GENERAL INFORMATION

Course goals: After completing this course, you will be able to:
1. Distinguish among the major groups of organisms represented in the fossil record;
2. Explain the patterns of evolutionary change preserved in the fossil record;
3. Apply your knowledge of the major fossil groups to identify ancient environments and periods of geologic time;
4. Describe how paleontologists are able to reconstruct the biology of ancient organisms

Please be aware that we will be covering a great deal of material!

Instructor: Roy E. Plotnick
Office: 2454 SES
Office hours: by appointment, I am almost always there
Phone: 312-996-2111
E-mail: plotnick@uic.edu

TA: Caitlin Boblitt Office 2446 SES E-mail: cbobli2@uic.edu

Website:
Information on the course, announcements, lecture notes, external links, etc, will be available from the Blackboard system. I will also send occasional e-mails.

Class hours: M 9:00-9:50; WF 9:00-10:50. Labs and lectures are integrated.

Attendance: Attendance is expected but attendance will not be taken. However, poor attendance almost invariably results in poor grades. We will be doing a great deal of “hands-on” learning. In addition, you will be responsible for knowing about any announcements made during lectures.

The website for the book is: http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/paleobiology/

Supplementary book: Your Inner Fish by Neil Shubin. We will have assigned readings and discussions of chapters from this book.

Exams: Midterm, final; exams divided into lecture and lab sections. Lecture section exams will be conducted as a “pyramid” test. Midterm: Weds., March 8.

Term project: Poster session on the last day of class. This project will account for 25% of your total grade. Further details in separate handout.

Field Trip: Saturday April 13 (tentative). Mandatory. Details to be announced.

Grades:
1. Labs 10% (all weighted equally). Includes field trip
2. Time Scale Quiz 1%
3. Participation in class discussions 5%
4. Poster - 25%
   a. Topic 2%
   b. References 3%
   c. Poster 20% - including handout
5. Midterm - 24%
   a. Lecture Individual 16%
   b. Lecture Group 4%
   c. Lab 4%
6. Final - 35%
   a. Lecture Individual 24%
b. Lecture Group 6%
c. Lab 4%

Grades will be 85+ A, 75-84 B, 65-74 C, 55-64 D.

My Contract With You
This section covers some elementary rules of behavior in this class, including what you can expect from us (Prof. Plotnick and the TA) and what we, in return, expect from you.

1. You will be expected to attend all lectures and labs,
2. Classes will start and end on time.
3. No talking, reading, texting, or other distracting behavior during class.
4. We will treat you courteously and with respect.
5. If you have a question, please ask it! Don't be afraid of looking "dumb." In return, we will make an honest effort to answer your question.
6. Assignments will be turned in when they are due.
7. Assignments will be returned within one week; exams within 2-4 days.
8. If you have a valid excuse for missing an exam or for turning in an assignment late, you must discuss your reasons with your instructor in advance or within 24 hours afterwards. We cannot provide "makeup" labs.
9. Please bring any problems to my attention in a timely manner! We will deal with them in a timely manner.
10. Your grades are based on how well you know the material! As a result, do not assume I will grade based on a "curve."

Keys to success in this course are simple:
1. Come to lecture and pay attention;
2. Take your own notes;
3. Review your notes with the help of the online notes and the textbook;
4. Study as we go along, not just the day (or night, or morning) before the exam
5. See your TA during their office hours for help on the material, or see me if she is not available.

Notice:
Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at 312-0413-2103 (voice) or 312-413-0123 (TTY).

Class Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction; Taphonomy</td>
<td>Chapters 1 and 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to Molluscs; Bivalves (note: no class Monday)</td>
<td>p. 326-338; 340</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Fossil form; Gastropods</td>
<td>p. 15-17 (Box1.3); 137-150; 338-344</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Fossil function; Cephalopods, other Molluscs</td>
<td>p. 151-160; p. 346-360</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Systematics; Brachiopods and Bryozoa</td>
<td>p. 128-136; Chapter12</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Paleoecology I; Annelids and Arthropods</td>
<td>Chapter 14; p. 80-103</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Paleoecology II; Echinoderms I</td>
<td>p. 103-113; p. 390-409</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Midterm; Echinoderms II</td>
<td>p. 390-409</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Paleobiogeography; Spongiomorphs; Coelenterates; Reefs</td>
<td>Chapter 11; p. 41-53</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Trace Fossils; Biostratigraphy</td>
<td>Chapter 19; p. 22-41</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Protists; Evolution</td>
<td>Chapter 5; Chapter 11</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Chordates: Graptolites; Conodonts; Origin of life</td>
<td>p. 409-425; Chapter 8</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Fish and basal tetrapods; Origin of metazoans</td>
<td>Chapters 10 and 16</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Dinosaurs; Extinctions</td>
<td>p. 453-461; Chapter 7</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Mammals; Overview of the history of life</td>
<td>p. 462-478; Chapter 20</td>
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