



Course Syllabus: Graduate Seminar  
GEOS 6001 -201  
Spring 2025  
Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Jonathan D. Price (He/Him)  
Office: Pierce 207 → Bolin 101  
Office hours: M: 9-11a, W: 1-3p, R: 3:30-5p or by appointment  
Zoom id: (940) 518-1980  
Office phone: (940) 397-4288  
Cell Phone: (940) 224-4127 (don't forget name on text)  
E-mail: [jonathan.price@msutexas.edu](mailto:jonathan.price@msutexas.edu)

### Course Description

With completion of your Master of Science degree, you are likely to be engaged in pursuits where you may be the sole authoritative voice of scientific evaluation. You will be the rare vessel of knowledge and understanding about Earth materials and processes. In some cases, you will be the defender of your insights to a body of experts. Very few of us are predisposed to serve these roles; this seminar course will engender the skills necessary and typical for those who hold an M.S. in Geoscience.

Additionally, when you complete your Master of Science degree, you will most likely seek employment or further educational opportunities. You will compete with graduates from a number of other excellent programs. It is my sincere hope that you are not merely competitive, but the clearly superior candidate in these evaluative processes. This seminar is preparation towards that goal.

But lastly, you need to get to completion. The seminar will endeavor to enhance skills that ease the thesis process and alerting you to the obstacles that you will need to overcome to walk away with the degree.

### Graduate seminar should be a chance for

- Interactions and information exchange amongst the academically active grad cohort
- Broad dissemination of general and scientific information
- Honing critical thinking and communication skills
- Exploration of geologic topics

### Our immediate objectives

- Enhance expository and reflective communication
- Strengthen critical thinking
- Explore new ideas
- Heighten academic, professional and interpersonal skills
- Develop a robust broad understanding of geoscience
- Grow as scientists

## Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. As chair, I reserve the right to dismiss you from the program if you engage in academic dishonesty.

### Artificial Intelligence

Chatbots (like ChatGPT) have recently grown in sophistication and accessibility. They can be useful tools to assist in drafting out writing or providing imaging, but they should be an assistance, not a substitute for your thought.

Earth Science is a beautifully diverse field; you need to find your own voice. Any creative input in this class is an opportunity to test and refine that; avoid shortchanging yourself the feedback you deserve.

Finally, in all academic work, ideas and contributions from others must be acknowledged. Using an AI-content generator to complete coursework without proper attribution or authorization is a form of academic dishonesty. For this class, use of AI-content with appropriate citations is permitted. Citing with AI can be a trick.

### Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing in "Works Cited")-regardless of its use in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. It is a theft of intellectual property and will not be tolerated, whether intentional or not.

### Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Components	Points
Participation, engagement, weekly activities	25
Written assignments	20
Presentations	20
Resume/CV	5
Research fest	20
Reflection on scientific and professional ethics	5
Membership	5

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	>90%
B	80-90%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

### Evaluation

I will provide feedback both formally and informally. Firstly, I will be evaluating your performance on the basis of quality presentation, participation and engagement in the seminar. I may call on other evaluation methods as needed, including (but not limited to) quizzes, worksheets, exercises, and extensive face-to-face questioning over beverages cold or hot. In all cases, I will be looking for your genuine growth as we progress; you need not try to outperform your classmates so much as outperform your previous self. Progress people! We are in search of progress.

### Participation

Seminar classes rely on interaction and discussion. You will need to be actively involved in each session to receive full credit for participation. I have high expectations, so please showcase your engagement at every opportunity.

### Colloquium and Talk Participation & Writing Assignments

To grow as a student and as a professional, you should attend presentations by other knowledgeable authorities as they arise.

The department will be interviewing candidates this semester. You need to definitely attend at least one of these and two other acceptable presentations.

Acceptable presentations include:

- Other sessions of our Colloquium (candidate interviews)
- NTGS or other geosociety meetings
- Conference presentations (GSA, AAPG, AGU, etc...)
- Short courses

I am requiring **a written summary within a week** for each attended presentation. The summary should include the title of the presentation, the speaker's name and affiliation, a short synopsis of the presentation, a few sentences on how the presentation related to your prior understanding of the topic, and a few sentences on your personal impressions of the presentation (style, execution, etc...). Each submission should be a third (or better) draft, exceptionally coherent, and free of spelling and grammatical errors.

Participation in Geosciences Club fulfills one presentation

### Presentations

You will be asked to give a series of short presentations on topics. Some will involve your participating in a group presentation, others will be solo presentations.

### Resume/C.V.

Early in the semester, I will have you construct or modify your resume. You will be asked to honor a list of guidelines. This will be a graded assignment.

### Celebration of Scholarship

We will be participating in the Spring Semester's Celebration of Scholarship. Plan on participating in the 3MT and/or presentations.

### Proposal Presentation

First-year students will need to give a presentation on their intended thesis projects.

### Reflections on Ethics

Your professor would like to believe that ethical behavior is second nature to everyone, but as a newspaper subscriber, he is aware that universally robust ethics is not reality. Experience suggests that exposure to ethical guidelines is useful, even for upstanding citizens, such as yourselves. We'll engage an exercise to evaluate ethical behavior in the science and profession of geology.

### Membership

Professional geologists seek ways to interact with the greater community. It provides information and feedback throughout your career, and can permit opportunities to network and communicate. You need to hold a current membership in one or more earth-science professional organizations before the end of the semester.

To receive credit, you need to provide some form of proof of current membership and a paragraph statement that mentions why you joined that organization.

### Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### Attendance

This class is targeted at graduate students. At this point, you undoubtedly realize the importance of interactions with your professor and colleagues in the classroom and lab settings. You need to be both present and fully engaged in

each meeting. In the rare case you are missing a meeting, you should contact the professor and the other members of the class to inform us of your absence.

#### Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. The [Academic Honesty Checklist](#) describes the timeline for appealing from the instructor to the next in line (dean, for this class) and who must be notified of academic honesty infractions.

#### Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

#### Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Northwestern State University (NSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to NSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs.

#### Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Northwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

#### Learning environment

Dr. Price is committed to providing an equitable and inclusive forum for learning and endeavors to keep this class a safe, open, and supporting space for all students. He is available and willing to address your issues and concerns. He also wants you to be aware of the following supporting structures that assist in this environment.

Student Engagement Center: cultivates “a sense of belonging for all students at MSU Texas by facilitating student access to critical resources and opportunities, supporting student success and advocating for constant improvement in the way we meet students’ needs across our campus.” <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/mosaic/index.php>

Policies for general student complaints are available at <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/dean/general.php>. General student complaints should start with the informal process form [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout\\_id=4](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout_id=4)

Sexual misconduct is handled by the Title IX Coordinator, and misconduct information and reporting is [https://msutexas.edu/human-resources/policy/4-general-university-policies/4.161-A-Title\\_IX\\_Sexual\\_Misconduct.asp](https://msutexas.edu/human-resources/policy/4-general-university-policies/4.161-A-Title_IX_Sexual_Misconduct.asp)

Anonymous complaints can be made through EthicsPoint: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/45483/index.html>

#### Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

#### Course Schedule

We meet each Monday at 5 PM.

Important due dates and other requirements will be imparted as the semester progresses.