



Course Syllabus - **Dinosaur Extinction and Other Controversies**

EARTH 150H (3) GN
Fall 2009

Penn State Brandywine -- London Trip

Instructor: Dr. Laura A. Guertin (aka "Dr. G")

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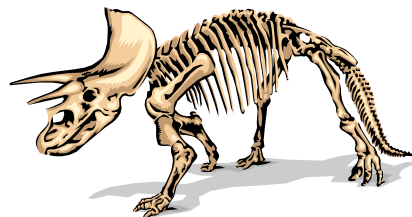
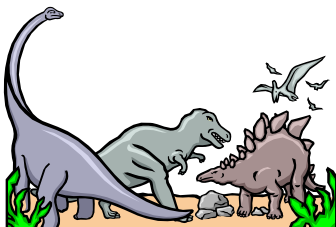
Office hours: 8:30–9:30AM MWF, 9:30-10:30AM Tuesdays

Lecture: All materials will be presented online in asynchronous and synchronous sessions. We will travel as a group to three sites while in London.

Textbook: *Dinosaurs, The Science Behind the Stories*, by Scotchmoor, Springer, Breithaupt, and Fiorillo (American Geological Institute, 2001); other readings in ANGEL and audio in iTunes U

What's in store for you... For the majority of you, this is your first true scientific introduction to dinosaurs! There are no prerequisites for this course, all you need is an open mind, and you will learn things about dinosaurs you never knew before. Stay tuned, and find out what Earth was like during the Mesozoic Era. You will gain insight into the origin and classification of dinosaurs. Learn about the "hot topics", such as the warm blooded/cold blooded debate and the mass extinction that killed the dinosaurs. Get the scoop on dinosaur trace fossils, and find out how we know about dinosaur biology and behavior. Let's not forget what an important role the early dinosaur paleontologists played and their international discoveries. We'll examine how dinosaurs have been portrayed in the media – accurately and erroneously. And yes, we'll even learn how to pronounce these complex dinosaur names!!! The most exciting part is that we will be able to visit some sites and view some of the original dinosaur fossils and sculptures you are unable to see anywhere else in the world – who would have thought, in London!

Dr. G's philosophy on higher education: *****Students are responsible for their own learning!!!***** I am here to help facilitate your science education to the best of my ability, but you must do your part as well. It is up to YOU to complete the assignments in ANGEL by the deadlines, to take notes, to ask questions, to be an active learner! It is up to YOU to take advantage of the education I am providing you. It is your choice to sink or swim in this course.



COURSE GOALS!!!!

I realize that 99.9% of the students that take my geoscience courses will never become professional geologists. This is why I design all my courses around skill-based goals, where you will acquire and/or further develop skills that will be applicable to you no matter what your future career. This is especially true in this EARTH course.

- **The scientific method and working with data sets:** You will be learning about the methods of science and participating in class activities and assignments that require critical thinking and analyzing science issues with various forms of scientific data.
- **Using technology:** You will be working with Microsoft Office and various forms of technology throughout the semester to prepare you for the technology-focused world of employment. You will use iTunes and other Web 2.0 technologies to facilitate your learning and to share what you have learned.
- **Sharing your knowledge with others:** For the rest of your lives, you will always be a student and a teacher. You will also learn the course material better if you explain it to others in and outside of class. There will be a service project required for you to share your new London dinosaur knowledge through the creation of a book, with your Flickr images, to be donated back to your elementary school library.

Now for all the necessary, important information....

My expectations of you...

I expect every student to read all materials I post in ANGEL and complete all of the assignments by the deadlines. I encourage everyone to ask questions in the general discussion boards I place in ANGEL and converse with your fellow students in this virtual world. There will not be traditional assignments in this class. Your virtual participation will strongly impact your performance and thereby your resulting grade.

- **Class Participation**

Class participation is required! This online course is to be an interactive course, filled with questions, discussions, stories on your favorite dinosaur experience, etc. There is much we can learn from each other! Although you will be viewing several lectures during much of this course, what you will be doing outside of viewing the lectures is a vitally important aspect of how you will learn in this course – whether you be an “active” participant or just click through ANGEL and be a “passive” participant. You will also be working in groups in some of the discussion forums, which places on you serious responsibility to other students in the class.

- **Online Etiquette**

Let's work together on this one. Please do not personally attack any postings or comments by your fellow students. Do not use IM-speak. I expect full words and capital letters at the beginning of every sentence. This course is a professional environment. We will be having online discussions where I want you to volunteer your interpretation and opinion on certain issues. Be open, be honest, and show respect for the opinions your fellow students have. **If I find that anyone is being**

too disruptive to too disrespectful to the students or myself, I reserve to block your access to the discussion forums (including the graded ones). You will then have to speak to me (yes, that means call me) in my office before I will allow you back into the discussion forums. The class will be much more enjoyable if we show respect for one another!

- **A note on behavior in London:** Once we meet face-to-face, I expect the professional courtesy to continue. We have lots to see and do in London, lots of places to visit, tours to take, and pictures to snap. We will need to work together efficiently and effectively to make this the best dinosaur experience of your life!

In a nutshell, it's all about respect!!! I demand respect in my online classroom – respect towards me, respect of students to students, and myself respecting the class. I will not tolerate disrespect online, and neither should you!

- **ANGEL**

ANGEL will be used for most of this course. If you are not familiar or comfortable with ANGEL, please set up an appointment with myself or someone on your campus ASAP you can sit down and be shown how to most effectively use Penn State's course management software. There will be several folders and links for you to access relating to various class discussions and assignments. The most "complex" use of ANGEL is where you will need to know how to download Microsoft files that I post, enter text/data, and then place the file in a drop box folder I set up. Trust me, you will not survive this course if you don't use ANGEL.

You must access your Penn State email as well. PSU email is the designated form of official communication between Penn State faculty and their students. Do not email me from an outside email account you might have (such as AOL or hotmail) – if you do, I cannot guarantee that I will receive that message, and I cannot guarantee that I will respond to that message. **ALL EMAILS REGARDING THIS COURSE NEED TO BE SENT THROUGH ANGEL IF YOU EXPECT ME TO RESPOND.** I will be making use of email as reminders for deadlines, follow-up to online discussions, clarification on assignments, etc. I will not send useless messages, only ones that directly relate to the class and to assist your learning. All emails I send to the entire class at once will be done through the ANGEL email system. Again, please use professional etiquette when emailing me – don't use all lower-case letters, don't use abbreviations that you might use if you were going to IM someone, and please type your name at the end of the email message.

- **iTunes U**

Our course is listed in iTunes U. Although your primary course material will be delivered and submitted via ANGEL, PDF files of assignments will be placed in iTunes U as a backup. More importantly, I will be audio and video recording some fascinating dinosaur stories for you with the files going in iTunes U. You do not need an iPod to listen to the files. If you do not have speakers on a home computer, you

can always listen to these files on any of your campus Library computers by checking out a set of headphones from the circulation desk or bringing your own headphones to campus to plug in.

- **Math**

Yes, folks, this is a science course, so there will be some math involved. But the math skills I'm expecting are basic. You should be comfortable with the following: graphing, unit conversions, setting up and solving ratios, and percentages.

- **References and Assignments**

It is critical that students learn how to properly cite sources, not just in this course but in all courses. For all of your papers, you must use the APA style of citation for in-text citations and list of references. And be sure to utilize quality sources.

Wikipedia is NOT an acceptable reference for any work in this course.

- **Late Assignments**

In a nutshell, you will not be allowed to turn in assignments late during this course. It is your responsibility to stay on top of deadlines **Do not use “computers” as an excuse for not turning in an assignment on time** (such as the disk ate my paper, I couldn't log in from home, AOL was down, etc.). You will be given more than enough time to complete and turn in assignments, I will not make exceptions if you wait until 5 minutes before an assignment is due to hand it in.

Unless I tell you otherwise, all assignments will be turned in via an ANGEL drop box or quiz form, which will disappear according to when the “ANGEL clock” hits the deadline time. **DO NOT** send me paper copies of assignments. I will not be responsible for assignments not turned in via ANGEL.

What you can expect of me...

I will have all the ANGEL and iTunes U materials prepared for you when the course begins. I will keep you updated if there are to be any changes to the syllabus (for example, if the class wants to explore a topic further, I will be flexible!). I will make myself available online and offline to answer any question you may have – don't hesitate to ask anything! **I am here to help you IF you put in the effort and work yourself!** I will not only teach you “the material” but why we are learning it, the applicability of this course to your everyday lives. Note that I will not give any makeup assignments, for this is not fair to everyone that is ready to participate in class and hand in everything on time. If you have a medical/family emergency and cannot turn in an assignment, contact me **PRIOR** to the due date and time to see if there is a way to make up for missed work (please note that there are some online exercises where it will not be possible to make up the work).

In the end...

You must have fun in this course! I give you my word that I will put much effort and energy into this course to make this an enjoyable semester. In return, you should enter our online course with a positive attitude and open mind to new ideas and topics!

Note to students with disabilities

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is Penn State's policy to provide reasonable academic adjustments for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for modifications in this course, PSUBW students should contact Sharon Manco, 610-892-1461, 203A Main Building, sam26@psu.edu. This notification should occur by the end of the first week of the semester. Students may visit www.equity.psu.edu/ods/ for complete information.

Grading

Your grade for the semester will be based on miscellaneous exercises and the final exam. Each assignment is assigned a point value, and then calculated as a percentage of the final grade. The breakdown is as follows:

DURING THE ENTIRE COURSE

20% - DinoBytes (online discussions)

10% - APA documentation, follow-up video questions, discussion forums

PRE-LONDON ASSIGNMENTS

10% - Lunch with dinosaur hunters

25% - Mid-term project – Create your own Jurassic Park

POST-LONDON ASSIGNMENTS

10% - Darwin and dinosaurs toast

25% - Final project – Book through Flickr, A Journey to the Original Dinosaurs

The final grades will be assessed at the end of the semester as follows:

A ≥ 93.0; A- = 92.9 to 90.0; B+ = 89.9 to 87.0; B = 86.9 to 83.0; B- = 82.9 to 80.0;

C+ = 79.9 to 77.0; C = 76.9 to 70.0; D = 69.9 to 60.0; F = 59.9 and below

**** Do not expect me to drop any grades, curve any grades, or round up any grades on individual assignments during or on the final average at the end of the semester. Note that the ANGEL Grade Book may round up grades – I do not! I will track all grades in an Excel spreadsheet and calculate final grades from there before I enter grades in eLion. Extra credit is not available in this course.***

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to act with civility, personal integrity; respect other students' dignity, rights and property; and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their own efforts. An environment of academic integrity is requisite to respect for self and others and a civil community.

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another persons' work as one's own, using Internet sources without citation, fabricating field data or citations, "ghosting" (taking or having

another student take an exam), stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc.

Students charged with a breach of academic integrity will receive due process and, if the charge is found valid, academic sanctions may range, depending on the severity of the offense, from F for the assignment to F for the course.

The University's statement on academic integrity, from which the above statement is drawn, is available at: <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html>

OK, so **WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN... DO NOT EVEN THINK OF CHEATING!!!** Do not copy off of your fellow students, do not share assignments, do not plagiarize (from books, the internet, from yourself, etc.). I will vigorously pursue any suspicions I have of academic integrity violations! If I suspect a violation, I will first have an informal conversation with you to discuss the issue. Then, depending on the outcome of that conversation, I will have another conversation with you that requires us both to sign an academic integrity report form that will be turned in to the campus academic integrity committee of the Penn State Brandywine campus (even if you are a student at a different Penn State campus, the course is offered through the Brandywine campus and therefore it is the Brandywine Academic Integrity committee that will review the case). I will determine what I feel is appropriate punishment for your violation of PSU's academic integrity policy. The sanction may be from failing the assignment to failing the course, depending on the severity of the violation. We will be reviewing academic integrity and plagiarism the first week of the semester, and you will have a quiz on academic integrity and plagiarism early in the semester. Schreyer Scholars are strongly encouraged to go back to the Schreyer Student Handbook to see what may happen to their status as Schreyer Scholars if found guilty of an academic integrity violation.

Because you will be turning in assignments this semester that require some background research, I know most (if not all) of you will be using the internet for assistance. To make sure that we are all clear and understand the rules of properly documenting sources and putting work in our own words, **all your written assignments** (Darwin and dinosaurs toast, lunch with dinosaur hunters, the text for the Jurassic Park and Flickr book projects) **will be checked against internet sources through Turnitin.com**. If the program determines you have copied text passages directly from the internet without documentation, expect to have a talk with me about an academic integrity violation.

Breakdown of topics covered during the semester

- *note that this syllabus is subject to change with prior notification*

► UNIT 1 -- Visit ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

Demonstration of iTunes U

Sign up for the course Flickr group, submit your first photo

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/pennstatelondondinosaurs/>

View videos on multimedia copyright

<http://copyright.psu.edu/>

<http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/>

ASSIGN: APA formatting assignment for dinosaur resources (ANGEL drop box)

ASSIGN: DinoByte #1

WATCH: Online lecture – Welcome to EARTH 150H!

DUE (before beginning UNIT 2): APA formatting assignment

► UNIT 2 -- Visit ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6

WATCH: Three online videos as part of the Earth Revealed Series

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series78.html>

#6 Plate Dynamics, #10 Geologic Time, #11 Evolution of Life

WATCH: Online fieldtrip – real vs. fake fossils in museums

ASSIGN: Follow-up questions to online fieldtrip

ASSIGN: DinoByte #2

DUE (before beginning UNIT 3): Follow-up questions, DinoByte

► UNIT 3 -- Visit ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapters 3, 4, 13

WATCH: Online lecture – classification

WATCH: Online lecture – cladistics

*Exercise on reserve in the library – submit responses to Dr. G's office

ASSIGN: DinoByte #3

ASSIGN: Lunch with dinosaur hunters

DUE (before beginning UNIT 4): DinoByte, Exercise on cladistics

DUE (Sunday, November 1): In ANGEL, Lunch with Dinosaur Hunters assignment

► UNIT 4 -- Visit ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapters 9, 14

WATCH: Online lectures – two lectures on dinosaur groups

ASSIGN: DinoByte #4, DinoByte #5

ASSIGN: Follow-up questions to video China's dinosaurs

DUE (before beginning UNIT 5): Both DinoBytes, Follow-up to China's dinosaurs

► **UNIT 5** -- **Visit** ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapters 10, 15

ASSIGN: DinoByte #6, DinoByte #7

DUE (before beginning UNIT 6): Both DinoBytes

► **UNIT 6** -- **Visit** ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapters 7, 8, 11

WATCH: Online lecture – The Loch Ness Monster

ASSIGN: DinoByte #8, DinoByte #9

DUE (before beginning UNIT 7): Both DinoBytes

► **UNIT 7** -- **Visit** ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

WATCH: Online lecture – Cope vs. Marsh

WATCH: Online lecture – *Hadrosaurus foulkii*

ASSIGN: DinoByte #10

ASSIGN: Darwin and Dinosaurs Toast

ASSIGN: Flickr dinosaur book project

DUE (Wednesday, November 18): DinoByte #10, Jurassic Park Mid-Term Assignment

► **LONDON TRIP**

Visit: Natural History Museum, tour Darwin Biodiversity Centre

Visit: Crystal Palace Dinosaur Park (outside of London)

Visit: Down House (outside of London)

While at these sites, you are to collect information, data and images to use in your Darwin and Dinosaurs Toast assignment and Flickr Book final project.

► **UNIT 9** -- **Visit** ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapter 12

READ: Articles on latest ideas on what killed the dinosaurs

READ: Twitter feed of latest dinosaur discoveries – what can we learn?

ASSIGN: DinoByte #11

► **UNIT 10** -- **Visit** ANGEL/iTunes U and complete the following:

READ: Textbook, Chapter 16, 17, 19, 20

Bringing dinosaurs back to life(?), Technology and dinosaurs
Dinosaurs alive in the media

ASSIGN: DinoByte #12, #13

DUE (Monday, December 14): DinoBytes #11, #12, #13, Toast to Darwin and Dinosaurs, Flickr Book Project

The last item to complete in the course is DinoByte #14!

A Note on Virtual Lectures and Virtual Fieldtrips

I have recorded lectures for you to watch that would fill a typical class period. So instead of coming to class, watching my PowerPoint and seeing me speak, you'll be able to watch the PowerPoint and hear me speak on the computer, or view photos with my captions.

I have recorded the lectures I would have typically given during the class periods. If you look in the folder for the week that has the date of the lecture I am missing, you will see a folder titled "Virtual Lecture" or "Virtual Fieldtrip" that contains a link to the required online lecture and instructions on how to access. I STRONGLY recommend you take notes while watching this lecture just as if you were in class.

The Virtual Lectures can be watched on a PC with Internet Explorer 5.0 or later for Windows. Please note that the Virtual Lectures will NOT work on a Macintosh computer. Netscape Navigator is touch-and-go with playing the virtual lectures.

There will be several ways to access these lectures. Note that you will need to hear the sound for the complete lecture (speakers on home computer or use of headphones on campus):

- **From any Brandywine campus computer**, log into ANGEL, read instructions in folder and watch. For the computers in Vairo Library, the circulation desk has 3 or 4 headphones that can be checked out for library use only. The PC's MUST use headphones since the speakers have been disabled. You can bring your own headphones from home to use with these computers (our campus bookstore also sells headphones). Both library PC computer labs (near the circulation desk and back by Room 201E) support audio w/headphones.
- **From any home computer with a DSL (fast connection)**, log into ANGEL, read instructions in folder and watch and take notes.
- **If you have dial-up from home (slow connection)**, the Virtual Lecture *most likely will not work*, as it will take much too long to load. If you cannot access the lecture from home, then you are encouraged to use one of the campus computers.
- **If you do not have internet connectivity from home**, you'll need to watch the lecture on a campus computer.

Note that you MUST view the online lectures in ANGEL and iTunes U. Here I've presented several options for watching the lecture - there will be no excuses or reasons for not accessing the lecture before assignments are due. Remember that you can start-and-stop the lectures at any point – you do not need to sit down and watch the entire lecture at once. You can also go back to specific sections and review the information presented.

Explanation of the DinoBytes

A “DinoByte” is an activity where we explore some specialized topics relating to the course content. Here’s how the DinoBytes will work.

Readings and responses outside of material presented online

On the weeks of our DinoBytes, you will be responsible for completing a reading(s) from your text, an online article, or listening to an audio file. In addition to the reading(s), you will be answering three short questions relating to the content of the readings and/or your point-of-view on the material. There will be link in ANGEL to that online form. Some weeks, you will be formulating responses with your peers, while during other weeks, you will be completing the assignments individually.

Online discussion on responses

We will review the class responses as a group in ANGEL. The responses will be presented as anonymous to the class, so no one will be able to identify “who-said-what.” We will breakout into a discussion forum to have further questions/statements for debate.

Dr. G’s 2¢ worth

At the end of the DinoByte discussions, I’ll put in my 2¢ worth on the topic of discussion. We’ll also highlight some of the more “animated” discussions and develop a take-home message of the week.

How the “grading” will work

I will be looking for complete answers with a complete thought. One- or two-sentence responses for each question are not acceptable. Do not plagiarize – you should reference your sources if you take material verbatim from a source, but I do not want to see entire text passages as your response. Put your answers in your own words. Your final DinoByte grade will be a percentage. You will have 14 DinoBytes, each with 3 questions. Each question will be scored from 0 to 3.

- **Score 0** = you respond that you do not know how to answer the question, or you leave it blank (shows no effort).
- **Score 1** = you try to answer the question but show minimal accurate knowledge and/or substantial misconceptions about concept. You do not use any information from the readings or lecture notes to answer the question (minimal effort, incorrect answer).
- **Score 2** = you show some accurate knowledge and may use correct terminology to answer the question. However, you do not use appropriate information from the readings or lecture notes to answer the question (partially correct, but still incomplete/not fully answered).
- **Score 3** = you answer the question correctly and completely. You incorporate information from the readings or class notes into the answer. You may have looked for the answer outside of the class (on the web, etc.).

You cannot receive credit for not getting your online responses in on-time. There are no make-ups and no excuses allowed for missing the DinoByte online deadline.