Course Syllabus for Geology 302D

The Age of Dinosaurs

Fall, 2023

Professor Timothy Rowe

Email: rowe@utexas.edu

Overview:

The Age of Dinosaurs is an introduction to Natural History, evolution, extinction and biodiversity. The course focuses on current scientific theories and controversies surrounding the evolution and extinction of dinosaurs. In order to appreciate these issues, the course presents an introduction to Earth history, plate tectonics, surface geology, sedimentary processes, fossilization, and related topics. It also presents an introduction to the theory of evolution, an overview of the diversity of Life on Earth, along with a discussion on how modern scientists study the relationships among organisms and interpret the evolutionary history of Life. The geological and evolutionary processes that have affected the history of dinosaurs are the focus throughout the course. In the end, you will learn how Earth history and Life history are intricately intertwined, and how scientists are using their knowledge of the past to predict what’s ahead for us all.

- Students with disabilities may request appropriate accommodations.

Instructor:

Dr. Timothy Rowe
e-mail: rowe@utexas.edu
Office: Geology 3.216E
Office Hours: Tu, Th 3:30-4:00. I’ll also be happy to answer your questions via email. Email is the best way to contact me.

Teaching Assistants:

Mr. Liam Norris
Email: liamanorris@utexas.edu

Course Materials:

1) Text book – The Mistaken Extinction, by Lowell Dingus and Timothy Rowe (distributed at no cost on Canvas)
2) **Lectures**: Given the large size of the class, this will be an asynchronous course, and I will not deliver video lectures on a regular schedule. Captioned PowerPoint presentations for each lecture will be available on Canvas as PDF files.

**Exams**: All Exams will be worth 100 points. Exams will be given during regular lecture times in the lecture room. Each exam runs for 80 minutes. The exam schedule is as follows:

- **Tuesday, September 12**: Midterm Exam 1
- **Thursday, October 12**: Midterm Exam II
- **Tuesday, November 7**: Midterm Exam III
- **Thursday, November 30**: Midterm Exam IV (Comprehensive)

**Laboratory/Discussion**: Weekly Lab sections are a required part of the course. The Labs provide an opportunity to examine specimens, as well as a forum for group discussion of issues raised in the course.

### Policy on Grades:

1) **Final Grades**: Your final letter grade will be based on your total score from exams and labs. Grades are assigned using a standard curve that reflects the accomplishment of the class as a whole. The curve mean represents a 'C'.

2) **Exam (75%)**: 3 midterms and 1 final exam will be given. All three midterm exams and the final exam must be taken. Your best 2 midterm scores plus the final exam score will be counted as 75% of your final grade. In other words, you may drop your lowest midterm score. Exams are given only once. There are no make-up exams and no specially scheduled exams. Exceptions may be made for handicapped students, but they must request any special arrangements early in the semester. All exams are cumulative in their coverage. They will cover material from lectures, reading assignments, and labs. You will be asked questions about general concepts as well as specific points of information.

3) **Lab Quizzes (25%)**: There are no Labs in the first week – Labs will begin in Week 2. Lab quizzes will not be given every week and a schedule will be posted in Week 2. They must be taken at the scheduled times, and all assignments must be turned in on time. Lab assignments turned in late will receive no credit. Your cumulative score from lab assignments and quizzes will be counted as 25% of your final grade.

4) **Statute of Limitations**: If you wish to appeal a grade received on an exam, quiz, or lab, your appeal must be made within 7 days from the time it is handed back. No appeals will be considered after that deadline.
5) Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Work submitted for a grade under your name must be exclusively your own. Evidence of dishonesty on even one exam, quiz, or assignment will result in an 'F' for the course and a report to the Dean of Students; if you were failing the course anyway, a recommendation of disciplinary probation will also be forwarded to the Dean of Students.

6) Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.