GEOLOGY, BS

Geology often draws students with interests in the outdoors, travel, concern for environmental and energy issues and those pursuing careers in geosciences-related industries. Geology applies chemistry, physics, mathematics and sometimes biology to understanding earth processes, so students take a broad array of ancillary science classes. Additionally, majors train in the specialized laboratory and field skills required by professional geologists.

Admission into the Major

Students are expected to formally declare a major no later than the fourth semester of full-time enrollment (or at 61 semester hours for transfer students). Students can declare a major by completing the Change of Major/Minor Application online under the Student tab of myBama.

Special Opportunities

Interested students pursuing a major in geology (BS or BSG) can apply for admission to the geological sciences honors program after earning 13 hours of geological science courses. In addition to meeting the major requirements for BS or BSG, participants must maintain a 3.3 GPA for all geological science courses and 3.0 cumulative GPA. Honors students earn a grade of Pass or Fail in the honors seminars (GEO 435 Honors Sem in Geology and GEO 436 Honors Sem in Geology). They must also complete six hours of honors research (GEO 499 Research In Geology) and present the results in the honors seminar. Students should also submit an acceptable honors thesis based on research conducted under the supervision of a faculty member of the department of geological sciences.

Students earning the bachelor of science (BS) degree must complete all University, College and departmental degree requirements. These include the general education requirements, the following major requirements, all requirements for an approved minor and other sufficient credits to total 128 applicable semester hours.

Grade Point Average

A 2.0 grade point average in the major is required for completion of the degree. Please see the Grades and Grade Points section of this catalog for an explanation on grade point average calculations. All GEO courses must be passed with a minimum grade of C-.

Upper-level Residency

A minimum of 12 hours of 300- or 400-level courses in the major must be earned on this campus.

Required Minor

The geology major (BS) requires completion of a minor.

Additional Major Requirements

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have met all University, College, major and minor requirements. However, each student must meet with an adviser in the major department for academic planning and to be approved for registration each semester. College advisers are also available for additional assistance with minor, College and University requirements.

Prerequisites

Prerequisites for all GEO courses must be passed with a minimum grade of C-.

Geologists have broad career options. Common fields of employment include environmental assessment and remediation, water resources, geotechnical consulting, energy, earth materials, hazard assessments, academic research and education. Some examples of employers would be environmental and geotechnical firms, energy and mining companies, public utilities, building material suppliers and state and federal government.

Types of Jobs Accepted

 Majors graduate to become geochemists, hydrogeologists, geophysicists, petroleum geologists, resource exploration geologists, hazard assessors, environmental regulators, geotechnical engineers, environmental lawyers and consultants. Some graduates become licensed Public Geologists.

Jobs of Experienced Alumni

Alumni hold an impressive array of jobs as leaders of national and international energy corporations, environmental and geotechnical firms, and mining and materials production companies. Several majors became entrepreneurs and founded companies focused on geotechnical
consulting, energy exploration, environmental remediation and other key industries. Others conduct research at universities, national laboratories, museums, state and U.S. Geological Survey offices and other government agencies including NASA, the DOE, the Interior Department and the EPA to name a few.

Learn more about opportunities in this field at the Career Center