***Geoscience Fundamentals Group Project Introduction***

*"Writing is Nature's Way of showing you how sloppy your thinking is."*

*-Anonymous*

***Project Goal****:*Organize, carry out, report, and present a scientifically structured research study.

***Learning Objectives***

* To identify the various methods of science
* To define a focused research question
* To gather and interpret evidence to inform the research question
* To respond to the research question with an evidence-supported argument
* To communicate the argument using an appropriate written and oral organizational structure
* To collaborate effectively and productively with peers

***Task***

In a written report and an oral or poster presentation, present the results of a descriptive study that will aid the Geosciences Curriculum Committee with their revision of the undergraduate geosciences coursework. Your reports must include:

* An *abstract* that summarizes all sections of your manuscript
* An *introduction* with background information to support the objective/purpose of your review
* A description of the *methods* you used in your study
* A descriptive summary of the *results* of the class review of each university’s curriculum
* A *discussion* (synthesis) of the results of the class findings and how they might be useful at VT
* A list of cited *references*.
* A persuasive PowerPoint oral presentation or PowerPoint poster presentation of your study.

***Topics, Universities, and Groups***

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| ***Topic***  | ***Universities*** | ***Group Members*** |
| 1. Undergrad non-major course offerings (Intro)
 | UC San Diego, UCLA, UC Santa Barbara | Alsaad, Lipscomb, McClimans |
| 1. First-year experiences in geosciences (FYE)
 | UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Santa Cruz  | Prunty, Hoover, Lahart |
| 1. Geoscience living/learning communities (LLC)
 | Oregon, Oregon State, U Washington  | Gorce, Griffiths, Haynes  |
| 1. Geoscience core course offerings (Core)
 | CU Boulder, U Utah, U Wyoming  | Wheeler, Blower, Overby |
| 1. Geoscience capstone courses (Capstone)
 | U Arizona, Arizona State, U New Mexico | Brown, N., Robinson, Driscoll |
| 1. Geoscience undergrad research (UResearch)
 | U Texas Austin, Texas A&M, U Oklahoma  | Distad, Cavanagh, Aluise |
| 1. Geoscience field study/study abroad (FS&SA)
 | U Michigan, Michigan State, U Wisconsin | Staton, Sarver, Stamper |
| 1. Geoscience learning outcomes (GLO)
 | Perdue, Indiana University, U Illinois  | Bly, Hardy, Phillips |
| 1. Geoscience assessment of learning (Assess)
 | U Tennessee, U Kentucky, Ohio State | Seay, Becker, Keenan |
| 1. Geoscience majors/options offered (Major)
 | U VA, NC State, UNC Chapel Hill | Henley, Brown, A., Matthews |
| 1. Geoscience curricular models/integration (Models)
 | Georgia Tech, U Georgia, U Florida, Duke | Slaughter, Laffoon, Belton, Overbey, A |
| 1. Cognate science requirements (Cognate)
 | Penn State, U Maryland, SUNY Stonybrook | Elmiger, Peterson, Neary  |

***Getting Started with Information Searching***

Once you have received your "curriculum topic” get familiar with the scholarly and popular literature on it. (*For now, ignore the three universities listed next to your topic*.) College librarians Ed Lener and Margaret Merrill will guide you in a review of the literature to support your topic.

As you locate pertinent materials, enter your citations into a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet will function as an annotated bibliography of background information that will inform your topic.

You can download the spreadsheet template (1005\_Project\_InfoSearch\_2011.xlsx) from Resources/Project. After downloading it, rename it by adding the abbreviated topic name (in parentheses in the table above) to the end of the filename.

Each group will fill out one spreadsheet, which should have about 15 entries because each person in the group is responsible for five sources in that spreadsheet. When you are finished, upload your spreadsheet (with a renamed filename) to your discussion site in Forums.