
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY, AND PLANNING

GLG 358

Instructor: Thomas G. Plymate

Writing II: Reporting Geological Information

Office: Temple 358

Fall 2010

**Office Hours: 9:30-10:30 MWF;
9:00-10:00 TR**

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

GLG 358 Writing II: Reporting Geological Information. 3(1-4) S. Prerequisite: ENG 110 and 30 hours and GLG 314 and either GLG 318 or GLG 332. Techniques and strategies for locating and accessing technical geological information. Preparation of technical reports and presentations on geologic topics with emphasis on the styles and formats of the Geological Society of America and the United States Geological Survey.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

As a Writing II course, GLG 358 is designed to satisfy part of the “Basic Required Skills” component of the Missouri State University General Education program. Specifically, this course is intended to develop technical reporting skills (both written and oral) which will be of benefit to the geology student throughout his/her educational and professional careers. The specific goals of this course are as follows:

- Develop ability to find and access detailed geologic information using *GeoRef* and other online bibliographies. (General Education Goals I.B.1, I.C.1, I.C.2, I.D.1, I.D.2, II.A.1, II.A.2)
- Develop ability to interpret detailed geologic information presented in text formats, including formal geologic reports and abstracts. (General Education Goals I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.C.2, I.C.4, I.D.1, II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.4, II.A.5)
- Develop ability to interpret detailed geologic information presented in visual formats, including graphs, cross-sections, and geologic maps. (General Education Goals I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.C.2, I.C.4, I.D.1, I.D.3, II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.4, II.A.5)
- Develop ability to write with clarity and precision about geologic subjects. (General Education Goals I.C.3, I.D.1)
- Develop ability to properly cite sources of geologic information using the styles of the Geological Society of America and the U.S. Geological Survey. (Gen. Ed. Goal I.D.1)
- Develop ability to clearly and precisely abstract a complex body of geologic information. (General Education Goal I.D.1)
- Develop ability to clearly and precisely illustrate a subject graphically within a geologic report. (General Education Goals I.B.5, I.D.1, I.D.2, I.D.3)
- Develop ability to speak with clarity and precision about geologic subjects in front of an audience. (General Education Goals I.C.3, I.D.1)
- Develop ability to clearly and precisely illustrate a geologic subject visually in front of an audience. (General Education Goals I.B.5, I.D.1, I.D.2, I.D.3)

III. COURSE ASSESSMENT:

As with all General Education courses, GLG 358 will be assessed periodically to determine how effectively it is meeting the goals and objectives of the General Education Program. To help in that assessment, at the end of the course I will ask for your feedback on a questionnaire about the strengths and weaknesses of this course.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following texts are required for this course:

- a. Hansen, W.R. (ed.), 1991, *Suggestions to Authors of the Reports of the United States Geological Survey (7th ed.)*, United States Government Printing Office.
- b. Bates, R.L. and Jackson, J.A. (eds.), 1984, *Dictionary of Geological Terms (3rd ed.)*, American Geological Institute.
- c. Walsh, J. Martyn and Walsh, Anna Kathleen, 1987, *Plain English Handbook (9th ed.)*, Random House.
- d. Hacker, D., 2008, *A Pocket Style Manual (5th ed.)*, Bedford/St. Martin's.
- e. A good dictionary of the English language.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There will be a total of fourteen assignments: six writing assignments, five grammar/editing assignments, and three oral presentations. The writing assignments vary in length from 100 to 2000 words, and the oral presentations vary in length from 5 to 12 minutes. The due dates for these assignments are spaced more-or-less evenly throughout the semester; there is no single "term paper" or "portfolio" due at the end of the course.

VI. GRADING:

Each of the 14 assignments will be given a letter grade. At the end of the semester, the letter grades will be converted to numbers as follows: A+=98, A=95, A-=92, B+=88, B=85, B-=82, C+=78, C=75, C-=72, D+=68, D=65, D-=62, F=50. These numerical grades will be multiplied by the pre-specified "point values" listed on the Course Outline. Each student's course grade will then be determined from his/her total course points according to the following percentages:

92.50 and above	A	77.50 to 79.99	C+
90.00 to 92.49	A-	72.50 to 77.49	C
87.50 to 89.99	B+	70.00 to 72.49	C-
82.50 to 87.49	B	67.50 to 69.99	D+
80.00 to 82.49	B-	60.00 to 67.49	D
59.99 and below		F	

VII. MISSED DEADLINES:

You have one "free late" in this course; you may use it either on a writing assignment, on a grammar/editing assignment, or on an oral presentation. If you use your "free late" on a writing or grammar/editing assignment, that assignment will be accepted without penalty for up to one week after its original due date. Similarly, if you use your "free late" on an oral presentation, you can reschedule that presentation for any time up to one week after the original date with no penalty. After you have used your one "free late", no excuse, no matter how legitimate, will be sufficient to justify missing a deadline. The penalty for the second missed deadline is 50% of the grade for that assignment. The penalty for the third missed deadline is a grade of "0" for that assignment. The penalty for a fourth missed deadline is a grade of "F" for the course.

Each writing assignment will include very specific requirements for length, references (type and minimum number), illustrations (type and minimum number), and format. If your paper does not conform to these specifications it will be returned for rewriting and it will be counted as a missed deadline.

VIII. PROOFREADING:

You are expected to proofread each of your papers thoroughly and carefully before handing them in. All uncorrected typographical errors will be graded as spelling errors. (Note: It is acceptable to correct typographical errors in pencil, and you are encouraged to do so.)

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:

You are expected to attend all of your courses regularly. Attendance will be kept, as required by university regulations, for verification of attendance status in relation to student loans, grants, scholarships, etc. Your attendance will not figure directly into the computation of your grade for this course, but it will be virtually impossible for you to learn the material of this course without attending regularly.

X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Missouri State University is a community of scholars committed to developing educated persons who accept the responsibility to practice personal and academic integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following the university's *Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures*, available at www.missouristate.edu/policy/academicintegritystudents.htm. You are also responsible for understanding and following any additional academic integrity policies specific to this class (as outlined by the instructor, below). Any student participating in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to sanctions as described in this policy. If you are accused of violating this policy and are in the appeals process, you should continue participating in the class.

Cheating or plagiarism on any of the assignments for this course will be taken very seriously. The first occurrence of cheating or plagiarism by a student in this course will result in a grade of "0%" for the assignment in question. A second occurrence by the same student will result in the instructor initiating the procedure for assigning an "XF" grade for the course.

XI. DROPPING THE COURSE

It is your responsibility to understand the University's procedure for dropping a class. If you stop attending this class but do not follow proper procedure for dropping the class, you will receive a failing grade and will also be financially obligated to pay for the class. For information about dropping a class or withdrawing from the university, contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) at 836-5520.

XII. NONDISCRIMINATION

Missouri State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, and maintains a grievance procedure available to any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against. At all times, it is your right to address inquiries or concerns about possible discrimination to the [Office for Equity and Diversity](#), Park Central Office Building, 117 Park Central Square, Suite 111, (417) 836-4252. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of an academic nature) should be discussed directly with your instructor and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Head. Please visit the OED website at www.missouristate.edu/equity/.

XIII. DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Director of the [Disability Resource Center](#), Plaster Student Union, Suite 405, (417) 836-4192 or (417) 836-6792 (TTY), www.missouristate.edu/disability. Students are required to provide documentation of disability to the Disability Resource Center prior to receiving accommodations. The Disability Resource

Center refers some types of accommodation requests to the [Learning Diagnostic Clinic](#), which also provides diagnostic testing for learning and psychological disabilities. For information about testing, contact the Director of the [Learning Diagnostic Clinic](#), (417) 836-4787, <http://psychology.missouristate.edu/ldc>.

XIV. EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY

Students who require assistance during an emergency evacuation must discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Services. If you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

For additional information students should contact the [Disability Resource Center](#), 836-4192 (PSU 405), or Larry Combs, Interim Assistant Director of [Public Safety and Transportation](#) at 836-6576.

For further information on Missouri State University's Emergency Response Plan, please refer to the following web site: <http://www.missouristate.edu/safetran/erp.htm>

XV. POLICY ON USE OF CELL PHONES IN CLASS

As a member of the learning community, each student has a responsibility to other students who are members of the community. When cell phones or pagers ring and students respond in class or leave class to respond, it disrupts the class. Therefore, the [Office of the Provost](#) prohibits the use by students of cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or similar communication devices during scheduled classes. All such devices must be turned off or put in a silent (vibrate) mode and ordinarily should not be taken out during class. Given the fact that these same communication devices are an integral part of the University's emergency notification system, an exception to this policy would occur when numerous devices activate simultaneously. When this occurs, students may consult their devices to determine if a university emergency exists. If that is not the case, the devices should be immediately returned to silent mode and put away. Other exceptions to this policy may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.