

# Senior Seminar

**Instructor**

M. Scott Wilkerson

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8:20-9:50 am TR

**Office Hours**

2:45-3:45 pm MWF

other times: stop in or by appt.



## COURSE GOALS

This capstone course is designed to provide you with the opportunity to not only reflect on the knowledge and skills that you have developed during your DePauw career, but to also apply your learned expertise in situations that will prepare you for the next phase in your life after DePauw (whether it be a job or graduate school). Specifically, upon completion of this course, you should gain experience honing your oral and written communication skills by...

- developing graduate school/job search skills and resources. You will have the opportunity to research existing graduate schools/advisors and current employment opportunities in your area of interest. You also will have the opportunity to develop a professional resume, a LinkedIn profile, letters of application, and a digital storymap portfolio of your work/experiences while at DePauw.
- creating a lecture/activity on a topic of your choice. You will gain experience synthesizing information on a topic of interest to you and then teaching/explaining the material to an audience as part of a mock class.
- critically reading the scientific literature. You will sharpen your critical thinking skills by reading and analyzing manuscripts on a topic of your choice from the primary literature. You also will have the opportunity to craft a presentation and to lead a group discussion about the manuscripts.
- peer reviewing your classmates' work. You will have the opportunity to review and to constructively critique each other's work in order to achieve a polished final product.

*This syllabus is meant to provide an outline for the general flow of the course. At my discretion, I will add or omit topics and/or modify the timetable.*

## DESCRIPTION

This seminar will meet for 3 hours each week to work on various assignments and to engage in discussions.

There will be 6 main assignments:

1. Resume & LinkedIn Profile.
2. Graduate School Search & Application.
3. Job Search & Application.
4. Storymap Portfolio.
5. Mock Class.
6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles.

**Assignments #1-4** are meant to prepare you for your graduate school or job searches and to give you experience in writing for a professional audience. Regardless of your goals upon leaving DePauw, introducing yourself properly digitally and on paper is a valuable skill.

**Assignment #5** is designed to give you experience summarizing material and explaining/teaching that material to an audience. Preparing and presenting material in a classroom setting will be part of your daily life as a graduate student on a teaching assistantship and can be invaluable for teaching workshops in an industry or government position.

**Assignment #6** is meant to give you experience researching and presenting a geoscience topic drawn from the primary literature. Each person will choose a topic in the geosciences and critically read/analyze two approved papers from the primary literature that the entire class will read. During seminar meetings, each student will lead a discussion-based class on the papers that they have chosen. The discussion will begin with a timed presentation by the student, followed by questions and a general discussion led by the student. The ability to read a science-based document, understand the content, and analyze this document for its strengths and weaknesses is a talent that will serve you well in the future as you read materials in your chosen profession. Moreover, having the ability to lead a technical discussion is an important skill in a wide range of settings.



## GRADES

The basis for final grades is described in the table below. All materials to be turned in for a grade must be turned in on time, clearly written (or typed), and stapled in order. Work that fails to meet these criteria will not be accepted and will receive a "0".

To receive S-certification, you must receive a course grade of 70% or higher. For additional assistance with S-related work, please visit the S Center, 115 Asbury Hall, 765-658-4039 (<https://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-resource-center/s-center/>).

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

- (90-100) You initiated or contributed to a discussion that led to a deeper or broader understanding of the subject matter; you raised new issues or extended the discussion into related areas; you were able to clearly defend your position on an issue with appropriate evidence and supporting argument; you challenged someone else's position, belief, or assertion, with contrary evidence or argument. It was clear that you carefully and critically read all the material.
- (80-89) You participated by answering or asking questions of a factual nature; your comments showed that you completed the reading/writing assignment, that you followed the general trend of the discussion, and that you understood the topic/issue being discussed.
- (70-79) You were in class and seemed interested in the discussion. You participated in the discussion just enough to show that you read the appropriate material and completed the assignment.
- (60-69) You showed up for class, but you really didn't say much of anything. You were only marginally engaged in the discussion and consequently, it was hard to assess your understanding of the topic. It was not clear that you read the material.
- (<60) You weren't in class, either physically or mentally.

Percent of Final Grade		Grading Scale*	
1. Resume & LinkedIn Profile	10%	88%	100% = A- to A
2. Graduate School Search & Application	15%	77%	87% = B- to B+
3. Job Search & Application	15%	66%	76% = C- to C+
4. Storymap Portfolio	15%	55%	65% = D- to D+
5. Mock Class	15%	00%	54% = F
6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles	15%		
Discussion	15%		

## TENTATIVE ORDER OF TOPICS

Week Starting	Activity
	<i>last day to withdraw - 10/26</i>
01: 08/20	Syllabus/Course Organization 1a. Resume
02: 08/27	1a. Resume
03: 09/03	1b. LinkedIn Profile
04: 09/10	2. Graduate School Search & Application
05: 09/17	2. Graduate School Search & Application
06: 09/24	3. Job Search & Application
07: 10/01	3. Job Search & Application
08: 10/08	4. Storymap Portfolio
09: 10/15	<b>Fall Break</b> (10/13-10/21)
10: 10/22	4. Storymap Portfolio
11: 10/29	5. Mock Class
12: 11/05	5. Mock Class
13: 11/12	5. Mock Class
14: 11/19	6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles <b>Thanksgiving</b> (11/21-11/25)
15: 11/26	6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles
16: 12/03	6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles
<b>Final Exam Period:</b> 6. Critical Analysis/Presentation of Scientific Journal Articles <i>Mon, Dec 10, 2018 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Julian 223</i>	
<b>Note: These topics and times are subject to change.</b>	

**Feedback:**

I usually need at minimum of a week to return work. While I might not always write detailed explanations on graded work, I will orally go over assignments in class and/or in person (usually based on student requests). Please ask questions in class or stop by my office if a concept is not clear or if you have a question on how I graded your work. Additionally, please give me feedback about how the course is going...PLEASE ask questions!

# Policy Page

## ADA STATEMENT

It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular and on-time attendance is expected and monitored (see the Student Handbook <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/academic/policies/attendance/>). As stated in the Student Handbook, excessive absences can be grounds for being dismissed from the course. In addition, it has been my experience that learning comprehension improves dramatically when students are present to listen to lectures, to ask questions, and to discuss the material in the classroom setting. In addition, some activities (e.g., discussions) require attendance to receive credit. Should you know that you will be absent (e.g., health issue regarding yourself or immediate family, athletic obligation, etc), please contact me in advance (or ASAP afterwards) to make arrangements about assignments.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage over other students in the class will be handled in accordance with established University procedures as described in the Academic Handbook section on Academic Integrity: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/academic/policies/integrity/>

DePauw Academic Resources on Academic Integrity  
<http://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-integrity/>

Writing Center Information on Plagiarism:  
<http://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-resource-center/w-center/w-center-handouts/>

## CELL PHONE/COMPUTER/SMART DEVICE USE

Before class begins, turn off your cell phone (or set it to vibrate) and put it away (face down on top of the table or in your backpack...not in the table or on your person). Do not check or send voicemail or text messages during class, and do not leave class to check or send messages unless 1) you have an emergency (inform your instructor prior to class starting of special circumstances involving a personal emergency situation that would require you to use your phone when class is in session) or 2) are on an instructor-designated break. In other words, do not use your cell phone in class for any reason at any time unless you have consulted with the course instructor. I will have my cell phone on in the case of a campus emergency.

If you have a cell phone/smartwatch on your person or on your desk/table during an exam without the instructor's permission, you will receive a 0 on the exam, and you will automatically be considered in violation of DePauw's academic integrity policy on cheating due to unauthorized use of a cell phone/smartwatch. You may not take your cell phone/smartwatch with you on bathroom breaks during exams.

Please read the following: <http://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/just-visiting/open-letter-incoming-freshmen>

Laptops, tablets, smartwatches, and other electronic devices are not allowed to be used in the classroom except for activities directly related to our course as specified by your instructor (e.g., do not check or send emails, chats, or texts, do not use your web browser except for course-sanctioned activities, etc.). Quit all programs not specifically designated by your instructor (not only reducing temptation, but also helping your computer run more efficiently).

*Violating the cell phone/computer/smart device use policy is one way students may be considered not engaged/participating in course activities (negatively affecting your Discussion grade).*

# Policy Page

## CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

- **Early is on time, and on time is late.** (especially on days with presentations).
- **Respect everyone.** (yourself, your peers, and your instructor).
- **Listen and contribute.** Lecture and discussion portions of our class can quickly morph to lecture only if you are not an active and contributing participant in class.
- **Work to the best of your ability.** True learning is hard work and is constructed and nurtured by you (not simply transferred from the instructor). A strong work ethic will not only serve you well in this course, but in life in general. Do not settle for less than your best effort.
- **Be aware of consequences (positive & negative).** If you make good decisions (e.g., reading the course materials, taking notes, asking questions, working hard, etc.), you will likely experience good consequences such as enhanced understanding of geoscience processes, improved grades, and general success in life. Conversely, poor decisions (e.g., waiting to cram right before an assignment is due, pulling an “all-nighter” and coming to class exhausted, relying on energy drinks or other substances, distracting yourself or others with cell phones or laptops, etc.) typically have negative consequences that cause your understanding of course content to suffer.
- **Consider the classroom your workplace.** Once you step inside the classroom, commit yourself to learning as much as you can during that time. Do not routinely get up during class to take care of personal needs (e.g., bathroom breaks, social networking, etc.). Please address these needs during the break between classes. If an emergency occurs, please feel free to leave the classroom to address it.

## AUDIO/VISUAL POLICY

- No video, audio, or still picture recordings are allowed during class without the instructor's permission.
- No video recordings, still picture, or other means of duplication (e.g., xeroxing) of homework assignments, labs, exams, etc. are allowed without the instructor's permission.
- ADA accommodations pertaining to recordings of lectures for taking notes are typically addressed by the instructor providing handouts of lecture slides/materials.

