

**ERS 103 – Dynamic Earth  
Syllabus – Summer Session 1 (May Term)**

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**Course Description**

This 3-credit undergraduate course explores Earth, examining the various processes that have shaped our wonderful planet and how they affect and interact with humans. After taking this course, your perception of the world around you will change. Next time you travel by air, you will be able to appreciate how mountains, rivers and deserts were formed, and why they are located where they are. While hiking, you will understand how the multicolored pebbles in a stream formed. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis and other geologic hazards will take on new meaning with your greater understand of the processes that cause them. We will explore climate change, considering the various natural and anthropogenic contributions. And we will examine where our natural resources come from, and why their supply is limited.

**The Brightspace Learning System**

Brightspace is a web-based software platform that provides a complete course management system. To log in, please use the link above or go to [courses.maine.edu](http://courses.maine.edu). When you register for a course that uses Brightspace, you will automatically be added to that Brightspace course. Once I make the course available to students, you should be able to see and access the course when you log into your Brightspace account. If you are having problems, go to the above link for a number to call for help.

**Required Textbook**

**Understanding Earth (8th Edition)** by John Grotzinger and Tom Jordon (Macmillan publishers). To purchase your book, navigate to the [University of Maine bookstore](#). As you navigate through the process you might see a message “*Problems using our textbook lookup? Click here to use an alternate version*”. I find the alternative version easier. There is only one option to choose from for this course (ERS 103), an Ebook called Achieve Read and Practice, which I highly recommend because it provides effective methods for improving your understanding of the book content. See instructions in the Brightspace course for how to log into Macmillan and access your Ebook. If the bookstore is out of the book, you can use the

information there (ISBN number and book title) to buy it directly from Macmillan.

### **Course Assessment - Please Read Carefully!!!**

ALL STUDENTS IN THIS COURSE WILL TAKE THE EXAMS ONLINE THROUGH BRIGHTSPACE AND SUBMIT THE STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ANY EXTRA CREDIT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS THROUGH BRIGHTSPACE.

#### *1. Statement of Responsibility (4% of final grade/40 points)*

The Statement of Responsibility assignment, which is worth 40 points. You will find it on Brightspace.

#### *2. Three Exams (96% of final grade/960 points)*

There will be three, 40-question, multiple-choice exams based on readings from the textbook. Exams will be taken on-line. Each exam is timed - you will have 50 minutes to complete each one. The results will automatically be recorded. You will generally be able to access your results directly after you take the exam. I recommend that you read the chapters very carefully taking notes and study the exercises and thought questions at the end of relevant chapters in preparation for the exams.

**\* Exam #1 = 320 points – To be available starting at 6 am on the Thursday of Week 1 (see assignment schedule in Brightspace).** Covers Chapters 1 through 5. To be **completed by 11:30 pm on the following Sunday.**

**\* Exam #2 = 320 points –To be available starting at 6 am on the Thursday of Week 2 (see assignment schedule in Brightspace).** Covers Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 10. To be **completed by 11:30 pm on the following Sunday.**

**\* Exam #3 = 320 points –To be available starting at 6 am on the Thursday of Week 3 (see assignment schedule in Brightspace).** Covers Chapters 12, 15, 17, 18, and 19. To be **completed by 11:30 pm on the following Sunday.**

**Please note:** there are also three practice exams with 10 questions each that go along with the real exams. **These 10 questions will be on the real exams** so it is definitely in your best interest to take the practice exams! **You can take them as many times as you want, and they do not count toward your grade.**

#### *3. Extra Credit (worth up to 75 points)*

You can complete extra credit assignments in Brightspace. Read up to 5 chapters from the textbook that we **do not** cover on the exams, and write a review focusing on what you have learned. **Each review should be at least 500 words and if properly done is worth 15 points.** Summarize the content of the chapter and describe your reaction, **in your own words (You will receive ZERO points for ALL extra credit assignments that you submit if we find**

**plagiarism in any of them**). A full chapter has a lot of information in it, so focus on the aspects that you found interesting. The purpose here is to practice your writing skills, and your ability to summarize a chapter of information in 500 words. Please note that references, quoted text that is taken directly from the textbook, and information like your name, chapter, etc., are NOT counted in the word total. We only count what you have written in your own words. All writing assignments are run through a plagiarism checker in Brightspace called *Turnitin Originality Check*. The grading of these reviews is all or nothing (no partial credit). Make sure it is at least 500 words, well written, and clearly on topic and you will get full credit (15 points). DO NOT submit a review that contains spelling and grammatical errors, or you will receive zero points for it. So, proofread it carefully. **Due no later than Wednesday at 11:30 PM following the third and last exam** (see assignment schedule in Brightspace for the due date).

**Determining your grade: Note there are no plus/minus grades!!! If you need some more points to get to the next letter grade, consider completing some extra credit assignments.**

1. **Exams: 96% of grade** (remember that you can find 25% of the questions in the practice exams so definitely use them to prepare for the real exams!)

Exam #1 320 points

Exam #2 320 points

Exam #3 320 points

2. **Statement of Responsibility: 4% of grade**

40 points

3. **Extra credit assignments**

75 points possible

**TOTAL:**

1000 points for exams and statement of responsibility (plus up to 75 points of extra credit)

**Grading:**

A = 900 or more points

B = 800 – 899 points

C = 700 – 799 points

D = 600 – 699 points

F = 599 or fewer points

### **On Academic Honesty - Please Read This Carefully!!!**

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to submit assignments written by another person, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the [University of Maine Student Conduct Code](#). The maximum possible

sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University.

**Regarding PLAGIARISM:** Without proper citation, taking the words of another writer directly as they are written from the textbook, websites, etc., is plagiarism. **Plagiarism is a serious breach of the Student Conduct Code**, so be sure that you understand what plagiarism is and that you do not plagiarize in your extra credit writing assignments. Violators will be reported to the appropriate authority for disciplinary action. In writing assignments we would ideally like you to paraphrase what you have read entirely in your own words. If you use strings of words exactly as another person wrote them, you must put them in quotation marks and cite the source. For example, "At divergent boundaries, plates move apart, and new lithosphere is created" (p.xx). You don't have to put the textbook's authors and title at the bottom of your post as reference in this case, but if you use outside sources, please include references at the bottom of your post as well as citing them in parentheses at the end of the sentences. Do some research on how to properly paraphrase the writing of others if you do not already know how. [Here is a recommended website for better understanding plagiarism and paraphrasing.](#)

### **Disability and Accommodation**

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact the [Student Accessibility Services](#) office.

### **Course Schedule Disclaimer**

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

### **Sexual Discrimination Reporting**

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination involving members of the campus, your teacher is required to report this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For confidential resources on campus: Counseling Center: 207.581.1392 or Cutler Health Center: 207.581.4000.

For confidential resources off campus: Rape Response Services: 1.800.310.0000 or Spruce Run: 1.800.863.9909.

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may need to report the

incident to others who can help:

For support services on campus: Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention: 207.581.1406, Office of Community Standards: 207.581.1409, University of Maine Police: 207.581.4040 or 911. Or see the [OSAVP website](#) for a complete list of services.

### **University of Maine COVID-19 Syllabus Statement**

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The virus is transmitted person-to-person through respiratory droplets that are expelled when breathing, talking, eating, coughing, or sneezing. Additionally, the virus is stable on surfaces and can be transmitted when someone touches a contaminated surface and transfers the virus to their nose or mouth. When someone becomes infected with COVID-19, they may either have no symptoms or symptoms that range from mild to severe and can even be fatal. During this global pandemic, it is imperative that all students, faculty, and staff abide by the safety protocols and guidelines set forth by the University to ensure the safety of our campus. All students are encouraged to make the Black Bear Cares Pact to protect the health of themselves, the health of others, and the College of Our Hearts Always.

**Black Bears Care Pact:** <https://umaine.edu/return/black-bears-care/>

**Symptom checking:** The symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe, and even people with mild symptoms may transmit the virus to others. Students are encouraged to use the symptom checking app each day before attending class or moving about campus and follow the recommendation prompted within the app. Students should monitor for the following symptoms daily: fever (temperature  $>100.4^{\circ}\text{F}/38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) or chills, new cough, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath/difficult breathing, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting, or the onset of new, otherwise unexplained symptoms such as headache, muscle or body aches, fatigue, or congestion/runny nose.

**Physical distancing:** Students need to make every effort to maintain physical distancing (6 feet or more) indoors and outdoors including within classrooms. The University classrooms and physical spaces have been arranged to maximize physical distancing. Follow the traffic patterns outlined in each building and outdoor space to avoid crowding. If students are in an academic setting (i.e. clinical or lab class) that requires them to reduce physical distancing, they should follow the instructor's guidelines.

**Face coverings:** Students must wear appropriate face coverings in the classroom. Face coverings must be worn in indoor and outdoor spaces on campus unless people are alone in a room with a door closed or when they are properly physically distanced and do not expect someone to approach them. When face coverings are removed, people are placing themselves and those surrounding them at increased risk for COVID-19.

**Eating and drinking in classrooms:** Students may not eat or drink in the classrooms and are encouraged to take their food or drink into areas designated for these purposes where they can maintain 6 feet physical distance from others.

**Hand hygiene:** Proper hand hygiene is an effective measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Students should wash their hands often with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, especially after using the bathroom, before eating or drinking, and before and after going to class or university spaces such as the recreation center, library, or dining halls.

**Contingency plans:** Classes will be held in various formats to offer flexibility, compassion, and empathy during these unprecedented times. Under certain circumstances, students or instructors may need to miss classes or in-person classes may be disrupted. Students are expected to notify their instructor if they are unable to attend an in-person or online class but will not be penalized for missing class due to illness or the need to care for a family member affected by COVID-19. If a disruption occurs, your instructor will provide communication and contingency plans.

**What to do if you have or suspect you have COVID-19:** If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been possibly exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should stay home, not interact with others, and contact your health care provider immediately to be tested for COVID-19. You may not attend in-person classes and should suspend interactions with others until you are tested. Prior to receiving test results, you should quarantine in your living area according to the Maine CDC guidelines below. Please follow the guidance of your health care professional regarding testing, quarantine, and isolation during the testing process and potential illness period.

**What to do if someone you know has or may have COVID-19:** If someone you know or that you have had close contact with (defined by the ME CDC as 15 mins or more within 6 feet or less) has tested positive for COVID-19, you should stay home and quarantine according to the guidance of the ME CDC, contact your health care provider, and continue to monitor for symptoms. You may be required to quarantine and/or be tested for COVID-19 under these circumstances. You may also have been exposed to COVID-19 by someone you do not know, and it is possible that you could be contacted through contact tracing to determine if you were exposed. Everyone should respond to these confidential questions to ensure the safety of themselves and those around them.

**Maine CDC guidelines:** <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/general-information.shtml>

**If you have questions or would like additional information related to the University of Maine COVID-19-specific policies or procedures, please use the following sources:**

University Webpages: [umaine.edu/return](http://umaine.edu/return) and [together.maine.edu](http://together.maine.edu)

COVID-19 Information line: 207.581.2681

Emergency Operations Center Email Contact: [umaine.alerts@maine.edu](mailto:umaine.alerts@maine.edu)