

**Earth Sciences 4421b: Physics of the Earth II**  
**Geophysics 9530b: Advanced Physics of the Earth**  
**Course Outline – Winter 2022**

## 1. Course Information

**ES4421b/GP9530b** – Physics of the Earth II/Advanced Physics of the Earth

Lectures: Tue: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.; Thu: 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., **AHB-2B04**

**List of Prerequisites:** Earth Sciences 3321, completion of the second year of any Geophysics program or special permission the instructor.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## 2. Instructor Information

Instructors	Email	Office	Phone	Office Hours
Dr. Robert Shcherbakov (Course Instructor)	<a href="mailto:rshcherb@uwo.ca">rshcherb@uwo.ca</a>	BG&S 1080	x84212	By appointment
TA				

## 3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

This course provides an advanced overview of fundamental processes responsible for the evolution and the current dynamic state of the Earth and other planets. It introduces concepts and topics of physics of the Earth providing a way to study the inner workings of our planet at different temporal and spatial scales. During the course students will be given an introduction into several fundamental physical concepts such as magnetism, radioactivity, elasticity, and elements of continuum mechanics and fluid mechanics which play key roles in understanding and studying various phenomena on Earth and planets.

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Apply basic knowledge and methods of the three major areas of geophysics: geomagnetism; radioactivity and radioactive dating methods; and elements of continuum mechanics applied to Earth processes;
- Explain the basic principles of the physics of magnetism and their application to the Earth and planets;
- Identify and use several radioactive dating schemes.

- Apply the basic principles of continuum mechanics to modelling the deformation of solid materials and fluid flow.

**Summary of Lecture Topics** (*approximate and subject to change!*):

- Radioactivity and Earth's age.
- Magnetism of the Earth and planets.
- The physics of magnetism.
- Rock magnetism, paleomagnetism, and the geomagnetic timescale.
- Magnetism of stars and planets.
- Geochronology and the geological timescale.
- Elasticity and flexure of plates.
- Deformation, stress, strain, and linear elasticity.
- Elements of continuum mechanics and rheology.
- Elastic properties of the Earth's lithosphere.
- Principles of isostasy.
- Basics of fluid flow and fluid mechanics.
- Poroelasticity.

**Course Work**

Assignments will consist of examination-style answer questions and require no formal writeup. Late submissions will be accepted with a **5% per day penalty**. Under exceptional circumstances, late submissions will be accepted with no penalty, provided that adequate documentation is given. With a few exceptions, only SI units should be used to report any physical quantities.

The midterm exam will be held during the class period on Tuesday, March 1. The final exam will be **two hours** in length and will take place during the April examination period. For both exams, a **single-sided hand-written crib sheet** and a non-programmable calculator may be used.

The project will involve a written report (5 pages + figures) and a brief oral presentation (10-15 minutes). The topic will be chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. Research topics must be in any area of the physics of the Earth covered during the course. The project must include references to the scientific literature. Projects are due April 5, and oral presentations will be given during the last week of the term. (**Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).**)

**The relevant Key Sessional Dates:**

Classes begin: January 3, 2022  
 Reading Week: February 19–27, 2022  
 Classes end: April 5, 2022

**Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely

online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

## 4. Course Materials

### Recommended Textbooks:

- Lowrie, W., *Fundamentals of Geophysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Turcotte, D.L. and Schubert G., *Geodynamics*, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Stein S., Wyssession M., *An Introduction to Seismology, Earthquakes, and Earth Structure*, Blackwell, 2003.
- Fowler, C.M.R., *The Solid Earth: An Introduction to Global Geophysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2005.
- Stacey F. and Davis P., *Physics of the Earth*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>.

If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 5. Methods of Evaluation

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

### For ES4421b

Assignments	Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Participation	Project
25%	20%	25%	5%	25%

### For GP9530b

Assignments	Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Participation	Project
25%	15%	20%	5%	35%

## 6. Student Absences

### Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

- (i) Submitting a Self-Reported Absence (SRA) form provided that the conditions for submission are met. To be eligible for a Self-Reported Absence:
  - an absence must be no more than 48 hours
  - the assessments must be worth no more than 30% of the student's final grade
  - no more than two SRAs may be submitted during the Fall/Winter term
- (ii) For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner to the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration.
- (iii) Submitting appropriate documentation for non-medical absences to the Academic Counselling office in their Faculty of Registration.

Note that in all cases, students are required to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period covered, unless otherwise instructed in the course outline.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For the policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs, see:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

### Religious Accommodation

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

## **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

## **6. Accommodation and Accessibility**

### **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf),

## **7. Academic Policies**

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy,

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf),

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual’s official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

For the exams a non-programmable calculator is required. A single-sided hand-written crib sheet can be used for formulas and definitions.

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

## 8. Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at (519) 661-2147 if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

Learning-skills counsellors at the Student Development Centre (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<http://www.health.uwo.ca/mentalhealth>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <http://westernusc.ca/services>.