

Our Dynamic Ocean

OCN104, Fall 2012

Class Meetings: Monday/Wednesday 14:10-15:25, Sci101

Instructor: Petra Dekens, PhD

Office Location: Thornton Hall 623

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Office Hours: M/W 3:30-4:30PM, or by appointment

Textbook: Essentials of Oceanography

Author: Trujillo and Thurman, Publisher: Prentice Hall

Clicker: iClicker

Course Description

Our planet is for the most part covered by a thin layer of water -- the oceans. The dynamics, chemistry and geology of these water masses affect us all, and maybe more than we sometimes realize. In this course we will explore some of the principal processes in the ocean, its geology, the dynamics, and the implications for our climate (and changes therein). You are invited to actively participate in our discussions this semester, to creatively interact with others, and develop your own ideas!

Objectives

The objective of this course is to give you a first acquaintance with the physical ocean and the scientific ideas that have emerged from studying it. If this course is completed successfully, you will have developed

- a basic understanding of current ideas about ocean processes and their impact on our lives;
- the ability to interpret maps, graphs, and other representations of the natural world;
- familiarity with basic scientific concepts, such as the notion of conserved quantities, and the ability to apply such concepts to real-life problems;
- an appreciation for the complexity of natural processes, their inherent interdisciplinary character, and the development of scientific ideas.

Course Logistics

General Course Policy

It is important to come to all class meetings prepared. Class material such as presentations, notes and/or visuals, and lab materials will be posted on the course iLearn website. An abbreviated PDF of the day's lecture notes will be available on iLearn to print out before each class (by noon). Printing these notes and bringing them to class will help you take notes efficiently and affectively. However, these posted notes are NOT intended to substitute for class attendance (they are not the complete lecture).

Please note that we will communicate by email and through iLearn about course material etc. Please make sure you log into iLearn and **check your @SFSU.edu email regularly (daily)**. There will also be weekly iLearn quizzes (see next page) designed to help you prepare for the material that will be covered that week.

Attendance

To be successful in this course, you are strongly advised to attend class meetings. **You must come to class on time.** It is disruptive to me and to your classmates to come in late -- or to leave early.

If for whatever reason you cannot make it to class, please inform the instructor before the class meeting. Since a number of students are on waiting lists for this class, I will adhere to a strict attendance policy during the first weeks of the course, until **Friday, February 3rd (the drop deadline)**. During this period, if you attend lecture or lab (or arrive in class more than 15 minutes late), and you have not communicated your absence to me and your GTA before the start of class, you may be dropped from the class. We do this to ensure that we can offer the class to as many of you as possible.

Grade

Your grade will be based on labs, clicker quizzes (in-class), iLearn quizzes, and exams (two midterms and a final) as follows.

Assessment	Points/Percentage
Laboratory assignments	25 %
Poster presentation	5 %
Clicker quizzes (in-class)	10 %
iLearn quizzes (homework)	10 %
Midterm 1	15 %
Midterm 2	15 %
Final	20 %
Total	100 pts / 100%

Your percentage score will be translated to a letter grade according to the following scheme.

Course Grade	Letter grade range
88% - 100%	A- to A
78% - 87%	B- to B+
68% - 77%	C- to C+
50% - 67%	D
< 50%	F

Laboratory Activities

Laboratory activities are an integral part of this course. **You must attend the lab section in which you are enrolled. Labs will begin the first week of classes.** Lab section will be held weekly (as per the Course Schedule handout) and will **meet in Thornton Hall 513.**

The labs are designed to give you hands on experience. Generally, lab activities will be completed within the time designated for the lab, although some work outside of class time may be required. The lab sections will be taught by Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA's). Because each lab takes preparation time and collaboration with your fellow students, it is not possible to make up missed labs. Here are the key Lab policies:

- No Make up labs
- Your lowest lab grade will be dropped
- **If you miss more than 3 labs you will FAIL the course.**
- You must pay lab fees (\$10): This fee is for instructional material and is non-refundable. Please go to the Bursar's Office website at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~bursar/>. Click on "Web Payment: Using Credit Card and e-Checks", login in and select "Additional Fees". From the fee category select "Geoscience Lab Fees" and select the appropriate class. This fee must be paid by Monday September 10th. Failure to do so will result in a hold on the student's records and suspension of all university services.

Clicker Quizzes (in-class)

Most classes will start with a 'clicker quiz', which will assess your understanding of material covered in the previous lecture. Clicker quizzes will take place in the first 10 minutes of class. If you are late and miss the quiz you will not get credit (and no make-up opportunities). However, the lowest 3 scores of your quizzes will be dropped. These quizzes are intended to help you study and give you a sense of your understanding of the material. The iClickers will be used throughout the lectures, but only the quiz portion will be graded. Half of your grade of on the clicker quiz will be whether or not you answered the quiz questions correctly. The other half will be if you answered the questions throughout the lecture, serving as class attendance points. Do not bring a friend's clicker to class for them. If I see that you are using more than one clicker during class, I will take both clickers and result in zeros for all clicker-related grades for the entire semester. Please make sure you have purchased and registered your clicker (through www.iclicker.com) by **Wednesday September 5th, 2012. We will have our first Clicker Quiz that day in class.**

iLearn Reading Quizzes (homework)

You will be given homework questions through iLearn. These questions will be based on assigned reading and other material and will be designed to help you prepare for the material to be covered that week. These quizzes will be made available to you for a certain time window (of which you will be informed). Be strict to adhering to the time window since you will not be able to access the quiz after it has closed.

Midterms & Final

There will be two midterm exams during the semester and a final (third) exam at the end of the semester. Exams must be taken on the scheduled date and time. ***There are no make-up exams offered.***

Please note that quizzes, in-class work, and exams often require the use of a basic calculator. So bring a calculator to class, labs, and exams! No cell phone calculators will be allowed.

Poster presentation

The poster presentation is an opportunity to investigate some aspect of oceanography in more detailed than what is covered in class. More details will be provided later, but the project will involve investigating a topic and presenting it to your colleagues (your fellow students). Your project **MUST** involve some observations, either from the field or through on-line data. We will provide you with a list of possible topics, and the GTA's will help you develop your ideas into a well thought out poster. You will present your poster to your colleagues during class time.

Students with disabilities

If you have disabilities and need accommodations for your class participation that I can provide, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, the Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate such accommodations. The DPRC, located in SSB 110, can be reached by telephone at 338-2724 (voice/TTY) or by e-mail at dprc@sfsu.edu

Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. Although there will be opportunities to work together, everything that you turn in must be your own expression of your understanding of the material. Academic misconduct in any part of the course may lead to failing the particular assignment and the course, and it may result in disciplinary sanctions.

Dropping, withdrawing & grading option procedures

During the first two weeks of instruction, dropping a course is permitted without academic penalty. No symbol is recorded on the student's permanent record. Students are responsible for making changes to their official academic schedule. After September 10th withdrawal from a course is not permitted except for serious compelling reasons. The "W" grade carries no connotation of quality of students' performance and is not used to calculate grade point average.