available under Assessments>Quizzes at the D2L Course Navigation Bar. Students make take the quiz any time between Monday and 10:30 PM Sunday and have fifteen (15) minutes to complete the open book/note quiz. Students may take each lab quiz twice and the best score is incorporated into their grade. The graded lab quiz score is posted at Grades within two days after the quiz interval ends.

Remember that the lab grade (25% of total course grade) is based on the lab exercise scores (44%) and lab quiz scores (56%). Students must get 55% or more in the lab component to pass the course. Please note that Assignment 1 must be completed before any lab exercise may be submitted. Failure to complete Assignment 1 will not be accepted as an excuse for late labs or lab tests and will result in a zero score.

Exams: The course includes four (4) exams and the exam intervals are shown in the course schedule one exam about every four weeks). The exams comprise 60 percent of the course grade. The exams are comprehensive but not cumulative, meaning you will need to understand material from all the preceding chapters, but you will only be asked specific questions about topics covered after the last exam. Exams include 75-85 questions from the readings, topic presentations, quizzes, and labs. Review materials are found at the Course Navigation Bar> Content>Course Topics>Topic Overviews. Other preparation materials include: Parts 1 and 2 of the labs, presentations, and presentation summaries. The testing format is similar to the weekly quizzes. The test is not “returned” to the student but general information about test performance can be requested from the instructor. Exam scores are posted at Grades in D2L within one week after the exam interval ends. Students must have an average exam score equal to or above 55% to pass the course and no exceptions will be made.

The exams are closed-book/notes and must be taken online at a testing center or supervised by a proctor approved by Continuing & Distance Education (CDE). The USD online learning guide contains information about proctors and testing centers. The exams are password-accessed at the D2L Course Navigation Bar and must be completed in 60 minutes. CDE provides access passwords to the proctors and testing centers before each exam interval. Students who violate exam proctor policy or engage in academic dishonesty on any exam will be given an F for the course.
Assignments: The online course includes two mandatory (2) assignments early in the term which are meant to help the student decide if this course fits their expectations, life style, and other commitments before the drop/add date on January 17, 2018. Assignment 1 will acquaint the student with course policies and illustrate how the online course content is organized. In Assignment 2, the student provides science background information and specifies how they will be taking their exams.

Directions for the assignments are available under Assignments (D2L Course Navigation Bar>Content). The assignments are not part of the course grade, but must be completed in order to proceed with the course. Assignment 1 is complete when students correctly answer all the questions. Assignment 1 is corrected in D2L by opening Assignment 1 under Assessments>Quizzes at the D2L Course Navigation Bar. Students have unlimited attempts to achieve the 100% correct standard. Students will see their scores immediately after submission. Assignment 2 is complete when students answer all the questions and upload it to the Dropbox under Assessments in D2L, and send the proctor form to CDE if needed. Assignment 2 is not graded but all questions must be answered in order to take course exams.

It is critical that students understand course policies, grading, and organization of course learning materials during the first few days of the term. Therefore, students cannot proceed with any other coursework until Assignment 1 is completed; this means that no topic quizzes, lab exercises, lab quizzes, lab tests, or exams can be taken until all of the questions in Assignment 1 are answered correctly. Failure to complete Assignment 1 on time will not be accepted as an excuse for missing other scheduled coursework deadlines and zeros will be given for that coursework. No exceptions will be made because previous experience has shown that 85 percent of students who did not complete the early coursework on time did not succeed in the course. Most of these students dropped the course later, were dropped by the instructor later, or ended up with final course grade of D/F.

Submittal Intervals for Topic Quizzes, Lab Exercises, Lab Quizzes, and Exams: There will be no exceptions for offering interval dates and times because all coursework and evaluations may be completed any time during a 5-7 day period. Students are expected to contact the instructor and arrange for early submittal or quiz/exam dates when needed to manage schedule conflicts. Prearranging early quizzes and lab exercises requires a minimum of 48 hours’ notice to the instructor. Please do not wait until the last minute, e.g. 10:29 PM Central Time, to submit a lab or take a quiz and then blame the software or the clock or work when deadlines are missed. Develop the habit of completing all coursework and exams well before the due date/time as a buffer for technical difficulties and to leave time to ask the instructor for help.

If you have legitimate technical difficulties or other major unanticipated circumstances that prevent you from submitting the lab exercises, taking the quizzes, or taking the exams on time email the instructor immediately and describe the unexpected problem. One accommodation may be provided at the discretion of the instructor and the following penalties will be applied: 1 day late- 20%; two days late- 30%; 3 days late- 45%, 4 days late- 60%, 5 days late- 75%, and 6 days late- 90%. Please note that it is up to the student to contact the testing center or proctor well in advance (7-14 days) of the exam interval and make arrangements to take the exam by the deadline. Failure to do so will not be accepted as an excuse for missing the exam.
Late Registration Caution: Previous experience has shown that 70% of students who register late (after the term begins) subsequently dropped the course or ended up with a D or F. This is especially true during summer term which is short. One reason this occurs is that students often must wait to begin coursework and they struggle to catch up. Late registration is not advised and only the following accommodation will be provided:

Missed labs and quizzes must be completed within three days after students have D2L access.

Class Policies--------------------------------------------

Course Participation: Students who have not taken all the scheduled exams and completed at least 60 percent of the scheduled quizzes by April 2, 2018 will be dropped by the instructor for non-participation in the course. Completed means the quiz or exam has been taken and graded.

Academic Dishonesty: The University of South Dakota considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The University supports the imposition of penalties on students who have been adjudicated to have engaged in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook, and South Dakota Board of Regents policy 2-33 www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-33.pdf.

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

a. Given a zero for that assignment.
b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
d. Dropped from the course.
e. Failed in the course.

Students caught engaging in academic dishonesty on any exam will fail the course. Working together on labs can be a good way to learn the material, but it’s essential each student understands the lab exercise in order to do well on the quiz. Quizzes are an individual effort intended to help students prepare for the exams so do your own work.

Fair Evaluation: Each student is entitled to a fair grade in each course in which he or she is enrolled. It is the right and the responsibility of an instructor to establish criteria for evaluation for each course which he or she teaches, and to determine the degree to which an individual student has fulfilled the standards set for the course. Students are notified that extraneous factors such as eligibility for sorority or fraternity membership, scholarship or financial aid awards, athletics, timely graduation, or for admission to graduate or professional schools, have no bearing on the determination of grades. The quality of the student’s overall performance with respect to standards for evaluation will be the only basis for judgment.

Students Rights to Assistance or Accommodations: Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability
should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center (605)677-6389
Web Site: www.usd.edu/ds E-mail: dservices@usd.edu

**Freedom in Learning Statement:** Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college or school that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence:** The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected. To learn more about USD’s diversity and inclusiveness initiatives, please visit the website for the [Office of Diversity](#).

**Communication and Equipment:** Communication between student and instructor in this course is limited to internet email or the paging tool in D2L. Correct spelling, proper punctuation, and a courteous, professional tone must be used in all electronic communications. Students who lose the ability to communicate through D2L due to technical problems with internet access or computers, must inform the instructor by leaving a phone message with Continuing Education (605/677-6240 or 800/233-7937) that describes the problem and estimates when course activity will resume. Students are also reminded that course work may be done on any computer with internet access, so if your computer crashes find an alternative while it is repaired or replaced. If students experience extended problems, more than three days, with a home internet connection or personal computer they are required to find alternatives and keep up with the course schedule.

**Required Information For Courses Meeting Graduation Requirements:** This class, in conjunction with the laboratory, fulfills the following Goal of the South Dakota System of General Education Requirements: Goal #6: Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world.

As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:

1. Demonstrate the scientific method in Earth Science in a laboratory experience.
   Assessment: Identify a variety of common minerals, rocks, and fossils; and identify and interpret basic geological processes using topographic maps, geologic maps, and aerial photographs through completion of laboratory assignments and quizzes.
2. Gather and critically evaluate data using the scientific method.
   Assessment: Examine geologic maps, fossils succession, stable and radioactive isotope data, and magnetic rock properties to develop interpretations of Earth’s history through completion of laboratory assignments, quizzes, and exams.

3. Identify and explain the basic concepts, terminology and theories of the selected natural sciences.
   Assessment: Demonstrate an understanding of basic geological changes in Earth’s crust and the evolution of life through time on exams and quizzes.

4. Apply selected natural science concepts and theories to contemporary issues.
   a. Demonstrate an understanding on exams and quizzes of how basic geological/biological processes such as plate tectonics, climate change, ocean circulation patterns, and evolution have affected the Earth system in past and continue to do so during the present.
   b. Demonstrate an understanding on exams and quizzes of basic fossil, and other, evidence for how life on Earth has changed through time.

**Course Syllabus, Schedule, and Policy Changes:** May occur at the instructor’s discretion; students will be informed of any change.