

Starting Point: Linking Methods and Materials for Introductory Geoscience Courses



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Introductory courses are one of the most challenging teaching environments for geoscience faculty. Courses are often large, students have a wide variety of background and skills, and student motivation can include completing a geoscience major, preparing for a career as teacher, fulfilling a distribution requirement, and general interest. The Starting Point site provides help for faculty teaching introductory courses with examples of things that can be used in class and the information you need to use them well.

What Can You Find On the Starting Point Site?

- Hundreds of time-tested, peer-reviewed teaching examples, spanning the subjects addressed in entry-level geoscience courses and searchable by topic.
- An introduction to teaching with a variety of teaching methods – from field labs and game-based learning to role-playing, Socratic questioning and inquiry based on investigative casework and datasets.
- Tips on the most effective ways to use those methods.
- A special section on strategies for incorporating an Earth systems approach in your courses, on that integrates solid earth, atmospheric and ocean science in a way that emphasizes their interactions and complimentary roles.

Looking for Examples of Things You Can Do In Class?

Starting Point contains a fully searchable collection of teaching activities authored by faculty. Each example includes all of the information you need to successfully adapt or adopt this activity in your class .

There are 477 examples spanning these topics

- Atmosphere
- Biosphere
- Climate
- Earth Surface
- Energy/Material Cycles
- Human Dimensions/Resources
- Hydrosphere/Cryosphere
- Ocean
- Solar System
- Solid Earth
- Time/Earth History

Faculty Find That:

- Examples are extremely helpful and spark creativity
- Pedagogic information is placed in a useful context
- Starting Point is a great place to learn about teaching methods
- 8000 people visit per month

Interested in Contributing?

Faculty are invited to contribute to the example collection, participate in site evaluation, propose new additions to the site and/or to volunteer as an author. We particularly encourage faculty to submit reviews of examples they use to the DLESE Community Review system. For more information contact Cathy Manduca or visit our website.