Department of Geology

Chairperson: Abdel-Rahman, Abdel-Fattah M.
Professor: Abdel-Rahman, Abdel-Fattah M.
Assistant Professors: Elias, Ata R.; El-Kibbi, Maya M.; Haidar, Ali T.
Instructors: "Bou Jaoude, Issam; "Khadra, Wisam M.; "Nassar, Philip E.; "Oueida, Raghida S.
Assistant Instructor: "Skayian, Heghnar S.

The Department of Geology offers programs leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Geology, and Master of Science degrees in certain areas of the vast field of geological sciences. It also offers a more broadly based program leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Studies. Students wishing to major in geology or petroleum studies must secure the approval of the department. In addition, students must have a strong background in sciences and have taken the freshman science program or its equivalent.

The department also offers the following undergraduate elective courses: GEOL 101, GEOL 102, GEOL 103, GEOL 104, and GEOL 201 in the area of general geology, and GEOL 205 in environmental geology.

Field trips are required parts of most geology courses.

BS Degree

Mission Statement

The Department of Geology at the American University of Beirut is committed in providing the best Geoscience education in the Middle East, via its emphasis on excellence in teaching, and engaging students in research. The aim is to prepare our students to fulfill the needs of this region in terms of its geological nature, its petroleum and mineral resources, as well as groundwater resources, and their role in world economy and environmental implications. This is achieved within the context of learning about the occurrence, distribution and origin of natural resources worldwide. With the structure of our courses which include laboratory components, field components, term papers, oral presentations, and problem-solving assignments, we train our students to observe, analyze, critically evaluate, think independently, and derive their own conclusions. We emphasize the development of the conceptual apparatus, and the unbiased and accurate reporting of field and laboratory data (observation) and its significance in reaching a correct interpretation. In this manner, we promote high ethical professional standards, character, and scientific integrity. The program prepares our students to be life-long learners and well-rounded individuals, who can lead successful careers in the areas of energy and petroleum resources, hydrogeology, mining, geotechnical sciences and related fields.
Undergraduate Program

Geology majors must attain an average of 70 in major courses during the first three semesters in order to remain in the program. Majors must complete the following courses, in which a general average of 70 or more must be maintained: GEOL 201, GEOL 202, GEOL 203, GEOL 210, GEOL 211, GEOL 212, GEOL 213, GEOL 214, GEOL 219, GEOL 221, GEOL 222, GEOL 224, and GEOL 229, which is a total of 40 credits. In addition, three required elective courses - CMPS 209 (or a 200-level CMPS course), and 200-level economics and education courses (6 credits) - must be completed. No course may be taken without its prerequisite unless authorized by the departmental faculty. Students are encouraged to take additional geology courses such as GEOL 205, GEOL 207, GEOL 215 or GEOL 225, and also courses from the graduate level, provided other requirements permit.

The requirements for a BS degree in Geology are 90 credits for students entering the department at the sophomore level, including 40 credits in the major. The distribution of university requirements is as follows:

University Requirements

- University Language requirements: English (6 cr) and Arabic (3 cr)
- University General Education requirements: Humanities (12 cr), Social Sciences (6 cr), Natural Sciences (9 cr) and Quantitative thought (3 cr).

The core courses of the petroleum studies program (totaling 58 credits) are GEOL 201, GEOL 202, GEOL 203, GEOL 211, GEOL 212, GEOL 213, GEOL 214, GEOL 219, GEOL 221, GEOL 222, GEOL 225, GEOL 229; CHEM 201, CHEM 208; ACCT 210, MNGT 215, MKTG 210, and ECON 203. In addition, a required elective course, CMPS 209 (or a 200-level CMPS course) must be completed.

Petroleum studies majors must attain a grade of 70 or more in GEOL 201, and GEOL 203, and also pass the next two geology courses with a grade of 70 or more.

The requirements for a BS degree in Petroleum Studies are 90 credits for students entering the department at the sophomore level, including 37 credits of geology courses, 6 credits of chemistry courses, 9 credits of business courses and 3 credits in economics. The distribution of university requirements is as follows:

University Requirements

- University Language requirements: English (6 cr) and Arabic (3 cr)
- University General Education requirements: Humanities (12 cr), Social Sciences (6 cr), Natural Sciences (9 cr) and quantitative thought (3 cr).

To obtain a minor in geology, students must complete the following core courses: GEOL 201, GEOL 202, GEOL 203, and GEOL 205, and two of the following elective courses: GEOL 210, GEOL 211, and GEOL 222 (for a total of 16 credits).

**GEOL 101**  The Earth, Present and Past 3.0, 3 cr.
A freshman level survey of the present day processes that shape the earth we live on, such as plate tectonic activity, rock formation and erosion, coupled with an overview of the origin and history of the earth and life. Each semester.

**GEOL 102**  Environmental Physical Geography 3.0; 3 cr.
An introduction to the structure, classification, physical processes and characteristics of the earth's atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere, dynamics of change, and associated environmental impacts. Each semester.
GEOL 103  Introduction to Marine Geology  3.0; 3 cr.
A freshman level survey of oceanic geological processes, wave dynamics, submarine springs, marine
economic mineral resources, marine communities, pollution, global change, and marine-related
environmental issues. Each semester.

GEOL 104  Natural Disasters  3.0, 3 cr.
A freshman level course covering events involving natural forces that have major devastating effects
on humankind. These include mud flows, land slides and slope failure, earthquakes, tsunamis,
explosive eruptions and volcanic hazards, meteoritic impact and mass extinctions, hurricanes and
tornadoes, flooding, and forest fires. Each semester.

GEOL 201  Physical Geology  3.0; 3 cr.
An introduction to minerals, igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks, geological structures,
and external earth processes, including the geologic work of streams, glaciers, groundwater, wind,
and plate tectonic theory. Each semester.

GEOL 202  Historical Geology  2.2; 3 cr.
An introduction to earth history, including the principles of interpreting the past, origin, and
development of the solar system. This course also provides an introduction to the systematic study
of fossils, their classification, and identification. Prerequisites: GEOL 201, GEOL 203, or consent of
instructor. Annually.

GEOL 203  Physical Geology Laboratory  0.2; 1 cr.
An introduction to the identification of rocks and minerals in hand specimen, geographic and
geological maps, and basic interpretation of geological data. Pre- or corequisite: GEOL 101, GEOL 102,
GEOL 103, or GEOL 201, or consent of instructor. Each semester.

GEOL 205  Earth Resources and Energy  3.0; 3 cr.
A study of the main economic mineral resources and traditional and alternate energy resources, with
an emphasis on the environmental impacts of their use and misuse. A special emphasis is given to
regional issues. Open to both arts and sciences students. Each semester.

GEOL 207  Map Interpretation  2.2; 3 cr.
A course on the description, reading and interpretation of topographic and geological maps. This
course also introduces stereographic projections, construction of cross-sections across geologic
structures, and basic field mapping techniques. Prerequisites: GEOL 201, GEOL 203, or consent of
instructor. Occasionally.

GEOL 210  Geomorphology  3.0; 3 cr.
An introduction to the study of land forms and the interaction of external geological forces and
erosion agents with the structure and composition of their surface rocks. This course is also an
examination of the interaction between the internal and external earth processes responsible for
the development of land forms. Prerequisites: GEOL 201 and GEOL 203, or concurrently, with consent of
instructor. Annually.

GEOL 211  Crystallography and Physical Mineralogy  2.2; 3 cr.
An introduction to the study and classification of crystals; properties of minerals as related to
their crystal structure; identification, description, and classification of minerals. This course entails
practical work with crystal models and hand specimens of common minerals. Annually.

GEOL 212  Optical Mineralogy  2.2; 3 cr.
An introduction to the theory of crystal optics, the polarizing microscope, and methods of mineral
identification based on their optical properties. This course is also a systematic study of the common
rock forming minerals in thin section. Prerequisite: GEOL 211 or consent of instructor. Annually.
GEOL 213  Structural Geology  2.2; 3 cr.
Introduction to the study of rock deformation, the relationship between stress and strain, and the
interpretation of structures and their significance to regional and global tectonics. Prerequisite: GEOL
201. Annually.

GEOL 214  Stratigraphy  2.2; 3 cr.
A course on the principles of interpretation of the sedimentary rocks and methods of correlation and
an introduction to the stratigraphy of Lebanon in the context of the regional geology of the Middle
East. Prerequisite: GEOL 222 or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 215  Invertebrate Paleontology  2.2; 3 cr.
An introduction to the systematic study of invertebrate fossils, their classification and identification,
using macro-specimens and thin sections. Prerequisite: GEOL 202. Annually.

GEOL 219  Geologic Field Methods  0.6; 3 cr.
An introduction to applied methods used in field geological mapping. This course also provides a
description and interpretation of geological maps, and construction of cross-sections. Prerequisites:
GEOL 201, GEOL 213, GEOL 222, or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 221  Petrology  2.2; 3 cr.
A course on the origin, composition, occurrence, and classification of igneous and metamorphic
rocks and their systematic identification in hand specimens and in thin section. Prerequisite: GEOL
212 or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 222  Sedimentology  2.2; 3 cr.
A study of the characteristics and classification of sedimentary rocks using petrographic and field
study methods, with some focus on diagenetic processes, depositional environments, and elementary
basin analysis. Pre- or co-requisites: GEOL 202 and GEOL 212, or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 224  Regional Geology  3.0; 3 cr.
A course on the geology of the Middle East region, with emphasis on its stratigraphy, structure,
geological history, and tectonic evolution, and with reference to oil and mineral resources in the
region. Prerequisites: GEOL 213 and GEOL 222, or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 225  Petroleum Geology  3.0; 3 cr.
A course on hydrocarbon formation and occurrence as oil and gas fields, as well as exploration and
extraction methods. Prerequisites: GEOL 213, GEOL 222, or consent of instructor. Annually.

GEOL 229  Individual Field Work Project  0.18; 6 cr.
A complete and independent geological investigation of a designated area and preparation of a
detailed geological map, cross-sections, and report. For juniors and seniors. Pre- or corequisite:
GEOL 219. Annually.

GEOL 271/272  Directed Study in Geology  1–3 cr.
A tutorial that may be repeated for credit with different topics or may replace a required course.
Occasionally.
# 40 Credits in Geology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Analysis</th>
<th>English and Arabic (9)</th>
<th>Humanities (12)</th>
<th>Social Sciences (6+Unspecified)</th>
<th>Natural Sciences (40)</th>
<th>Quantitative Thought (3)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture Courses</td>
<td>(9+12+3+40+3)</td>
<td>Required credits in the humanities: 12 credits including 6 credits from CVSP (see pp. 158–63)</td>
<td>Required elective economics courses: a 200-level economics course (3), and a 200-level education course (3) from this list: EDUC 211, 215, 225 or 230</td>
<td>Required elective geology courses: GEOL 201(3), 202(3), 210(3), 211(3), 212(3), 213(3), 214(3), 216(3), 219(3), 221(3), 222(3), 224(3), 229(3)</td>
<td>Required elective computer science courses: CMPS 209(3) or 200-level (3)</td>
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1 Plus 50 required and elective credits
2 Combined lecture, laboratory (field), and research project courses
3 Combined lecture and seminar courses
4 Combined lecture and lab courses
# 37 Credits¹ in Petroleum Studies

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<tr>
<th>Modes of Analysis</th>
<th>English and Arabic (9)</th>
<th>Humanities (12)</th>
<th>Social Sciences (12)</th>
<th>Natural Sciences (37+6)</th>
<th>Quantitative Thought (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| Laboratory (13,3) | 1. Required geology courses: GEOL 203(1), 211d(3), 212(3), 213(3), 222(3) 2. Required electives computer science courses: CMPS 209(3) or 200-level(3) | | |


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¹ Plus 21 required credits in business, economics, and chemistry, in addition to 38 required and elective credits.
2 Combined lecture and research project courses.
3 Combined lecture and seminar courses.
4 Combined lecture and lab courses.