

PHYSICAL SCIENCE 201 COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR WINTER 2010 (version 2)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. John E. Poling, Science E-38, phone (ext. 1583), e-mail (jpoling@calpoly.edu), web page (<http://www.calpoly.edu/~jpoling>)

OFFICE HOURS: Will be posted at my office and on my web page. I encourage you to come to my office hours for help with the course. Please try to have specific questions in mind so that the time can be used efficiently.

TEXT: Oceanography, 6th edition or 7th edition, by Tom Garrison. I will be teaching from the 6th Edition, but either edition will be fine. I will put one copy of the 6th edition on two hour reserve.

EXAMS: Two midterms exams will be given, probably on Monday 1/25 and on Thursday 2/18. I will confirm or change these dates at least one week before the exams. The two midterm exams will be worth about 80 points each. The final exam is on Monday 3/15 and will be worth about 120 points. The exams will have mostly multiple choice questions, with a few short answer questions and a few simple numerical problems. All work will be done on the exam sheets - you will not need a scantron. The questions on the exams will be about the material covered in the lectures and in the homework. If there is any material you are responsible for which was not covered in the lectures or in the homework I will identify such material clearly for you. The final exam will review the two midterm exams and will also be on the material covered after the second midterm exam, with about 80 points for review and 80 points for new material. The review part of the final exam is an incentive for you to learn the correct answers to any questions you missed on the two midterm exams. If you understand the answer to a question on one of the midterms you should be able to answer a slightly altered version of that question on the final.

I will allow you to bring one three inch by five inch note card with notes written on both sides to each midterm exam. You will be allowed to bring the two note cards from the midterms and a third note card for the new material to the final exam. These note cards must be handwritten and cannot be photocopied or computer printed, and I am serious about the size of the cards. I may have a scissors with me to cut down any oversize cards.

You should bring a calculator to each exam to calculate the answers to numerical problems. Some cell phones have a calculator function, but cell phones may not be used during an exam - not even as calculators.

If you will not be able to come to an exam, you must notify me before the scheduled exam time . You may notify me in person, by a call to my office voice mail, or by e-mail. The best way to communicate with me is by email. You must also communicate with me before the next meeting of the class so that we can decide when and where you will make the exam up. I will offer you a makeup exam only if you follow these rules, and the limit is one makeup exam unless the circumstances are very unusual.

Forgetting your calculator or you note card/s could cause you a serious handicap on an exam. Try not to put yourself into that position, but if you do please let me know about it before you begin writing the exam. I will allow you to go home to get your materials and begin the exam late, or even take the exam later in the day, but once you have started writing the exam you must finish it. If you are significantly late for an exam I will either give you extra time at the end or allow you to take the exam later in the day. If you are too sick to take an exam or were too sick to prepare for it properly, please tell me about your difficulties before you begin writing the exam. After you begin writing an exam it is too late to put the exam off.

PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES: If you have medical or family or personal problems which may make this a difficult quarter for you, please talk to me early in the quarter or soon after the problem occurs in case there is anything I can do to help you. If you wait until you have received a very low exam score, there will be little I can do.

HOMEWORK: Homework assignments with some conceptual questions and some numerical problems requiring calculations will be made available on my PSc 201 web page. You should have a simple calculator for the problems. The homework will not be collected. The answers will be provided on the web page so that you can check your work. The homework questions I provide and the assigned review questions at the end of the chapters will provide only partial preparation for the exams. You must also study your lecture notes carefully.

CREDIT FOR PERSONAL FIELD TRIPS: I have decided on a number of possible activities you may see or do, mostly along our coastline. Each of these will require a visit to the location, a picture or a drawing, a description, and at least one reference (probably a web site) from which you learned more about whatever you saw or did. Read the requirements for the activities on the PSc 201 web site carefully. Each of these activities will be worth 5 points, and you will be limited to 8 of these for a total of 40 possible points. Your first report is due in class on or before 2/2, and should contain at least 4 activities - more if you wish. If your first report does not contain the limit of 8 activities, you will want to turn in a second report with the remaining activities. You must turn in your second report in class on or before 3/3 containing whatever additional activities you do, but your second report is limited to a maximum of 4 activities. No late papers will be accepted so if you haven't done everything you wanted to by these dates you will just have to turn in whatever activities you have finished. It is not acceptable to send me your report attached to an email - you must turn in hard copy. If you hand in a first report on only 2 activities by the first deadline on 2/2, you can turn in only 4 more activities for your second report so you will be turning in a total of only 6 activities and you will not be able to reach the total of 8 activities allowed. Descriptions of the possible activities are listed on my PSc 201 web page. If you do not have your own car you will probably be able to find other students who will be willing to take you along on their expeditions. Let me know if you are having trouble finding a ride and I will try to help.

ATTENDANCE: I will take attendance occasionally by passing around a roll sheet on which you will mark an x to show that you are present. Then I will count those present to make sure that count agrees with the number of x's. I will not be giving any extra credit for good attendance or charging any penalty for poor attendance, but when a student asks a favor the first thing I check is my attendance records. Sometimes there is a good reason for poor attendance, but usually there is not a good reason and I am less sympathetic to any problems students with poor attendance may have with the course.

CONTACT ME: Please feel free to come to my office hours or to email me whenever you have any questions or concerns about this course.

YOUR GRADE: Grading scales for the two midterm exams will be announced in class to give you some idea of how well you are doing as the quarter progresses. At the end of the quarter I will list all of your points on the PSc 201 web page so you can confirm that I have all of your points recorded correctly. I will identify you by the last four digits of your Cal Poly Employee ID, which you can find on the "My Cal Poly" page. The total points you accumulated during the quarter will be used to determine your course grade.