

**OXFORD COLLEGE OF EMORY UNIVERSITY**  
**GEOLOGY AND CULTURE IN SCOTLAND**  
**Geol235 / Eng235**

Stephen Henderson (Geology) and Christine Loflin (English)

SPRING SEMESTER 2006 (and JUNE 2006)

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students will be registered either for Eng235 or Geol235. The two courses will meet together and take the field trip to Scotland, but will have different research proposal and field research components. Students taking this course as Geol235 will undertake a research project in the Earth Sciences. Students taking this course as Eng235 will undertake a research project relating to Scottish literature.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course has been designed to introduce students to interdisciplinary perspectives on human culture in its physical environment, with particular emphasis on the connections between the geology, myth, storytelling, and literature. We will explore how geological processes have shaped the landscapes and ecosystems of Scotland and how those landscapes have influenced Scottish history and literature. In addition, students will study the landscapes and geology of Southern Scotland in and around Edinburgh, meet with storytellers, and visit significant literary landmarks. In Edinburgh, we will focus on the development of geology as a discipline. On Skye, students will also participate in a service learning project, helping the Staffin community to create the new Museum in the Environment. The museum will help to preserve and enhance the links between the local culture and the environment through the development of outdoor educational sites around the Staffin peninsula on Skye. By going to significant sites in geology, myth and literature, meeting with local singers and storytellers to learn how these art forms are linked to place, and helping to create the new museum on Skye linking these fields, students will have an interdisciplinary learning experience, and will be able to consider the ethics of development, of tourism, and of socially responsible travel and research. At the conclusion of the course, the students will have gained much knowledge of both Scottish geology and literature. Further, they will have an understanding of the connections (and potential conflicts) between ethics, academic disciplines, culture, and community development.

**COURSE GOALS**

By the end of this course, students will have:

- Completed an independent research project
- Given a field defense of their research project for the class
- Gained a knowledge of basic principles of geology in the country where geology was first established as a discipline

- Gained a knowledge of basic structures of both oral and written storytelling, and of their connection to local environments and culture
- Learned, through the study of both geology and literature, to make interdisciplinary connections between place, culture and literature
- Learned about the process of community and economic development through the example of the Museum in the Environment
- Learned about the integration of academic knowledge with community goals through the service learning project with the Museum in the Environment

## **COURSE LOGISTICS**

**CLASS MEETING TIME:** Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Plus field trip in Scotland (June 2006)

**PROFESSORS:** Dr. Christine Loflin Language Rm 106B, (770) 784-4682  
 Dr. Stephen Henderson Pierce Rm 106, (770) 784-8345

**TEXTS:** Electronic reserves including readings in geology and literature  
*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

**ATTENDANCE:** All students are expected to attend all scheduled Tuesday night class sessions. Because we only meet once a week during the semester, each session becomes very important. Attendance will be taken. If an absence is unavoidable, timely (i.e. as soon as at all possible) contact needs to be made with the professors. Unexcused absences are unacceptable and for each unexcused absence, two points will be deducted from the student's final course grade.

**HONOR CODE:** The Oxford College Honor Code applies to this course. If unsure whether or not how a particular assignment falls under the Honor Code, ask the professor prior to doing the assignment.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** This course consists of a conventional academic component on the Oxford campus and an intensive segment in Scotland, during June 2006. During the spring 2006 semester, each student will develop a research proposal on a topic of individual interest for field study in Scotland, approved by the instructors. This course requires a great deal of commitment from each student. At Oxford, you must be willing to keep up with the readings and class discussions and produce a credible research proposal. In Scotland, you must be willing to be a keen observer of natural and cultural environments, keeping a careful journal throughout the trip. Each student will need to take a good deal of initiative in pursuing his or her field research project, and will have to conduct an oral "field defense" and presentation on his or her findings. You

should be prepared to engage in a fair amount of physical activity while in Scotland, including daily hikes and other activities.

**GRADING AND EVALUATION:** Grades will be determined according to the following criteria:

Quiz during spring semester	5%
Lecture test during spring semester	15%
Research Proposal & Project	25%
Field Journal	25%
Presentation of Project	15%
Class participation	10%
Attitude	5%

### **LECTURE SCHEDULE FOR SPRING 2006**

#### **Week 1 (Jan 31): The Big Picture**

Plate tectonics and volcanism (Dr. Henderson)

Introduction to Scottish literature & languages (Dr. Loflin)

#### **Week 2 (Feb 7): Creation of Scottish Landscapes**

The role of glaciation and other types of erosion (Dr. Henderson)

*Celtic myths and legends*

#### **Week 3 (Feb 14): Focus on Scotland**

The geology of Scotland (Dr. Henderson)

Cultural regions of Scotland (Drs. Loflin & Henderson)

#### **Week 4 (Feb 21): Edinburgh (1) (Dr. Henderson)**

Edinburgh 1: local geology. *Quiz at end of class.*

**Week 5 (Feb 28): Workshop on Research Design** (Drs. Loflin & Henderson) This will include an introduction to research methods, strategies and ethics.

**Week 6 (Mar 7): Edinburgh (2)** (Drs. Loflin & Henderson) local geology and urban architecture; rational thought and the rise of medicine and geology in Edinburgh. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

*First draft of Research Proposal due.*

## **Spring Break**

### **Week 7 (Mar 21): Storytelling with Andy Irwin and Literature: Edinburgh**

What is storytelling about? Myths and stories, poetry, fiction

### **Week 8 (Mar 28): The Relations of Scottish Landscapes to Culture: Edinburgh/Skye**

The connections between geology, history, architecture, and art, with an emphasis on the opportunities and limits for human communities in these environments, and artistic responses to them. (Drs. Henderson & Loflin)

### **Week 9 (Apr 4): Geology, Culture and Myth in the Hebrides** (Drs. Loflin &

Henderson) Celtic songs and stories, island fiction and poetry, standing stones and other cultural monuments in the Hebridean landscape.

*Second draft of research proposals due.*

### **Week 10 (Apr 11): Island Communities and the Museum in the Environment** (Dr.

Loflin & Henderson) Focusing on the service learning component in this course, with readings on the ethics of travel and tourism, the significance of social engagement and community development through service learning.

### **Week 11 (Apr 18): Cinematic Representations of Scotland** (Drs. Loflin & Henderson)

Screening of *Brave Heart*

*Final Research Proposal due.*

### **Week 12 (Apr 25): Trip Preparation Workshop** (Drs. Loflin & Henderson)

## **Tentative Itinerary in Scotland**

### **June 9-13<sup>th</sup>: Edinburgh**

Visit Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh Castle, the Museum of Scotland, the Writers' Literary Museum, the Scott Monument, the National Storytelling Centre, the Scottish National Parliament Building, The Palace of Holyroodhouse, with a side trip to the University of St Andrews.

### **June 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>th</sup>: Skye**

Help create the Museum in the Environment on the Staffin Peninsula. Visit Dunscaith Castle, the Cuillins, the Old Man of Storr, the Museum of Island Life, the Staffin Museum, go fossil hunting, hear storytelling from George MacPherson, Gaelic singing from Ann Martin, attend a ceilidh in the local community.