

**EAPS 10000 Y01 *Planet Earth* online course**  
**Homework #6 (20 points)**

**Persuasive Letter or Career Paper (Choose one option)**

**Option 1: Persuasive Letter on a Geoscience Issue**

**Objective:** Writing a letter, brief report or memorandum that is designed to convince others about a particular issue or action is an important skill. This assignment also provides an opportunity to investigate a geoscience issue that is significant to you.

**Procedure:** Write the text of a letter (omit the address block and other information that is normally contained in a letter) to the editor (such as your local newspaper) or to your US representative or senator, that is intended to inform and persuade the reader on a geoscience issue that is important to you. Because such letters, to be effective, must be concise and short, your letter must be well-organized, clearly written and no longer than one page, single-spaced typed text. You do not need to actually send the letter to the editor or to your US representative or senator. Please use the following steps:

- a. Select a geoscience topic of interest to you. It might be easiest to select a relatively controversial and current topic. A list of some suggested topics is given below.
- b. Research the topic using library and Internet resources. You may include one key reference (citation of a book or article or an Internet URL address) in your letter to provide the reader with a source of information about your issue.
- c. Because, in practice, letters to the editor and letters to representatives and senators must be short and “to-the-point”, your letter must be well-organized, clear, well-written (see d. below), and short. **The length of your letter must be 500-700 words (equivalent to about 3/4 to one page of text, single-spaced, typed, Times Roman 12 point font, normal margins).** Word processing programs such as Microsoft Word have a word count feature (select the section, number of words shown in status bar) that will help you determine the correct length for your letter. For example, *this single page*, with the existing headings, spacing and indentations that are included for ease of reading, contains **535 words**.
- d. Organization/Content: Your letter should have three distinct sections. Begin by clearly stating why you are writing – state the geoscience issue that you are concerned about. Next, provide a small number of persuasive statements, arguments and information (data, facts, observations, reasons) that are designed to convince the reader that your position on this issue is correct. End the main part of your persuasive letter by stating what you would like to see happen or your proposed solution to the problem or the approach that you favor to address the issue. Finally, end with a brief summary sentence that emphasizes the significance of the issue and the need for your proposed solution. **Also, see discussion of plagiarism in the Writing Assignment 1 (WA1.pdf) document.**
- e. Hand in (or submit electronically) your one page letter (500-700 words) on or before the due date in the EAPS 10000 Y01 course. You can submit as an email attachment. Please use the file naming convention described on the EAPS 10000 Y01 syllabus. Be sure to include your name on the paper.

**Suggested topics (the topic must be a geoscience issue):**

coastal erosion/overdevelopment	building codes for earthquakes or other
beach nourishment/protection	natural hazards
ocean pollution	national insurance for natural
energy policy	hazards/natural disasters
development on floodplains	petroleum exploration policy
flood insurance	mining restrictions
radioactive waste disposal	global warming
nuclear power	restrictions on fossil collecting on
alternative energy development	public lands
air pollution	CO <sub>2</sub> production
groundwater pollution	climate change
science education	ozone depletion

## Option 2: Geoscience Careers

**Objective:** Writing a brief report on a geoscience career that is (or might be) of interest to you (select one career specialty such as paleontologist, weather forecaster, seismologist, marine biologist, astronomer, etc.). In researching a geoscience career, you will learn more about an Earth, ocean, atmosphere or astronomy specialty area (such as petroleum geology, meteorology, ocean engineering, volcanology, paleontology, environmental geoscience, astronomy, etc.), the work that people in these fields do, and the career options that exist in these fields. **Also, see discussion of plagiarism in the Writing Assignment 1 (WA1.pdf) document.**

**Procedure:** Research a geoscience career and write a brief paper (same length requirements as for the persuasive letter, above) about that career. Be sure to read one or more first-person accounts or essays on the selected career written by someone who is working in that career. Be sure to comment on this first-person account in your report. Also, include some reasons why this career is interesting to you and the significance of the career (to you or to society). Some excellent reference material is available at the following sites. You can also do a web search for more specific information by searching on “oceanography careers” (or similar phrases).

### Geoscience Career Resources:

American Astronomical Society, <http://aas.org/jobs/career-resources>

American Meteorological Society, <http://www.ametsoc.org/pubs/careers.html>  
<http://www.meetmeatthecorner.org/episode/an-interview-with-a-meteorologist>  
<http://voices.yahoo.com/interview-meteorologist-7892578.html>

The Oceanographic Society, <http://www.tos.org/resources/careers.html>

American Geological Institute, <http://www.agiweb.org/workforce/careers.html>