

GEOL 1201: GEOLOGY
SYLLABUS FOR FALL 2007 (2081)

General Information:

Prerequisites: none

Class Times: F 9:00-11:25

Lecture Location: Thaw 203

Website: Lecture and other materials will be available on CourseWeb: <http://courseweb.pitt.edu>**Instructor:**

Dr. Charles E. Jones

Telephone: 412-624-6347 Office: 503 SRCC

Office Hours: Tues. 1:30 P.M.-2:30 P.M. or by appointment

Email: cejones@pitt.edu **NOTE: I get so much e-mail that I would get nothing else done if I tried to answer it all. Thus, if it is important, come talk to me after class or in my office!****Text (recommended):**Cowen, Richard *History of Life*, Blackwell Publishing. 4th edition is the most recent. 3rd is OK.**Course Overview:**

This course is a survey of the history of life with an emphasis on the patterns and processes of evolution and on the causes of extinction.

Grading:

The course grade will be based on exams and any exercises and writings that I assign. The relative weighting of the grades will be as follows:

First Exam:	20 %
Second Exam:	25 %
Third Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	30 %

It will *not* be possible to make up missed exams unless you have a note from a doctor or a dean. If you anticipate a schedule conflict, please see me well before the exam!

A = 90-100%, B = 80-90%, C = 70-80%, D = 60-70%, F = 0-60%. Plus and minus grades are assigned as follows (using B grades as an example): B- = 80-83%, B = 83-87%, B+ = 87-90%.

Learning Disabilities or Non-Native Speakers:If you need extra time or other accommodations during exams, contact Disability Resources and Service to find out what you need to do! Here is their web page: www.drs.pitt.edu. If you are not fluent in English and think it may slow you down on exams, please let Dr. Jones know in advance of the first exam!**Need help?**

If you find yourself doing poorly in the class, there is only one strategy to improve your grade: Study more effectively! You will have review guides to help focus your study for the exams, so if you are unclear about things, come see the instructor! If you are surprised at a poor exam grade, please come see me! To encourage improvement throughout the course, know that if each of your exam grades improves by at least 3%, I will bump up your final class average by 3%.

Cheating

Cheating will not be tolerated on the exams or in any other class work. Cheating means getting any unauthorized assistance from any source during an exam or in preparation of a homework. You cannot copy from another person, refer to hidden notes of any type, or receive information via electronic or other means. You can discuss homework problems and issues with your fellow students, but you are not allowed to be a parasite, simply copying down someone else produced. You must intellectually participate in every aspect of the work you hand in!

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when you copy someone's work and allow people to think it is your own. The most common form of plagiarism today is when students copy and paste items directly from web pages. To avoid charges of plagiarism, you must rewrite everything in your own words and list any resources that you consulted at the bottom of the essay. It is easiest to rewrite something in your own words if you take brief notes and do not look at your source while you think of how you are going to say it. To some it seems ridiculous to simply rephrase what someone else has already said adequately well, but I can tell you that a collection of cut and pasted quotes generally reads really, really badly. You will be much better off if you write a whole essay in your own words. The point of any writing assignment is to get you practice in clear communication. If engineers had mastered the art of clear communication, the space shuttle Challenger might not have flown the day it exploded. (Note: Some disciplines thrive on direct quotes (e.g., history), but in sciences direct quotes are very rare. We generally give credit for ideas or data without direct quotation.)

The standard penalty for cheating or plagiarism is immediate failure in the class. Egregious or repeated violations are rewarded with suspension or dismissal from the University.

Important Dates:

Week of August 28 (First week of classes)

Friday, Sept. 21: First Midterm Exam

Friday, Oct. 19: Second Midterm Exam

Friday, Nov. 16: Third Midterm Exam

Friday, Dec 7: Final Exam, regular class time and place

Week	Tentative List of Topics		
		8	Early tetrapods
1	Introduction and the Facts of Evolution	9	Rise of the Synapsids (Our ancestors)
2	The theory of evolution; extinctions	10	Rise of the Diapsids (Dinosaur ancestors)
3	Early life; Cambrian explosion	11	Permo-Triassic extinctions; dinosaurs
4	Ordovician Radiations; Paleozoic marine life	12	The K-T Boundary extinction
5	Evolution on a dynamic planet	13	Diversification of the Mammals
6	Origin of Vertebrates; Paleozoic fishes	14	Mammal biogeography and evolution
7	Evolution of Plants in the Paleozoic	15	Pleistocene and modern extinctions