Geology

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Geology integrates physical, chemical, and biological studies of the Earth from its inception to the present day. Courses in Earth Science increase every student’s appreciation of the world’s natural processes and of how current fluctuations in the magnitudes and frequency of geological events and in the availability of natural resources affect human societies and their integrated ecosystems. Serious students of geology find opportunities in the environmental, energy, mining, teaching, engineering, and geophysics fields, and in resource management, K-12 education, academia, hydrogeology, space science, hazard management, and oceanography.

A student who enters Whitman without any prior college-level preparation in geology will have to complete 49 credits (32 in geology) to fulfill the requirements for the geology major. After a geology or geology combined major is declared, no geology course, except Geology 158, may be taken P-D-F.

Learning Goals: Upon graduation, a student will be able to:
- Apply geologic concepts to the interpretation of geologic materials and landscapes
- Apply quantitative techniques to geological questions
- Read and interpret geological information, including graphical data, geologic and topographic maps, and scientific literature
- Effectively communicate geologic concepts, including by written communication, oral communication, and mapmaking

Distribution: Courses completed in geology apply to the science and quantitative analysis (selected courses) distribution areas.

Total credit requirements for a Geology major: A student who enters Whitman College with no prior experience in geology will need to complete 49 credits with 32 credits in Geology.

The Geology major:

- 32-33 credits of geology (49-50 credits total with no prior experience)
- Required geology courses:
  - Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
  - Geology 227, 270, 350, 358, 405, 420, and 470
  - One course from Geology 312, 321, or 368
  - Field camp (a minimum of 3 credits of Geology 480)
- Required supporting science courses:
  - Mathematics 124 or 125, 128, or 247
  - Chemistry 125 and 135
  - Physics 145 or 155
  - A minimum of 6 credits numbered higher than 125 in any of the following: mathematics and statistics, chemistry, physics, or computer science
- Notes on required courses:
  - AP credit may not be used to fulfill the supporting science coursework listed above. Students with AP credit or have tested out of any of these courses in mathematics and statistics, chemistry, physics, or computer science should take the next higher course in the department’s sequence.
  - No PDF after declaration, except Geology 158.
- Senior requirements:
  - Geology 470
Senior assessment:
- Four-hour written exam;
- Oral exam, which may be conducted in the field

Honors
- Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
- Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
  - Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
- Accumulated at least 87 credits
- Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
- Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
- Major GPA of at least 3.500
- Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
- Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
- Pass the senior assessment with distinction
- The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar’s Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
- The department submit “Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate” to the Registrar’s Office no later than the Reading Day
- An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day

The Geology minor:
- 16 credits
- Required courses:
  - Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
  - Geology 227, 301, 312, or 350

The Astronomy-Geology combined major:
- 65-66 total credits
  - 20 credits in astronomy
  - 27-28 credits in geology
  - 4 credits in chemistry
  - 8 credits in physics
  - 6 credits in mathematics and statistics
- Required astronomy courses:
  - Astronomy 177, 178, and 179
  - One course from Astronomy 310, 320, 330, 350, 360, or 380
  - At least two additional credits in Astronomy courses numbered 310-392
  - Two credits of Astronomy 490
- Required geology courses:
  - Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
  - Geology 227, 270, 350, 358, and 470
  - Two of the following: Geology 310, 405, or 420
  - Two credits of Geology 490
- Other required courses:
  - Chemistry 125, 135
  - Mathematics 124 or 125, 126
Physics 145 or 155, Physics 156

Notes on courses:
- No courses for the major may be taken PDF.
- Strongly recommended courses: Computer Science 167, Mathematics 225, 244, Chemistry 126, 136, Physics 245, 255

Senior requirements:
- Astronomy 490
- Geology 470 and 490
- Senior assessment:
  - Comprehensive written exams in both geology and astronomy
  - One-hour oral exam by astronomy and geology faculty

Honors in Astronomy-Geology:
- Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors;
- Earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 and a major GPA of at least 3.500
- Write a thesis graded A or A- by department faculty;
- Pass the senior assessment with distinction;
- Department Chairs will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the third week of April
- An acceptable copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than reading day

The Biology-Geology combined major:

- 66-70 total credits
  - 23-26 credits in biology
  - 26-29 credits in geology
  - 14-18 credits in other departments

Required biology courses:
- Biology 111, 112, 205
- Four credits from the Organismal Biology category
- Four credits from the Ecology/Evolution category
- At least four additional credits in Biology and/or BBMB courses numbered 200 and above
- Three credits of Biology 489, 490, or 498 (or three credits of Geology 480, 490, or 498)

Required geology courses:
- Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
- Geology 227, 270, 350, 358, and 470
- Geology 312 or 368
- One course from Geology 301, 321, or 405
- Three credits of Geology 480, 490, or 498 or three credits of Biology 490 or 498

Required supporting science courses:
- Chemistry 125, 126, 135, and 136, or Chemistry 140
- Chemistry 245
- Mathematics 124 or 125, Mathematics 126 or a statistics course (Mathematics 128 or 247, Economics 227, Psychology 210, or Sociology 208)

Notes on courses:
- No courses taken PDF may be applied to the major
- Two semesters of Physics and field experience are strongly recommended.

Senior requirements:
○ Geology 470
○ Geology 490 or 498, or Biology 490 or 498
○ Senior assessment:
  ■ Comprehensive written exams in both geology and biology;
  ■ One-hour oral exam by biology and geology faculty

● Honors:
○ Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors
○ Earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 and a major GPA of at least 3.500
○ Write a thesis graded A or A- by department faculty
○ Pass the senior assessment with distinction
○ Department chairs will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the third week of April
○ An acceptable copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than reading day

The Chemistry-Geology combined major

● 51-55 total credits
  ○ 16-20 credits in chemistry;
  ○ 25 credits in geology;
  ○ 10 credits from other departments

● Required chemistry courses:
  ○ Chemistry 125, 126, 135, and 136, or Chemistry 140
  ○ Chemistry 310
  ○ Two of the following: Chemistry 320, 346, or 388

● Required geology courses:
  ○ Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
  ○ Geology 227, 270, 350, 358, 405, 460, and 470

● Required supporting science courses:
  ○ Mathematics 124 or 125, 126
  ○ Physics 145 or 155

● Notes on courses:
  ○ No courses taken PDF may be applied to the major
  ○ Majors are strongly encouraged to do a senior research project, enrolling in:
    ■ One credit of Chemistry 401 or 402
    ■ Two credits in Chemistry 490 or 498, or three credits of Geology 490 or 498

● Senior requirements:
  ○ Geology 470
  ○ Senior assessment:
    ■ Comprehensive written exams in both geology and chemistry
    ■ One-hour oral exam by chemistry and geology faculty

● Honors:
  ○ Earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 and a geology GPA of at least 3.500;
  ○ Complete an Honors Thesis:
    ■ Students must submit a thesis proposal to geology faculty within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which the student is eligible;
    ■ An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day;
Thesis must be graded A or A- by geology department faculty
- Pass the senior assessment with distinction;
- Earn a minimum of 87 credits;
- Must have completed at least two semesters at Whitman College

The Geology-Computer Science combined major:

- 49-56 total credits
  - 17 credits in computer science (21 if the student has not previously taken Computer Science 167 or equivalent)
  - 18-20 credits in geology
  - 10-11 credits in supporting science courses
  - 4 credits of senior requirements

- Required Computer Science courses:
  - Computer Science 270 (with a prerequisite of 167 or equivalent experience)
  - Computer Science 275 or 325
  - Computer Science/Mathematics 215
  - Three additional credits of Computer Science at the 200 level
  - Three additional credits of Computer Science at the 300 level

- Required Geology courses:
  - Introductory geology (Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126)
  - Geology 227 and 270
  - Two of the following Geology courses: 301, 310, 350, 418, 420, 460

- Required supporting science courses:
  - Mathematics 124 or 125
  - Physics 145 or 155
  - Chemistry 125 or 140

- Senior requirements:
  - Geology 470
  - Computer Science 495 and 496, OR 3 credits of Geology 490 or 498

- Notes on courses:
  - No courses taken PDF may be applied to the major
  - Geology 158 recommended

- Honors:
  - Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors
  - Earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 and a major GPA of at least 3.500
  - Write a thesis graded A or A- by department faculty
  - Pass the senior assessment with distinction
  - Department chairs will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the third week of April
  - An acceptable copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than reading day

The Geology-Physics combined major

- 61-62 total credits (with no credit for prior experience)
○ 25 credits in geology
○ 21-22 credits in physics
○ 13 credits in mathematics and statistics
○ 4 credits in chemistry

- Required geology courses:
  ○ Introductory geology from Geology 110 and 111, or 120 and 121, or 125 and 126
  ○ Geology 227, 270, 310, 358, 405, 420, and 470

- Required physics courses:
  ○ Physics 145 or 155 or 347
  ○ Physics 156, 245, 255, and 267
  ○ Two of the following: Physics 325, 339, 347, 357, or 385
    ■ Physics 347 may not be used to satisfy multiple requirements

- Required supporting science courses:
  ○ Chemistry 125 and 135
  ○ Mathematics 225 and 244

- Other Notes:
  ○ No courses taken PDF may be applied to the major
  ○ If students place out of Physics 155, they must take Physics 347

- Senior requirements:
  ○ Geology 470
  ○ Senior assessment:
    ■ Comprehensive written exams in both geology and physics
    ■ One-hour oral exam by physics and geology faculty

- Honors
  ○ Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
  ○ Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
    • Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
  ○ Accumulated at least 87 credits
  ○ Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
  ○ Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
  ○ Major GPA of at least 3.500
  ○ Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
  ○ Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
  ○ Pass the senior assessment with distinction
  ○ The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar’s Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
  ○ The department submit “Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate” to the Registrar’s Office no later than Reading Day
  ○ An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day

The Geology-Environmental Studies combined major: The requirements are fully described in the Environmental Studies listing of the catalog.

107 Special Topics in Geology
1-4 credits
Any current offerings follow.
110 The Physical Earth
Spring  Bader  3 credits
Physical geology including earth materials, the processes responsible for uplift and erosion, landforms, plate tectonics and the earth’s interior. Three lectures per week. Open only to first- and second-year students; others by consent of instructor. Students who have received credit for Geology 120 or 125 may not receive credit for Geology 110. Corequisite: Geology 111.

111 The Physical Earth Lab
Spring  Bader  1 credit
Laboratory exercises to accompany classroom instruction in The Physical Earth. Must be taken concurrently with Geology 110. Topics may include the identification of rocks and minerals, interpretation of topographic and geologic maps, and fluvial processes. One three-hour laboratory per week; field trips. Students who have received credit for Geology 121 or 126 may not receive credit for Geology 111. Corequisite: Geology 110. Lab fee: maximum $20.

120 Geologic History of the Pacific Northwest
Fall  Spencer  3 credits
An examination of the geologic history of the Pacific Northwest, including Washington, Idaho, Oregon, northern California, and southern British Columbia. Fundamental geologic processes that have shaped the Pacific Northwest will be examined through detailed study of different locales in the region. Three lectures per week. Open to first- and second-year students, others by consent of instructor. Students who have received credit for Geology 110 or 125 may not receive credit for Geology 120. Corequisite: Geology 121.

121 Geologic History of the Pacific Northwest Lab
Fall  Spencer  1 credit
Laboratory exercises to accompany classroom instruction in Geologic History of the Pacific Northwest. Must be taken concurrently with Geology 120. Topics may include general geologic skills such as the identification of rocks and minerals, interpretation of topographic and geologic maps, and fluvial processes, with a particular focus on the topics examined in lecture. One three-hour laboratory per week; field trips. Students who have received credit for Geology 111 or 126 may not receive credit for Geology 121. Corequisite: Geology 120. Lab fee: maximum $20.

125 Environmental Geology
Fall  Staff  3 credits
Natural geologic processes including Holocene deglaciation, landslides, flooding, volcanism, and earthquakes pose risks both to human wellbeing and societal infrastructure. Human decisions for how we choose to interact with the physical environment and its resources (atmosphere, soils, energy sources, minerals) may further imperil societies or may inform global and regional mitigation of Anthropocene climate change, water quality and quantity problems, resource use, and land erosion and mass movement. This introductory course provides exploration and discussion of geologic processes within the paradigm of plate tectonics. Three lecture/discussion periods per week. Students who have received credit for Geology 110, 120, or 210 may not receive credit for Geology 125. Open to first- and second-year students; others by consent of instructor. Corequisite: Geology 126.

126 Environmental Geology Lab
Fall  Staff  1 credit
Laboratory exercises to accompany classroom instruction in Environmental Geology. Must be taken concurrently with Geology 125. Topics may include general geologic skills such as the identification of rocks and minerals, interpretation of topographic and geologic maps, and fluvial processes, with a particular focus on natural hazards such as floods and mass movement. One three-hour laboratory per week; field trips. Students who have received credit for Geology 111 or 121 may not receive credit for Geology 126. Corequisite: Geology 125. Lab fee: maximum $20.
**130 Weather and Climate**  
*Not offered 2022-23*  
3 credits  
An introductory course in meteorology designed for nonscience majors with an emphasis on the weather patterns and climate of the Pacific Northwest. Topics covered include Earth’s heat budget, atmospheric stability, air masses, midlatitude cyclones, global circulation patterns and climates, and the origins of violent weather phenomenon.

**140 Tactics for scientific study of societal challenges**  
*Fall*  
Nicolaysen  
1 credit  
Human communities must adapt to gradual and abrupt changes in the physical environment. Sea-level rise, storm surge, flooding, and landslides are examples of hazardous environmental events requiring mitigation. While enhancing the infrastructure that copes with these physical changes, geoscientists ensure energy, water, and mineral resources and mitigate toxic legacy waste. Necessary first steps in associated geoscience investigations require identifying the scope and scale of a research question and evaluating which scientific instrument to implement during a project. This 1 credit course provides a science experience for incoming first-year students interested in pursuing any science major. The course is intended for students whose high school science had few hands-on science lab experiences. This course may include one or two half-day field trips to local county and city infrastructure and to local geologic features. The course also introduces scientific instrumentation including the imaging capabilities of electron microscopes, chemical analysis using X-Ray fluorescence spectroscopy, and/or laser analysis of particle sizes. Other activities include guest speakers, discussion of science articles written for the general public, and one short writing assignment. For first-year students only; participation pending approval of a short application. No distribution credit.

**158 Regional Geology**  
*Fall, Spring*  
Fall: Spencer; Spring: Staff  
1-3 credits  
The geology of part of the United States or elsewhere, with emphasis on geologic history, including petrology, stratigraphy, tectonics, and geomorphology. Lectures on the geology and other aspects of the area will precede field trips, which will take place during vacations and on long weekends. Geologic mapping may be involved. May be repeated for credit for different areas. Prerequisites: Geology 110 or 120 or 125 and consent of instructor. Graded credit/no credit. Fee: maximum $75 per semester.

**227 Sedimentology and Stratigraphy**  
*Spring*  
Spencer  
4 credits  
Fundamental principles of analysis pertaining to sedimentary rocks and rock sequences. Fluid flow, weathering, sediment transport, sedimentary structures, depositional systems. Geologic time and chronostratigraphy. Principles of Lithostratigraphy. Three one-hour lectures and one three-hour lab/week. Field trips. Textbook, professional articles, in-class presentations, research paper. Prerequisite: Geology 110 or 120 or 125.

**229 Geology and Ecology of Soils**  
*Not offered 2022-23*  
3 credits  
Soils provide nutrients, water and support for growing plants, host an amazing variety of organisms, and even influence global climate. This class will focus on the dynamic systems in soil and on the interactions between soils and larger ecosystem properties. Course topics will include pedogenic processes, agricultural ecosystems, the interpretation of paleosols, and the role of soils in the global biogeochemical cycling of organic carbon and nutrients. Lectures, field trip(s).

**250 Late Cenozoic Geology and Climate Change**  
*Spring*  
Persico  
3 credits  
The geology of the last few million years of Earth history, including glaciology, Pleistocene stratigraphy, glacial and periglacial geomorphology, and changes in flora and fauna. What are the causes of ice ages and the alternating glaciations and interglaciations within them? What are the roles of nature and humans in the current global climate
change? Research paper and field trip. **Prerequisites:** Geology 110 or 120 or 125, or Environmental Studies 120 and consent of instructor. Offered in alternate years.

### 258 Geology in the Field

**1-3 credits**

An exploration of the geology of a region, followed by a field trip to that area. Likely to include geomorphology; structure and tectonics; minerals, rocks, and sediments; fossils and stratigraphy. Classes followed by a field trip at least a week long. Students will make maps and presentations and keep a detailed notebook. **Fee:** variable depending on location, possible scholarships available. May be repeated as location changes. Any current offerings follow.

### 258 Geology in the Field: The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

**Spring Persico 1-3 credits**

This semester, Geology in the field will explore the geologic history and current environmental issues in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. This interdisciplinary course will cover themes in the Earth sciences, ecology, political ecology, and environmental history. Yellowstone’s unique and remarkable natural history will allow us to explore topics including super volcanoes, glaciation, climate change, and ecosystem dynamics. Additionally, the course will cover trophic cascade effects on ecosystems and landscapes associated with the eradication and reintroduction of wolves. Includes a 7-day field trip and camping beginning the day after graduation. The course is contingent upon the ability to travel safely during the Covid-19 pandemic. **Co-requisite:** ENVS-260. **Fee:** Up to $500.

### 270 Minerals, Society, and the Environment

**Spring Barbee 4 credits**

This intermediate-level course examines the role of minerals in human societies and Earth systems with particular emphasis on internal structure of minerals, the carbon cycle and carbon sequestration, the nuclear fuel cycle, and the growing concern regarding mining and resource scarcity. Skills include hand sample identification of minerals, analysis of crystal structure by X-Ray Diffraction, analysis of mineral composition by X-Ray Fluorescence or electron microscopy, primary literature searches and science writing. Lectures, discussions, and laboratory exercises. **Prerequisites:** Chemistry 125 and 135, and Geology 110 or 120 or 125. Open to Seniors by consent of instructor only. **Lab fee:** maximum $50.

### 301 Hydrology

**Spring Bader 4 credits**

A class devoted to understanding water resources, including both surface water and groundwater. We will study the hydrologic cycle and the properties of water, the shape and behavior of streams, the recharge and movement of groundwater, and environmental management of water including wells, dams, irrigation, and water contaminants. Lab topics will include stream gauging and the construction of hydrographs and hyetographs, determining peak discharge, water sampling, flow nets, well tests, and computer modeling of groundwater and contaminant flow. Three lectures and one three-hour lab per week. **Prerequisite:** Geology 110 or 120 or 125. **Corequisite:** Geology 301L. **Recommended prerequisites:** Chemistry 125 and Mathematics 126.

### 310 Geophysics

**Not offered 2022-23**

An introductory course in the application of seismic, gravitational, thermal, and magnetic methods for the study of the structure and composition of the interior of the Earth. **Prerequisites:** Geology 110 or 120, or 125 and Mathematics 124 or 125.
312 Earth History
Not offered 2022-23  4 credits
The physical and biological events during the geologic past. Special consideration given to plate tectonics and fossils in the lectures, and to fossils and geologic maps in the laboratories. Three lectures and one three-hour lab per week; required and optional field trips. Prerequisite: Geology 110 or 120 or 125 or consent of instructor.

321 Sedimentary Basin Analysis
Not offered 2022-23  4 credits
An intermediate-level course that examines the evolution of selected marine and nonmarine sedimentary basins primarily in North America. Consideration of sedimentary features ranging from small-scale sedimentary structures and grain textures and composition to bedform geometry, unit contacts and tectonic significance of depositional features represented. Fossil succession, biostratigraphy and paleoenvironmental indications. Hydrocarbon and other economically significant mineral potential. Geologic map interpretation of important sedimentary basins. Lectures, presentations, and field trips. Professional articles, Internet sources, reference sources. Prerequisites: Geology 110 or 120 or 125 and 227. Recommended prerequisite: Geology 368. Offered in alternate years.

338 Pages of Stone: The Literature of Geology
Not offered 2022-23  3 credits
Critical reading of the work of writers on Earth science. Examination of works demonstrating different styles, from scientific to poetry to descriptive prose, and how those writers incorporate Earth into their work. Two lectures per week, papers, in-class presentations, field trip. Prerequisites: Geology 110 or 120 or 125, or consent of instructor. Offered in odd-numbered years.

340 Volcanoes
Not offered 2022-23  3 credits
An investigation of volcanoes, including morphology, composition, eruption processes, periodicity, and impacts on climate and humans. Exploration of the topic will occur through lecture, in-class experiments, computer simulations, discussion of primary literature, and several field trips. Prerequisite: Geology 110 or 120 or 125. Offered in alternate years. Fee: maximum $40 unless field trip is outside of the Pacific Northwest.

350 Geomorphology
Fall          Persico          4 credits
Description, origin, development, and classification of landforms. Relationships of soils, surficial materials, and landforms to rocks, structures, climate, processes, and time. Maps and aerial photographs of landscapes produced in tectonic, volcanic, fluvial, glacial, periglacial, coastal, karst, and eolian environments. Exercises on photo-geology. Lectures, discussions, laboratories, and field trips. Prerequisite: Geology 110 or 120 or 125; open only to Geology majors and others by consent of instructor.

358 Field Geology of the Northwest
Fall, Spring Staff          1 credit
The geology of part of the Pacific Northwest, with emphasis on geologic history, including petrology, stratigraphy, tectonics, and mineralogy. Geologic mapping, paleontology, and mineralogy may also be involved. Most field trips will take place on long weekends. Each student will be required to write a report. May be repeated for credit for different areas. Required of all geology and geology combined majors. Prerequisite: Geology 110 or 120 or 125 and consent of instructor. Fee: maximum $75 per semester.

368 Paleobiology
Spring          Spencer          3 credits
A comprehensive examination of the fossil record through Earth history. Taxonomy and classification of important fossil groups, evolution and extinction, functional anatomy and morphology, ecologic significance of individual taxa and assemblages through time, paleogeographic reconstruction based on the fossil record, time-significance of fossil
groups. Two lectures, one three-hour lab/week. Textbook, journal articles, research paper, and weekend field trip. **Prerequisites:** Geology 110 or 120 or 125 and Geology 227. Offered in alternate years.

### 390 Independent Study
**Fall, Spring**  
Staff  
1-3 credits  
A reading or research project in an area of the earth sciences not covered in regular courses and of particular interest to a student. Maximum of six credits. **Prerequisite:** consent of instructor.

### 405 Volcanoes and the Solid Earth
**Fall**  
Harrigan  
4 credits  
The geologic history of the Pacific Northwest provides excellent examples of an active tectonic margin including accretion of oceanic crust and arc terranes and current arc volcanism. We examine magma generation and differentiation, volcano morphology, and physio-chemical processes of volcanoes from Earth’s mantle to the surface through interpretation of rock suites from the Stillwater Complex, the Cascade and Alaska-Aleutian arcs, and the Columbia River Basalt Group. Lab activities include reading the primary literature, hand sample identification, use of petrographic microscopes, interpretation of thermodynamic phase diagrams, an introduction to computer modeling of magmas (e.g., MELTS), and field trips possibly including one overnight field trip. **Prerequisites:** Chemistry 125, 135, and Geology 270 (formerly 343).  
*Lab fee:* maximum $30.

### 410-411 Problems in Earth Science
1-4 credits  
Specific problems in the geological sciences will be considered. Textbook and/or professional articles, discussions, paper, possible field trips. May be repeated for credit with different topics. **Prerequisite:** consent of instructor. Any current offerings follow.

### 415 Terroir
**Not offered 2022-23**  
3 credits  
*Terroir* is a French word that refers to the idea that agricultural products derive unique sensory characteristics from the physical and cultural environment in which they are produced. The focus of the course will be on the science, philosophy, economics, and politics of terroir, in particular as they relate to the production and marketing of wine. The course will only be open to seniors or others by consent, providing they are 21 years of age. **Prerequisite:** Geology 110 or 120 or 125 or 229 or consent of instructor.  
*Fee:* $50.

### 418 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems
**Fall**  
Bader  
3 credits  
A geographic information system (GIS) is a powerful computer tool designed for exploring, creating, and displaying spatial information. GIS has become the primary way in which spatial information is managed and analyzed in a variety of fields. Any data that has a spatial component (including most data in the Earth and environmental sciences) can potentially benefit from a GIS. Lectures will examine the applications and the conceptual framework for computer GIS, and lab exercises will teach students to use GIS software. The final third of the course is dedicated to individual projects. **Prerequisite:** consent of instructor.

### 420 Structural Geology
**Fall**  
Harrigan  
4 credits  
The description and analysis of intermediate- to large-scale rock structures. Topics include the analysis and graphical representation of stress and strain in rocks, deformation mechanisms, fabric development in metamorphic rocks, the geometry and mechanics of folding and faulting, and structures related to intrusive bodies. Geologic map interpretation and cross-section construction are used to analyze the structural geology of selected regions. Three lectures and one three-hour lab per week; field trip(s). **Prerequisites:** Geology 227 and 270.
430 Cordilleran Tectonics  
**Not offered 2022-23**  
3 credits  
An in-depth study of the tectonic events that shaped the western United States. A review of plate tectonic theory emphasizing plate interactions and orogenesis and the tectonic evolution of the western U.S. beginning with the amalgamation of Precambrian basement and ending with the development of the San Andreas transform and Cascadia subduction systems. Each week two class periods are devoted to lectures, discussions and student presentations. The third class period is reserved for practical exercises, particularly geologic map interpretation. There is one required weekend field trip. **Prerequisite:** Geology 227.

460 Geochemistry  
**Spring**  
Barbee  
3 credits  
An investigation of Earth’s systems and environmental problems using the principles of equilibrium, thermodynamics, diffusion, oxidation-reduction, solution chemistry, and isotope geochemistry. Skills will include discussion of primary scientific literature, statistical analysis of geochemical data, conditions of mineral formation via mineral equilibria models, and calculation of rock ages by radioactive decay. Themes of assigned readings may include carbon sequestration, water quality, or spent nuclear fuel disposal. May incorporate use of analytical equipment such as the Scanning Electron Microscope and Portable X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscope. **Prerequisites:** Geology 110 or 120 or 125, and Chemistry 126 or 140, or consent of instructor. **Recommended pre-or corequisites:** Geology 270 and Chemistry 126.

470 Senior Seminar  
**Fall**  
Bader  
1 credit  
Seminar on various topics in the earth sciences. Topics covered in each year are chosen by the instructors, and may include the history of geology, geologic controversies, and ethical issues related to the profession of geology. Students are expected to complete assigned readings and make an oral presentation. Required of all senior geology majors and combined majors.

480 Field Mapping  
**Not offered 2022-23**  
1-4 credits  
An advanced course in geological field methods. In a typical course students make maps in stratified and crystalline terranes, with rocks in varying degrees of deformation. Maximum of nine credits. **Prerequisites:** Geology 227, 420, and consent of department. **Note:** Geology 480 is not regularly offered by Whitman College. Students wishing to complete major requirements with a field experience should plan to complete an approved summer field course offered by another collegiate institution. **Fee:** variable depending on location, scholarships available.

490 Senior Research  
**Fall, Spring**  
Staff  
1-3 credits  
A project involving field and laboratory research in the geological sciences. Written and oral reports are required during the senior year. Maximum of six credits. **Prerequisite:** consent of instructor.

498 Honors Thesis  
**Fall, Spring**  
Staff  
2-3 credits  
Designed to further independent research or projects leading to the preparation of an undergraduate thesis. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in geology. **Prerequisite:** admission to honors candidacy.