

EES200, Sec 003

Columbia Gorge Field Studies

CRN 63795 (1 credit), Spring 2026

Location: Remote Access (Canvas)

Instructor: Dr. Alex Ruzicka

CH 46, 503-725-3372

email: ruzickaa@pdx.edu

Teaching Assistant: Caitlin Fernando

email: caitlinf@pdx.edu

Please use Canvas mail for contacting the instructors.



Eastward view of the Columbia River valley as seen from the Coyote Wall area in the Columbia Gorge, March 2020. [Image: A. Ruzicka]

Class website: [EES200-003](https://ees200-003.pdx.edu)

This website will include a copy of this syllabus and any major announcements.

Canvas: All course materials will be made available through the Canvas learning management system (canvas.pdx.edu) following PSU login.

Course description: The Columbia Gorge is a place of great significance, both to our forebears and to our current economy. How the Gorge itself came to be is the subject of this course. This online course is centered around videos that take the place of an in-person field trip. With these videos and other information, you will learn about the geology of the Gorge and how it was shaped by a variety of forces over periods of time that are almost unimaginably long, but some of which continue this day. This class is suitable for a wide variety of students: those currently enrolled in an introductory geology class, those who have taken such a course in the past, or those who want to learn more about how our landscape was shaped.

Course outcomes/learning objectives: After participating in this course, students will be able to correctly identify selected geological features and processes and historical events that occurred in the Columbia Gorge area.

Course pre-requisites: None.

Required materials: Computer with internet connection.

Major assignments: All assignments will be completed in Canvas. These include: 1) Discussion posting introducing yourself to the rest of the class. 2) Multiple choice quiz on handouts from a Powerpoint that introduces the subject. 3) Multiple choice quiz on each video stop. There are ten stops, so there are 10 quizzes for this. 4) End-of-course reflection, submitted as an assignment in Canvas in response to prompts.

Grading criteria: Pass / No pass only, 71% required to pass.

Discussion posting 5%

Quiz on Powerpoint 15%

Quizzes on video stops 50% (5% each stop)

End-of-term reflection: 30%

Quizzes will be graded quantitatively. Qualitative assessment will be made of the discussion posting and of the end-of-term reflection.

Course attendance & make-up policies: There is no attendance requirement, but the Discussion posting is required to serve as an acknowledgment of participation. Students must complete this assignment within the first week, or they may be withdrawn. Students will have flexibility to do course work on their own timeline, so long as they meet deadlines, but assignments will not be re-opened for individuals after the deadline has passed. If students cannot complete assignments owing to medical or family emergencies, they should message the instructor as soon as possible.

Communication: email should be the primary means of contacting the Instructor or TA. This can be done with Canvas. As with all communication, it is important to keep messages respectful.

Course flexibility statement: The instructor reserves the right to make changes based on unexpected events. Any changes to the course beyond what is stated in the Syllabus will be announced on the course homepage in Canvas and website.

Recording technology notice: Any technology used for virtual meetings and recordings in this course is governed by FERPA, the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and PSU's [Student Code of Conduct](#). A record of all meetings and recordings is kept and stored by PSU. The instructor will not share recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, TAs/GAs/Mentors, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners that we may engage with. You may not share recordings outside this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

Turnitin: Students agree that by taking this course all required submissions may be subject to review for textual similarity for the purpose of detecting unoriginal writing, including plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the [Turnitin.com](#) reference database solely for the purpose of detecting unoriginal writing, including plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Turnitin Acceptable Use posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Other policies: (a) If you feel you have a disability and need an accommodation, contact the Disability Resource Center (drc@pdx.edu, 503-725-4150). (b) Each student is responsible for all content, whether they participate in the class or not. (c) A culture of professionalism and mutual respect is expected. Any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, can be reported to the Office of Equity and Compliance, or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. For resources, see <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> (d) Students are expected to follow PSU policies for academic integrity, which means not engaging in academic misconduct; see <https://www.pdx.edu/dos/academic-misconduct>. Examples of misconduct include copying someone else's work, or submitting for credit work done by someone else. (e) A.I. should not be used for any submitted assignment. Students will be quizzed on the content delivered by the instructor, not by anything else external to the course (including an A.I.), and for the Discussion Introduction and Course reflection assignments, the instructor and T.A. want to hear from students, not an A.I. In short, this is not a course for A.I., but for humans. (f) Students should be cognizant of deadlines, because assignments will not be re-opened for individuals. The policy for this course: You can finish work on your schedule, and early if you want, but you can't finish it late. Missed deadlines will be counted as zeroes. (g) "Extra credit" will not be considered for this course.

Schedule

Event	Date
Start of course (Canvas becomes available)	Mar 30 12:01 AM
Discussion posting due	April 6, 11:59 PM
Quiz on Powerpoint due	April 20, 11:59 PM
Quizzes for Stops 1-4 due	April 27, 11:59 PM
Quizzes for Stops 6-11 due	June 8, 11:59 PM
End of term reflection due	June 8, 11:59 PM
Get ready for summer!	June 9, 12:01 AM