

**GLY 6932**  
**Navigating Graduate School**  
**Fall 2024**

**Instructor:** Ellen E. Martin (email: [eemartin@ufl.edu](mailto:eemartin@ufl.edu)); 362 Williamson Hall  
**Office Hours:** Monday 4:00-5:00

**Credits:** 1, Course Number- 286647, Section 7942

**Pre-requisites:** none

**Meeting time:** The class will meet in Williamson 214, Monday afternoons, 8<sup>th</sup> period (3:00-3:50)

**Objectives:** The path through graduate school can be challenging; the goal of this course is to provide information on how to deal with those challenges and optimize your graduate experience. During the course we will discuss critical deadlines, expectations, academic norms, skills that contribute to success in research, teaching and service, how the department works, and what resources are available to help you succeed. Everyone in the course will also be asked to think about and articulate their strengths, weaknesses, and goals.

**Learning Objectives**

- Understand the steps and deadlines that will carry you through your graduate career successfully
- Strengthen self-advocacy skills
- Identify time management skills to help you work for efficiently and effectively
- Clarify advisor expectations
- Join a cohort of students outside of your research group
- Expand your ability to create a healthy work environment
- Identify potential sources of conflict during graduate school and resources to help navigate those conflicts
- Define your career goals and the skills required to achieve those goals

**Readings:** Readings will assigned throughout the semesters and will be posted on canvas.

**Assignments:** There will be an assignment **due at 5:00 the Monday** before each class each. These assignments are designed to emphasize the learning objectives. A tentative plan for each week’s assignment is included on the syllabus, but the details may evolve during the semester. The final version of each assignment will be posted on canvas the week before it is due.

<b>Grading:</b>	Attending Class	40%
	Participating in discussion	30%
	Completed Assignments	30%

Grading scheme:

<b>Percentage earned</b>	<b>93%-100%</b>	<b>90%-92%</b>	<b>87%-89%</b>	<b>83%-86%</b>	<b>80%-82%</b>	<b>77%-79%</b>	<b>73%-76%</b>	<b>70%-72%</b>	
<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	etc.
<b>GPA Equiv</b>	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	

Below 60% = E (0 GPA)

**Course Logistics:**

**e-learning site** There is canvas site for the course that you should already have access to. Contact me if you have any trouble.

**Class Conduct:** Please be considerate of your fellow students and me during the class period. Please try to get to class on time, stay until the end and pay attention to the class rather than your phone or computer. These are basic, common courtesies that prevent distractions during class. We will be talking about the things people find challenging or confusing about graduate school. Please respect each other and recognize that everyone is coming to graduate school from a different place and dealing with different issues. I can set up a zoom meeting on occasion if someone can't attend class in person, but the goal is to have everyone working together in the classroom. If you do have to participate online, please keep your video on, if possible. It can be a difficult to stay engaged remotely and it helps if you do not feel like an anonymous black box. *Please email me or talk to me before or after class if there is some reason you need to participate remotely and if you cannot zoom with your video on.*

**Health and Wellness:** Life offers numerous challenges and being a student can be one of them. If you are struggling mentally or emotionally for any reason, you can contact the [Counseling and Wellness Center \(https://counseling.ufl.edu/\)](https://counseling.ufl.edu/). They have one-click access to people who can help you connect to the right resources for your situation. If these struggles are negatively impacting your performance in your courses, I encourage you to contact the [Dean of Students Care Area \(https://care.dso.ufl.edu/\)](https://care.dso.ufl.edu/) to connect with a support team that can help with temporary accommodations, authorization to make up missing course work, etc. Additionally, if you are comfortable doing so, please reach out to me and I will provide any accommodations in this course that I can.

- U Matter, We Care: [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu); [352-392-1575](tel:352-392-1575).
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>; [352-392-1575](tel:352-392-1575).
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center; [352-392-1161](tel:352-392-1161).
- University Police Department: <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>; [352-392-1111](tel:352-392-1111) (911 for emergencies).

**University Policies and Resources:****Attendance policy**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**Students requiring accommodation**

Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**UF course evaluation process**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **University Honesty Policy**

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course. For additional information, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

### **In-class recording**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party-note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by

a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### **Procedure for conflict resolution**

Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact Ellen Martin ([eemartin@ufl.edu](mailto:eemartin@ufl.edu), [352-392-2141](tel:352-392-2141)). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>; [352-392-1308](tel:352-392-1308)) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; [352-392-1261](tel:352-392-1261)).

### **Academic Resources**

- E-learning technical support: [learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:learning-support@ufl.edu); <https://elearning.ufl.edu>; [352-392-4357](tel:352-392-4357).
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union; <http://www.career.ufl.edu/>; [352-392-1601](tel:352-392-1601).
- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- Academic Resources: 1317 Turlington Hall; [352-392-2010](tel:352-392-2010); <https://academicresources.clas.ufl.edu>.

### **Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/) (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**Statement of access and inclusion:** The University of Florida is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with the [Disability Resource Center](https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/) (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course, and others. Regardless of whether you have consulted with disability services or not, please let me know if you have concerns about participating in this class or have comments on how it may be better organized for your learning. We are living in challenging times. Let's take each week at a time and offer each other patience and support.

**GLY 6932: Navigating Graduate School  
Fall 2024 (preliminary)**

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Guests/Reading</b>
The Department <i>Aug. 28</i>	Welcome and structure of Geological Sciences	NA
Graduate School Milestones <i>Sept. 4</i>	The Graduate Student Handbook; the steps along the way; deadlines; forming committees;	<i>'20 Things I wish I knew at the start of graduate school'; Dept. Grad Handbook;</i>
How does graduate school work?  <i>Sept. 11</i>	What are the work expectations; who do you work for; the role of the GS Union; who owns your research; what is the academic hierarchy and what does it mean	<i>'The importance of stupidity in scientific research';</i>
Professional Meetings  <i>Sept. 18</i>	Finding the right meeting/session; how to write an abstract; who to include as a co-author; finding; TARs; professional behavior, networking	<i>'How to get the most out of attending a meeting'</i>
Teaching and Mentoring  <i>Sept. 25</i>	What is expected of TAs; how to excel as a TA; how to mentor undergraduates; available resources	Matt Smith <i>'3 everyday practices that make you a good listener'</i>
Funding Opportunities  <i>Oct. 2</i>	How does summer funding work; what opportunities exist to support your research; what support can you expect from the dept/college/university; Also- discussion about ChatGPT	<i>'Potential Issues of ChatGPT in Science'</i>
Effective Story Telling  <i>Oct. 9</i>	How to share you science with scientists and the general public; how to capture the reader's attention	<i>'Story telling: the soul of science communication'</i>
How to critically read a paper <i>Oct. 16</i>	Where to start; what to focus on; how long should it take;	<i>'How to seriously read a scientific paper' see others on canvas</i>

Writing Manuscripts <i>Oct. 23</i>	How does peer review work; authorship; when to cite; referencing; annotated bibliographies	<i>'Art of responding to reviews' 'Ten simple steps to writing a scientific paper'</i>
Your Prospectus <i>Oct. 30</i>	What goes in it; when is it due; how long should it be; elements of a successful proposal	<i>Prospectus Guidelines- Geological Sciences</i>
How to Make Effective Figures <i>Nov. 6</i>	Elements of a good figure; what does a figure convey; how to make it legible, accessible, appealing, and impactful	<i>'How to make good graphs and figures for Scientific papers'</i>
Work/Life Balance Time management <i>Nov. 13</i>	Time management strategies; setting expectations and goals	Katherine Morgan from GatorWell <i>'9 to 5' '15 strategies for overcoming procrastination'</i>
Mental Health; Dealing with and Reporting Issues <i>Nov. 20</i>	Dealing with mental health issues, general health issues; advisor, colleague, or subordinate conflicts; reporting a grievance	<i>'Mental Health of Graduate Students sorely overlooked' and 'The emotional toll of Graduate school'</i>
<i>Nov 27</i>	No class- Thanksgiving Break	
Your strengths and Career Goals <i>Dec. 4</i>	What are the skills/qualities of a good scientist or a good graduate student; what are your strengths; what skills/qualities do you want to work on; what do you want to achieve in graduate school; what are your career aspirations and why	<i>Putting your Best Foot Forward</i> <i>'How to find the right career for me in 5 steps'</i> <i>'Career Trends'</i>

### **Assignments (Preliminary):**

**For Sept. 4- *Graduate School Milestones***- Read the Graduate Student Handbook for Geological Sciences. Also skim through the [UF Graduate Student Handbook](#). Make a list of key milestones. What are firm deadlines versus norms that have some flexibility? Note any inconsistencies between the 2 handbooks and any questions you want to follow up on.

### **For Sept. 11- *How does grad school work?***

- Write down your goals for 1) this semester, and 2) this year. Provide as much or as little detail as you want. What do you want to accomplish? What do you need to achieve to be on track for graduate school? You can think about this in terms of research, teaching, life, professional development- or whatever combination of those that you choose.
- Start to work on your Individual Development Plan (IDP).

### **For Sept. 18- *Professional meetings***

- Find one session at a meeting that would be an appropriate place for you to submit an abstract for your research (I will provide links to GSA and AGU). This is a process you need to go through before you go to any meeting, so it is good to figure out how to do it. Many of the meetings have an overwhelming number of sessions and finding the right one for you can be a challenge- or you may already know of a session that is a perfect fit from a friend, colleague, advisor... In some cases there are general sections by discipline in case you have a hard time finding something more specific, but try to find a session that is relevant if you can.
- Complete a TAR

**For Sept. 27- *Teaching and Mentoring***- Take the Implicit bias test from Project Implicit at Harvard (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>) you can sign in as a guest. There are a number of tests you can choose between to test your bias on a range of topics. Try at least two that strike you as interesting. Do not report your score. Instead, please **submit a few sentences about your thoughts on the test.** Which tests did you take? Have you taken a test like this before? Are you glad you took them? Did they seem fair, frustrating, intriguing? Would you recommend implicit bias tests to other people. Why or why not? Essentially, just let me know your impression of the test and how you think it should be used.

### **For Oct. 4-**

***Funding Opportunities*** - Communicate with your advisor and identify a potential funding source you could submit a grant to in order to help support your research efforts. This can be for small amounts of money for field or lab work (eg., GSA, Sigma Xi), support for travel to a meeting or workshop, are more substantial funding that

might support your tuition and/or salary, such as an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. Look up and write down the details of the requirements and deadlines for one funding source you are interested in. Search around a bit and see if you can identify 1-2 other funding sources that might be relevant to your particularly research topic. Write down the titles and deadlines for these funding sources as well.

***What is the Impact of ChatGPT?-***

Ask ChatGPT to write a 350 word essay explaining the processes that can lead to sea level rise. I'm going to let you decide how you want to word the request. Provide a short critique of the essay. The critique can be a bulleted list of what ChatGPT did well and what it got wrong. Would you be able to tell this was not written by a student? Add a short summary statement of what you see as the pros and cons of using ChatGPT to address scientific questions.

**For Oct. 9- *Effective Storytelling-*** The goal is to presentation your research from a humanities viewpoint.

- Compose a Haiku *and* a limerick about your research. I will provide more details on the framework for each.
- Come up with another way to tie your research to the humanities- either through linking it to literature or to art- you could write an essay, make a painting, write a poem or a song- just do something that makes you think about your scientific research in a different way.

**For Oct. 16 - *How to critically read a paper-***

- After reading the assigned papers, fill out the table I will provide about the order people in the readings use to work through the section of a paper. Then fill out a column about the order you use to read the sections of a paper.
- I will provide a paper and you will write an abstract for a paper and define the central hypothesis.

**For Oct 23- *Writing Manuscripts-*** Put together an annotated bibliography for 5 articles that are relevant to your research.

**For Oct. 30- *Your Prospectus-*** Prepare two elevator speeches about your research topic or research interests. One should be targeted for someone you run into at a scientific conference, one should be targeted at a friend or relative with a limited background in your research.

**For Nov. 6- *How to make effective figures-***

- Make a figure to illustrate an important point or concept related to your work. This can be based on your own data or data from the literature. If you use literature data, provide a copy of the figure from the publication and be prepared to explain how you have improved the presentation of the data or clarified the point you want to make.



- If it is a complex figure that you can't alter, you can copy it and draw on it physically or on the computer to explain what you would want to change.
- Make an XY plot using your data or data from the literature. Try changing the axes by changing the scale, plotting as logarithmic and normal, add and remove error bars... Just play around a bit and see how these types of manipulations change how you view the results of the data.
  - Comment on a couple of the versions to explain how you think the changes alter the way you view/interpret the data.

**For Nov. 13- *Work/Life Balance-***

- Complete both parts of the weekly study schedule worksheet (to be provided)
- Using the '15 Strategies for Overcoming Procrastination' - cross out the strategies you don't like, put a '?' by ones you want to learn more about, and circle at least 3 that you would like to try.

**For Nov. 20- *Mental health/reporting issues-***

- Go to the Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) and explore a bit. Look into the services that are offered (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/>) and resources that are available (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/resources/>). Also note, there is an "Ask a Question" section (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/outreach/askit/>).
- Then complete the Kognito training for students.  
This is a 30 minute course that is designed to help you recognize the signs of psychological distress and learn how to provide support to others.

**For Dec. 4- *Your strengths and career goals-***

- Make a list of:
  - at least 6 skills/qualities you think are important to be a successful scientist
  - 5 strengths you think you have that will contribute to your success in graduate school and/or as a scientist,
  - 5 areas where you want to improve.
- Complete your IDP and turn it in to John Jaeger
- Write down a description of a job/career that sounds like your dream job/career at this point in your life. Write down and explain what it is about that job/career that appeals to you and what you think the biggest challenges to succeeding in that job/career might be for you.