

MSCI/GEOL 215: Coastal Environments of the Southeast US

Spring 2011

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:15 PM; PSC 002

Dr. Jean Ellis

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Office Hours:

Friday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM and

by appointment (arrange via email)

About the Course

This introductory course will explore the coastlines involving geomorphological, hydrological, sedimentological, ecological, and societal phenomena. Students will learn about the fundamental processes and landforms found within the coastal zone and the impacts of human activity and natural disasters. Case studies will be presented throughout the semester that highlight the coastal zones of the southeast United States, defined here as North and South Carolina, Georgia, and the east coast of Florida.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and describe coastal processes that influence the southeast United States;
- Identify the influence of humans and natural disasters on coastal systems;
- Describe the importance of the coastal zone to environmental and economic systems; and
- Analyze and interpret environmental data.

Course Expectations

Students shall conduct themselves in a professional and collegial manner to both to their peers and to the instructor. Unacceptable behavior displayed during class will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from lecture or the course. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, using mobile phones, reading the newspaper, working on other assignments, napping, talking, and entering or leaving the classroom during lecture. The instructor has the right to remove students displaying disruptive behavior during class.

All email communication from students to the instructor shall originate from a University-issued e-mail account. E-mails shall have "MSCI 215" or "GEOL 215" as the first part of the subject line. Almost all communication from the instructor to the students will be through Blackboard. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that he/she is able to receive all messages from the Blackboard system.

Course Text

Due to the specialized nature of this course, there is no textbook. Relevant URL's will be provided in lecture. Several books that are used for generating lecture, that maybe helpful are:

Bird, E. 2008. Coastal Geomorphology: An Introduction. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Clayton, T.D. Taylor, Jr., L.A., Cleary, W.J., Hosier, P.E., Graber, P.H.F., Neal, W.J., and Pilkey, O.H. 1992. Living with the Georgia Shore. Durham: Duke University Press.

Hayes, M.O. and Michel, J. 2008. A Coast for All Seasons: A Naturalist's Guide to the Coast of South Carolina. Columbia: Pandion Books.

Lennon, G., Neal, W.J., Bush, D.M., Pilkey, O.H., Stutz, M. and Bullock, J. 1996. Living with the South Carolina Coast. Durham: Duke University Press.

Masselink, G. and Hughes, M.G. 2003. Introduction to Coastal Processes and Geomorphology. New York: Oxford University Press.

Park, D. (ed). 1989. Waves, Tides and Shallow-Water Processes. London: The Open University.

Grading

The grade breakdown for this course is:

Exam x 3	90%
Quiz x 5	10%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

Examinations

There will be three, non-cumulative exams with objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false, and diagram identification). Review sheets will be distributed. Even though Exam 3 is not cumulative, it will be given during the final exam period. All exams are required. If you miss an exam with a documented and University-approved reason, you shall contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss a plan of action tailored to your specific situation. Missing any exam for an unexcused reason will result in a zero grade for that exam. The exams are worth 25%, 30%, and 35%. The highest exam grade will be weighted 35%, the middle exam grade 30%, and the lowest exam at 25%.

Extra credit will be available. Specific details about the extra credit assignment will be posted on Blackboard. Students completing the extra credit assignment will be eligible to earn a maximum of two points added to their *final* course grade. Make-up quizzes will only be allowed if a student has an extenuating and documented situation.

Note: MSCI/GEOL 215L is completely separate course. Students can be enrolled in MSCI/GEOL 215 without being enrolled in MSCI/GEOL 215L, however the opposite is not true.

Quizzes

Six quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Only the 5 highest quiz grades will be considered when calculating final grades, so each quiz is worth 2%. These quizzes will be unannounced, distributed at the beginning of lecture, and will cover high-level concepts discussed in the previous lecture.

Attendance

The University's attendance policy (<http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=476&returnto=search>) states that faculty can penalize students that miss more than 10% of the scheduled class sessions (which is three classes). Attendance will not be taken in this class; however, please review the policy regarding quizzes.

Final grades are determined according to the following scale:

VIP Grade	Final Course Percent
A	90 to 100%
B+	87 to <90%
B	80 to <87%
C+	77 to <80%
C	70 to <77%
D+	67 to <70%
D	60 to <67%
F	<60%

The instructor reserves the right to curve exams and/or the final course grade. The curve will be adjusted only to benefit the student; for example, an 89% may earn an "A". Students will be made aware of the curve when the exam is returned. All grades will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester. An Excel spreadsheet will be posted on Blackboard that will allow students to easily calculate your grade.

University of South Carolina Honor Code

It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this Honor Code or who knowingly assists another to violate this Honor Code shall be subject to discipline. All such cases will be handled in accordance with university policy as outlined at <http://www.sc.edu/academicintegrity/honorcode.html>.

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Tentative Schedule*

Date	Topics	Notes
1/11 (T)	Course Introduction	
1/13 (Th)	Coastal Environments	
1/18 (T)	Plate Tectonics	
1/20 (Th)	No Class	
1/25 (T)	Coastal Classifications	
1/27 (Th)	Sea Level Change	
2/1 (T)	Sea Level Change	
2/3 (Th)	Waves	
2/8 (T)	Waves	Exam 1 Review
2/10 (Th)	Exam 1	
2/15 (T)	Waves	Return Exam 1
2/17 (Th)	Waves	
2/22 (T)	Tides, Inlets, Estuaries, and Wetlands	
2/24 (Th)	Tides, Inlets, Estuaries, and Wetlands	
3/1 (T)	Tides, Inlets, Estuaries, and Wetlands	
3/3 (Th)	Tides, Inlets, Estuaries, and Wetlands	
3/8 (T)	No Class: Spring Break	
3/10 (Th)	No Class: Spring Break	
3/15 (T)	Sandy Coasts	
3/17 (Th)	Sandy Coasts	Exam 2 Review
3/22 (T)	Exam 2	
3/24 (Th)	Sandy Coasts	Return Exam 2
3/29 (T)	Sandy Coasts	
3/31 (Th)	Sandy Coasts	
4/5 (T)	Hurricanes	
4/7 (Th)	Hurricanes	
4/12 (T)	Coral Reefs	
4/14 (Th)	Coral Reefs	
4/19 (T)	Coastal Management	
4/21 (Th)	Coastal Management	Teaching Evaluations and Exam 3 Review
4/27 (W)	Final Exam at 9:00 AM in PSC 002	

*Exam dates will *NOT* change