

GEOS 450 Geosciences Senior Seminar

Fall 2024

MW (TR) 7:00-8:30

Seminar Goals

The Geology and Environmental Geoscience Senior Seminar is a capstone course that is designed to give you experience researching topics that lie outside the realm of your normal coursework. This seminar will help prepare you for life after college, whether it involves employment or post-graduate education. You will have the opportunity to research graduate schools and employment opportunities, to explore areas of the geosciences that you are particularly interested in, to read the primary literature, to engage in discussions with your peers, and to present your work to your peers and to the Department. By the end of this class, you should be able to:

1. Clearly express your ideas and the ideas of others;
2. reason and communicate spatially using maps, cross sections, and/or scientific illustrations;
3. articulate geoscience concepts, ideas, and results to a variety of audiences by written, oral, and graphical means;
4. consider and critically evaluate alternative perspectives, hypotheses, and data;
5. prepare for life after DePauw.

Seminar Organization

We will meet twice each week for 1 ½ hours to work on assignments and to engage in discussions. There are five assignments:

- Assignment #1: Resumé and LinkedIn profile.
- Assignment #2: Job search and application.
- Assignment #3: Graduate school search and application.
- Assignment #4: Thematic discussions/teach a class.
- Assignment #5: Research project, poster, and oral presentation.

Assignments #1-3 are meant to prepare you for graduate school or job searches and to give you experience in different forms of writing. Regardless of your goals upon leaving DePauw, introducing yourself properly on paper is a valuable skill. Assignment #4 is meant to give you experience reading the primary literature and explaining it to your peers. Each person will choose a topic in the geosciences and select a key paper (or two) on that topic from the primary literature that the entire class will read. During seminar meetings, each student will give a 20-30 minute presentation on the topic, and then lead a discussion. Assignment #5 will be an opportunity for you to share in-depth knowledge of a particular topic with the entire department. Each student will give a professional-quality, conference-style presentation to the department on their topic. Assignments #4 and #5 may be on the same topic, but assignment #5 should include considerably more technical depth.

Grading

Your grade will be based on your seminar participation (discussion) and the five assignments. Grades will be weighted as follows:

Resumé and LinkedIn profile (Assignment #1)	5%
Job Search/Application (Assignment #2)	10%
Graduate School Application (assignment #3)	10%
Discussion (Assignment #4)	25%
Final Presentation (Assignment #5)	30%
Participation (in reading and discussion)	20%

A = 90-100% B= 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = < 60%

[To receive S certification, you must receive a course grade of C- or better

AND your oral communication skills must be judged satisfactory for "S" certification by the professor]

Your participation grade throughout the seminar will be based on the following criteria:

- A** (90-100%) You initiated/contributed to a discussion that led to a deeper/broader understanding of the subject matter; you raised new issues or extended the discussion into related areas. Your comments demonstrated careful and critical reading of the material.
- B** (80-89) You answered or asked questions of a factual nature, demonstrating that you followed the discussion and understood the topic being discussed. Your comments showed that you completed the assigned reading and generally understood it.
- C** (70-79) You were in class and seemed interested in the discussion. Your comments indicate that you read the assignment but it was not clear that you understood it.
- D** (60-69) You showed up for class but were not engaged. You opened the assignment but it was not clear you read it.
- F** (0) You were physically and/or mentally absent from class. You did not do the reading.

A word about plagiarism: I take academic honesty very seriously. In your work for this class, be very careful to acknowledge all the sources that you draw from (and that includes the sources you use in PowerPoint presentations). Even an oversight can negatively impact your grade, and any evidence of intentional plagiarism (or a second offense of unintentional plagiarism) may warrant disciplinary action through the University Review Committee.

Seminar Schedule

Dates: Topic

August 21 (22)	Introduction; topic selection
August 26/28 (27/29)	Assignment #1: Resumé and LinkedIn
Sept 4 (5)	Assignment #2: Job application
Sept 9/11 (10/12)	Student presentations for Assignment #2
Sept 16/18 (17/19)	Assignment #3: Graduate school application
Sept 23/25 (24/26)	Student presentations for Assignment #3
Sept 30/Oct 2 (Oct 1/3)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Oct 7/9 (8/10)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Oct 12-20	Fall Break (no class)
Oct 21/23 (22/24)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Oct 28/30 (29)	Assignment #4: Discussion (no class on Halloween)
Nov 4/6 (5/7)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Nov 11/13 (12/14)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Nov 18/20 (19/21)	Assignment #4: Discussion
Nov 25 (26)	Assignment #5 (individual meetings)
Dec 2/4 (3/5)	Assignment #5 (individual meetings)
Dec 9-13	Final Presentations (Time TBA)