

Earth Science Program

Department of Geography and Geosciences



AREAS OF FOCUS

- General Earth Science
- Geoenvironmental Science
- Marine Geoscience
- Secondary Education

Why Specialize in Earth Science?

Earth scientists (or geoscientists) gather and interpret data about the Earth. They use their knowledge to increase our understanding of Earth processes and to improve the quality of human life. Their work and career paths vary widely because geoscience disciplines are broad and diverse. The National Science Foundation considers geology, geophysics, hydrology, oceanography, marine science, environmental science and soil science as the major geoscience disciplines.

By addressing these issues and developing solutions to problems affecting the Earth, geoscientists act as stewards of the Earth. Though much has been learned about the Earth through earth science, much more is yet to be discovered, especially as society faces new problems such as global climate change, advances in technology, and exhaustion of energy and raw material supplies.



About the Program

SU's program focuses on giving students a broad background in the geosciences and its application to solving environmental problems and mitigating natural hazards. Thus, students complete core courses in geology, weather and climate, map interpretation, geographic information science, statistics, chemistry, and physics. Students then follow one of the four Earth science tracks and complete the additional requirements.

General Focus: Provides students with maximum flexibility to choose the electives that best match their career goals.

Geoenvironmental Science Track: Designed specifically for students who wish to pursue careers in environmental science.

Marine Geoscience Concentration: Designed specifically for students who wish to pursue careers in physical oceanography and/or related marine sciences.

Secondary Education Concentration: Designed for students interested in teaching Earth science (grades 7-12). Potential majors who have questions about the education courses required for this track should contact Starlin Weaver (sdweaver@salisbury.edu) in the Education Specialties Department.

One key feature of our coursework in the Earth science degree is SU's commitment to field work and experiential studies. Many of the core and elective courses in the Earth Science Program include class field trips and intensive, hands-on lab activities. The coursework required for this degree provides a solid undergraduate knowledge that serves as a strong foundation for students continuing on to graduate studies or onto a career in the geosciences.



Career Opportunities

The major applications of the geosciences are preservation of the natural environment; restoration from environmental damage; the mitigation of geohazards such as floods, landslides and hurricanes; and exploration and responsible development of natural resources (oil, gas, coal, minerals, construction aggregate, water, soil).

The outlook for jobs in the geosciences is very good, and the 2014 American Geosciences Institute (AGI) projections indicate a 14 percent increase in geoscience jobs over the next decade, particularly in environmental services, hydrology and petroleum (particularly natural

gas). The report also notes that the majority of the geoscience workforce is in their 50s, so turnover is expected to be high in the next couple decades.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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“Civilization exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice.”

—Will Durant

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