My objectives for this class are that
1) You develop an understanding of geological reasoning, and the nature of geological relations.
2) You get experience identifying igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks.
3) You read and comprehend some recent and classic literature concerning the southern Appalachians.
4) You practice thinking critically and writing.

Each week you will be responsible for writing one page summaries for two of the assigned papers. I’ll also ask you to prepare a vocabulary list composed of new geologic words or terms you read, learn and define in the readings. Finally, I’d like for you to prepare several questions based on your reading for the week. The questions need not be profound but should show that you read the article and/or what additional background you need(ed) to understand the material. Two of these three-part assignments are due at the beginning of class.

These writeups will make up 75% of your grade. The remaining 25% will be your choice of either a discussion of the evolution of the Appalachians or a description of the field trip we take over Spring Break. Either should run between 5-10 pages. This paper will be due (to me) 3 April 2008.

I have made the list as short as possible, partly because many students have a limited geological background, and adding more readings would not help you understand better. Most of my selections are special to sites we will visit on our field trip. Several geology texts, glossaries, and additional materials are on reserve at the library. I will also distribute additional handouts, drawn from other (non-assigned) readings.
Our discussion of topics will in generally be from west to east, and from older to younger, and we will focus on current themes and research problems in the Appalachians.

If you miss more than two class meetings, it will be very difficult to pass the class.

READING LIST


Nance, R.D. and Murphy, J.B., 1994, Contrasting basement isotopic signatures and the palinspastic restoration of peripheral orogens: An example from the neoproterozoic Avalonian-Cadomian belt: Geology, 22, p. 617-622.


Williams, H. 1978, Tectonolithofacies map of the Appalachian orogen, St Johns, Newfoundland, Memorial University Map No. 1, 1:1,000,000.


Wilson, J. T., 1966, Did the Atlantic close and then reopen?: Nature, 211, 676-681.