

Geology 302D: The Age of Dinosaurs Fall 2011

Lab Syllabus

<u>TAs</u>	<u>E-mail/Office</u>	<u>Office hours - 3.314A</u>	<u>Lab Times</u>
Alicia Kennedy	alicia.kennedy@mail.utexas.edu JGB 3.314B	W 9:30- 10:30 W 10:30-11:30	M 8:00-9:30 W 8:00-9:30 F 8:00-9:30
Adam Marsh	admarsh@utexas.edu JGB 3.310	T 11:15-12:15 W 11:00-12:00	T 8:00-9:30 Th 8:00-9:30 M 9:30-11:00
Zachary Morris	zsmorris@utexas.edu JGB 3.310	W 11:15-12:15 M 9:00-10:00	W 9:30-11:00 F 9:30-11:00 T 11:00-12:30
Jeri Rodgers	jcrodgers@mail.utexas.edu JGB 3.308	T 1:00-2:00 TH 1:00-2:00	F 11:00-12:30 T 3:30-5:00 Th 3:30-5:00

Overview

The Age of Dinosaurs contains a laboratory component so that you can receive hands-on instruction for some of the topics from the class that are most important in the study of paleontology. It is a chance for you to cover some areas of paleontology more fully and give you a better opportunity to understand them. Professor Rowe considers this lab time an essential part of your course experience. Use lab as a time to ask questions and really explore the material. At the end of the semester it is expected that you will be able to take the concepts taught in the course, to think critically about them, and relate them to the scientific process.

Lab Policies

Grades: The laboratory section makes up 25% of your overall grade in this course. Failure to attend or perform in lab will have an adverse effect upon your final grade. Your lab score is based on 8 quizzes, each worth ten (10) points, and two assignments worth 15 points each. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. The assignments consist of an outdoor lab at the Austin Science and Nature Center's Dino Pit and a group presentation, which will be explained in detail further into the semester. At the end of the semester the total number of points you earn will be turned into a percentage of the total points possible (100 points). This percentage becomes the

20% of your total score in the entire course. As you can see in the lab schedule, you have a quiz nearly every lab meeting of the semester.

The quizzes test your grasp of the subject material from the previous week. It is expected that you will retain the information covered early in the semester, as many of the concepts covered early in the semester are crucial for understanding methods and concepts later in the course. Any questions concerning the grade you received on a quiz must be brought up **within 1 week** from when the quiz was returned. Any complaints about answers, or questions, brought up after 1 week will not result in a grade correction. Please keep in mind that quizzes are given at the very beginning of lab. If you arrive after the quiz is over, you cannot take it. We do not give make-up quizzes if you miss a class unless you let your TA know **before** class begins that you will not make it, or if you have a note from a doctor explaining your illness. These situations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, so see your TA, and he or she will work with you to cover the material.

Attendance: We do not take attendance. We assume you are all adults and are responsible for your own academic performance. If you miss a lab without prior notification, you will receive a zero (0) for the quiz you miss. You will also miss important information on which you will be quizzed the next week. You may **not** attend any lab sections besides the one in which you are registered.

Special Notes on this class: VERY IMPORTANT: YOU WILL NEED A COPY OF THE DINOS CD USED LATER IN THE SEMESTER. IN ADDITION, WE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A COPY OF ALL LAB HANDOUTS THAT YOU MUST PRINT AND BRING WITH YOU TO CLASS. We will not provide you with lab handouts after the first lab, and if not printed out, you will find it nearly impossible to complete each week's exercises. You will have two labs while are held off campus: the Dino Pit exercise in Zilker Park (you will have 2 weeks to make sure you attend one session's worth) and a visit to the Vertebrate Paleontology Lab on the corner of Burnet and Braker in north Austin. You will need to sign up for available time slots the week before each of these activities starts. **They will NOT be held during your usual lab hours, and many of the Dino Pit times are during the weekend, because you will need travel time and extra time for the exercises.** ONCE YOU HAVE SIGNED UP FOR A TIME, YOU CAN NOT CHANGE IT! You will be responsible for your travel to and from these locations.

Lab specimens/equipment: NO FOOD, DRINK, OR GUM ALLOWED IN LAB! **Cell phone use is forbidden** during lab (even texting), and phones are expected to be OFF (not on silent mode – it's good to turn them off once in a while). If we observe you using a cell phone during a quiz, you will receive a zero (0) for that grade and may be reported to the course lecturers. You are expected to remain in lab until you are finished with your exercises. Always handle specimens with care. If you drop a specimen on the floor, immediately and loudly notify all of your classmates and TA. The rest of the class should remain still until it has been picked up. If a fossil gets pulverized under someone's heel, it is gone forever. If you break a specimen or cast, don't panic. Immediately tell your TA, and he/she will not be angry with you. Most breaks (with the exception of heel-grinding) can be easily repaired. However, if a TA finds broken specimens at the end of lab time, and was not notified about it, the TA will be very unhappy.

Contacting your TA: The names, email addresses, office numbers, and lab times of each of the Age of Dinos TAs are given on the front page of this syllabus. **Office hours will be in the office listed.** We strongly urge you to take advantage of office hours, which are traditionally under-utilized. If you cannot make your TA's office hours, make an appointment to meet with him or her, or see another TA during their office hours to get your questions answered. Most TAs check their email daily, but you should not be offended if you do not get an immediate response to an inquiry (especially at midnight).

Useful web sites:

Class Website - <http://www.geo.utexas.edu/courses/302d/>

Digital Morphology - <http://www.digimorph.org/>

Texas Memorial Museum - <http://www.utexas.edu/tmm/>

Dino Pit - http://www.utexas.edu/tmm/sponsored_sites/dino_pit/