



## HISTORICAL GEOLOGY LABORATORY

Geology 104

Section: 201

George Mason University

Spring 2026

Instructor: Sophia Damico

Office: Exploratory Hall 3416 (in the Geology Suite (previously the Forensic Anthropology Suite))

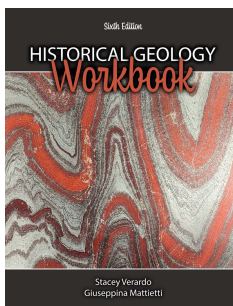
Contact Email: [sdamico@gmu.edu](mailto:sdamico@gmu.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30-12:30

Classroom: Exploratory Hall 1309

**Mandatory Laboratory Workbook:** Historical Geology Workbook, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 2024, Verardo, Mattiotti ISBN: 978179243075

<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/historical-geology>



**\*\*\*THE USE OF THIS WORKBOOK IS MANDATORY. You must have a copy of the correct workbook by the second week of class or each lab will be deducted by 1 point. Labs will not be accepted for credit without this book after week 4 unless you have made other arrangements with me.\*\*\***

## LMS: CANVAS

NOTE: You are responsible for reading all Canvas announcements. I send important information to you about exams and assignments there. Please ensure that your Canvas notifications are turned ON.

## General information and Laboratory Policies:

- It is the student's responsibility to verify his/her enrollment status in this lab section.
- NOTE that the first week of lab will be held during the FIRST week of the semester.
- This course fulfills the requirements for the GMU Core courses in the natural science, specifically, learning outcome 5: students will participate in scientific inquiry and communicate the elements of the process, including: a) making careful and systematic observations, b) developing and testing a hypothesis, c) analyzing evidence, and d) Interpreting results.
- The laboratory course consists of 14 lab sessions (see attached table with dates and lab topics). Lab session is scheduled for the duration of 2 hours 45 minutes. Expect to spend that amount of time in lab!
- There will be TWO exams to test your requisite knowledge of the material.
- <https://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Spring-2026-Final-Exam-Schedule-1.pdf>
- Attendance to the lab is mandatory.
- **Make up policy:** If you need to miss a lab, you must notify me **in advance**. If you let me know after the fact, I reserve the right to refuse to allow you to make up the lab. Things happen, so there is no limit to the number of labs you can make up, but it is your responsibility to organize the makeup. You may make the lab up in a different section, **but you must clear it with the instructor of that section as well as myself**. When you email the instructor of the other section, you should CC me in the email. Once I approve your makeup, I will give you the contact information for the instructor of another section based on your availability. Be aware that not every lab instructor runs the same lab—be sure to check which lab they are running before you ask to make one up. Your lab assignment **will still be due before our next regular lab section**. You may not make up quizzes.
- **Lab excuses:** You are responsible for planning ahead to arrive on time. Getting caught in unexpected traffic once is understandable, but should not happen every week.
- **Tardy work:**
  - **Labs:** Lab work is due BEFORE the following lab period. For example, the lab work for Tuesday, 9/2 will be due on Tuesday, 9/9 at 10:29 am. I will accept late work with a deduction of 10% every 24 hours that it is late. This means that I will only accept late work for partial credit for up to 10 days.
  - **Quizzes:** Quizzes are administered during the first 10 minutes of class. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will not be allowed to start the

- quiz, and you will receive a 0. This means that if you arrive at 10:40 or earlier, you will be allowed to take the quiz.
- Labs and grades will be accessible on Canvas
  - Students are expected to participate actively in the laboratory activities and to collaborate at the solution of the problems presented during the session, however, students are responsible for doing their own work and take exams individually. Each student is required to submit their own individual work from **their own work book**. Please write your name at the top of your work.
  - Students take responsibility for their actions during GEOL 104 lab time. Students participating are bound by all university Policies and uphold the GMU Honor Code. Disruptive behavior during lab time will not be tolerated.
  - Students in GEOL 104 lab abide by the GMU Honor Code.  
<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>
- 

- Phone policy:
    - During quizzes, you will place your phone face down on the table in front of you so I can see that you are not using it. Use of your phone, earbuds, smartwatches, and other devices are not allowed while I am lecturing. You may use your phone, earbuds, laptops, etc. while completing the lab, but please try to stay focused on the lab work.
  - AI policy:
    - The use of AI is **NOT ALLOWED**. If I suspect that you have used AI to complete a lab assignment, quiz, or exam, I will give you a 0 on that assignment and report you to the office of Academic Standards. This is an introductory geology laboratory. I do not expect you to be a geology expert but I do expect you to try your best and to complete your work yourself.
- 

### Course assessment

- Course is assessed based on lab exercises scores and the two mandatory exams, (Midterm and Final). Exams are based on the lab material.
- Exam 1 (midterm): 30% of final grade
  - Based on information from labs 1-6
  - Will be taken **in person**
- Exam 2 (final): 30% of final grade
  - Non-comprehensive. Based on information from labs 7-12
- Lab exercises: 30% of final grade
  - Each is worth 10 points
  - Lab exercises are due on Canvas by the start of the next lab period. For example, the lab work for **Monday, 1/26 will be due on Monday, 2/2 at 1:29 pm.**

- Please upload your work as a **single PDF document**. I will take off one point if you upload multiple documents, and I will take off one point if your work is not a PDF.
- There are several apps that will allow you to create a PDF of your workbook—the Apple notes app, Adobe app, and CamScanner app are a few.
- I will drop your lowest **one** lab.
- In order to receive full credit on a lab, it must meet the following criteria:
  - Complete
  - Legible
  - On time
  - A single document
  - PDF format
  - Pages in order and correct orientation (not upside down!)
  - Required questions thoughtfully completed (including any questions I may add during class)
- Unless otherwise noted, in order to receive credit for a lab assignment, you must complete the lab work **IN CLASS**. If you leave immediately after I finish lecturing but still turn in a lab, you will not get credit.
- Late work is allowed, but there will be a 10% reduction for every 1 day that it is late. This means that if your work is 10 days late, you will receive a 0.
- Pre-lab quizzes: 5% of final grade
  - Quizzes will be based on **THAT DAY'S** material. There is a short chapter before each lab. Please read this **BEFORE** coming to class, as I will draw quiz questions from this reading. These quizzes are designed to introduce you to the lab material before the lab begins—they are **NOT** difficult.
  - Please be **ON TIME**. Quizzes will be handed out at the start of class and will be due at **1:40**. The quiz should take you 5 minutes, but you will have the entire 10 minutes to take it. If you arrive before 1:40, you will be allowed to start the quiz, but it will still be due at 1:40. If you arrive at 1:39, you will have one minute to take the quiz.
  - If you miss the quiz or arrive after **1:40**, you will not be allowed to make up the quiz and you will receive a 0.
  - Quizzes will be returned to you by the next class period. You should use them to study.
  - I will drop your lowest **two** quizzes
  - There will **not** be a quiz on the first day of lab.
- Participation: 5% of final grade
  - Your participation score is based on active work in lab and engagement in class. To receive full credit,

Letter Grade	Percent Grade
A+	97-100
A	93 to <97
A-	90 to <93
B+	87 to <90
B	83 to <87
B-	80 to <83
C+	77 to <80
C	73 to <77
C-	70 to <73
D	65 to <70
F	<65

- you must engage in the lab material, turn in the labs, and arrive in time to take the quizzes. Serial lateness will result in a reduction of participation score.
- Final grade is assigned based on the score to letter grade scale to the right
  - If you are struggling with the material, please come see me sooner rather than later. It is easier to salvage a grade at the beginning of the semester than at the end.
- Remember that I'm here to help you and I want you to succeed!

### **GMU policies**

- Academic Integrity It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades.  
<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>
- Disability Accommodation. If you need special accommodations/arrangement for the class and the exams, you must first file with the Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474) <https://ds.gmu.edu/>
- Diversity and Inclusion: Faculty, staff and students in this course welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and disability. <https://diversity.gmu.edu/diversity>
- All faculty members are required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380) and Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730) <https://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix>
- Privacy: Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of this course. Students MUST use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. In accordance with FERPA regulation

### **Resources and suggestion for academic success**

- GMU Resources: GMU has additional resources for your academic success; among others: Academic success workshops (see calendar-  
<https://learningservices.gmu.edu/academic-success-workshops/>) University Life  
<https://ulife.gmu.edu/students/>

## GEOL 104 calendar – Spring 2026

Lab Session	Topic *	Date	Due (by start of lab)	Quiz
1	Review minerals and rocks	1/26		
2	Sedimentary rocks environments	2/2	Review minerals and rocks	1: Sedimentary rocks
3	Clastic sediments under the microscope	2/9	Sedimentary Rocks	2: Clastic Sediments
4	Relative dating	2/16	Clastic Sediments	3: Relative Dating
5	Radiometric dating	2/23	Relative Dating	4: Radiometric Dating
6	Correlations	3/2	Radiometric Dating	5: Correlations
7	<b>EXAM 1</b>	<b>3/16</b>		
<b>SPRING BREAK – no classes</b>		<b>3/9-3/13</b>		
8	Phylum Porifera, Cnidaria, Bryozoa, Brachiopod	<b>3/23</b>	Correlations	6: Porifera, Cnidaria, Bryozoa, Brachiopoda
9	Phylum Mollusca, Arthropods, Echinodermata, Conodonts	3/30	Porifera, Cnidaria, Bryozoa, Brachiopoda	7: Mollusca, Arthropoda, Echinodermata, Conodonts
10	Pollen and Climate	4/6	Mollusca, Arthropoda, Echinodermata, Conodonts	8: Pollen and Climate
11	Dinosaur Biomechanics	4/13	Pollen and Climate	9: Dinosaur Biomechanics
12	Evolution in the fossil record	4/20	Dinosaur Biomechanics	10: Evolution in the fossil record
13	Virginia Geology	4/27	Evolution in the fossil record	11: Virginia Geology
14	Trip to Smithsonian	5/4	Virginia Geology	12: Trip to the Smithsonian
15	<b>EXAM 2</b>	<b>5/11 1:30-4:15</b>	Trip to the Smithsonian	

\*Unforeseen circumstances might result in a change/rearrangement of the lab topics.