

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

Información del Plan Docente

Academic Year	2017/18
Faculty / School	100 - Facultad de Ciencias
Degree	296 - Degree in Geology
ECTS	6.0
Year	3
Semester	First semester
Subject Type	Compulsory
Module	---

1.General information

1.1.Introduction

Brief presentation of the course

The aim of this module is to introduce the main concepts of the structure, properties and composition of the Earth and the lithosphere, in order to define the frame where the geological knowledge and concepts acquired in other modules can be placed. To understand the Earth as a whole using different geophysical techniques (gravimetric, magnetic and seismic) is the other main goal of this module. In the end, these techniques can be applied to different types of geological problems, including shallow surface and deep features, and a basic knowledge of their application is a necessary step for geologists whatever their field of expertise.

1.2.Recommendations to take this course

This module requires comprehension of tectonic structures and Geology and basic Physics and Mathematics knowledge to understand the fundamentals of Geophysics. Abilities to work with contour maps, cross-sections and a minimum background of informatics are not compulsory but can help.

1.3.Context and importance of this course in the degree

This course is part of a group of subjects in the Degree in Geology that constitute the basin background for geologists to understand the Earth as a whole and to apply geophysical techniques to geological problems.

1.4.Activities and key dates

The 6 ECTS of this module corresponds to 60 hours of presential education which will be distributed in the following way:

- 28 hours of lectures (3 h/week), Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 9:00 to 10:00.
- 24 hours of teacher-assisted laboratory sessions (2 h/week), Mondays 16:00 to 18:00 or 18:00-20:00.
- 8 hours of evaluation sessions (3 sessions along the academic period).

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

- Beginning and end of the module: see the academic calendar approved by the Facultad de Ciencias.

2.Learning goals

2.1.Learning goals

During this module the student will develop:

- Knowledge of the main methods in geological surveying and their use for the understanding of the internal structure of the Earth and for solving geological problems.
- Ability to work with gravimetric and magnetic anomaly maps and interpret them according to the geological background.
- Ability to derive and solve problems related to seismic surveying (refraction and reflection).
- Ability to analyse plate kinematics and to interpret associated geological structures in plate boundaries.
- Understanding of the main processing methods in geophysics.
- Basic understanding of rheological models of the oceanic and continental lithospheres, and mechanisms of deformation at different levels within the crust.
- Intellectual skills to integrate her/his geological knowledge within the frame of Global Tectonics.

2.2.Importance of learning goals

The understanding of the structure of the Earth as a whole, the meaning of geophysical data, the kinematics of tectonic plates, and the application of geophysical methods to Geology is a basic part of the background in Earth Sciences for all geologists, whatever their field of specialization.

3.Aims of the course and competences

3.1.Aims of the course

The expected results of the course respond to the following general aims:

1. To provide knowledge about the methods to explore the Earth.
2. To understand the structure of the Earth and the Lithosphere.
3. To interpret geophysical data coming from potential fields (gravimetry and magnetometry).
4. To understand processing of seismic reflection profiles.

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

5. To relate physical properties of rocks to their behaviour at depth.
6. To apply geophysical data to the interpretation of geological bodies.
7. To understand the rheology of the lithosphere and mechanisms of deformation at different depths.

3.2.Competences

After completing the course, the student will be competent in the following skills:

- Ability to transfer geophysical information to geological features.
- Capacity to understand the Earth as a whole and the implications that its structure has for the different disciplines in Earth Sciences.
- Skills to work with contour maps of potential fields.
- Ability to solve elementary problems in geophysics.
- Capacity to interpret seismic reflection profiles in terms of geological cross-sections.
- Skills to obtain information from earthquake parameters.
- Capacity to solve questions of plate kinematics by means of vectorial calculations, paleomagnetism and magnetic anomalies of the ocean floor.
- Ability to understand mechanisms of heat transfer within the Earth and their implication in plate tectonics.

4.Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

4.1.Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

The student will prove that she/he has achieved the expected learning results by means of the following assessment tasks:

Continuous assessment:

1. Resolution of 3 tests during the semester, using skills and basic knowledge acquired in the lectures and lab sessions. Minimum score 5 out of 10. Slightly lower scores can be balanced between different assessments.

Categorising performance levels:

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

- Excellent performance (9-10 points): knowledge and problem resolution based on the taught programme
- Typical performance (7-8 points)
- Threshold performance (5-6 points)
- Compensable (4-4.9 points)
- Failure (0-4 points)

Final assessment:

1. In case of failure of one or more of the continuous assessment tests (minimum score 5 out of 10), the final assessment is a second-chance examination, also for students that cannot attend the normal development of the module.

5. Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

5.1. Methodological overview

The learning process that has been designed for this course is based on the following activities:

The students will have class notes given by the professor as the basis for their learning, that must be completed with important remarks during the lectures and the laboratory sessions. Study of basic handbooks is strongly recommended.

The 6 ECTS of this subject correspond to 28 hours of lectures, 24 hours of lab sessions and 8 hours of assessments and comments about the assessments, that are here used as a powerful learning tool.

The tutorials will be considered as another academic activity where the students will be free to ask about any topic concerning the module.

5.2. Learning tasks

The programme offered to the students to help them achieve the learning results includes the following activities:

- 28 hours of lectures (3 hours/week).
- 24 hours of lab sessions (2 hours/week).
- 8 hours of assessments and comments about them (3 assessments in the modality of continuous evaluation).

5.3. Syllabus

I. Program of Contents/Lectures

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

1. Introduction to Global Geophysics.
2. Elastic properties. Seismic waves.
3. Fundamentals of seismic refraction.
4. Structure of the Earth from seismic data.
5. The lithosphere.
6. Earthquake seismology.
7. Focal mechanisms. Palaeoseismology.
8. Plate tectonics. Dynamics of plate margins.
9. Divergent, transform and convergent margins.
10. Fundamentals of seismic reflection surveying.
11. Seismic data processing.
12. Structures associated with plate margins. Divergent margins.
13. Structures in convergent and transform plate margins.
14. The Earth's magnetic field.
15. Magnetic properties of rocks and minerals.
16. Magnetic surveying. Paleomagnetism.
17. Magnetic anomalies of the ocean floor. Plate kinematics.
18. Gravimetry. Gravity field. Geoid.
19. Processing of gravimetric data.
20. Isostasy.
21. Thermal properties of rocks.

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

22. Thermal flow. Distribution and causes.
23. Mechanisms for plate movement.
24. Plate tectonics in Earth's history.
25. Planetary tectonics.

II. Program of Practical/Problems

1. Seismic refraction interpretation.
2. Modelling of seismic rays within the Earth.
3. Focal mechanisms. Interpretation.
4. Plate boundaries. Vulcanism and seismicity.
5. Topography of plate boundaries and interiors.
6. Interpretation of seismic reflection profiles.
7. Kinematics of plates.
8. Interpretation of magnetic anomalies in the ocean floor.
9. Exercises on plate boundaries, seismicity, paleomagnetism and plate kinematics.
10. Computer-based modelling of gravimetric and magnetic anomalies.
11. Isostasy.
12. Interpretation of tectonic structures in Mars and Venus.

III. Program of Assessments and comment sessions

Written exams (100%): 3 tests during the semester, and/or two final resit tests (February and September) in case of failure. Tests include laboratory and theoretical questions, typically 13.

5.4.Course planning and calendar

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

Timetable according to the Faculty of Science webpage indications.

5.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

- BB** Burger, Henry Robert. Introduction to applied geophysics : exploring the shallow subsurface / H. Robert Burger , Anne F. Sheehan , Craig H. Jones. New York : W.W. Norton , 2006
- BB** Jones, E. J. W.. Marine geophysics / E.J.W. Jones. Chichester [etc.] : John Wiley & Sons, cop. 1999.
- BB** Kearey, Philip. An introduction to geophysical exploration / Philip Kearey, Michael Brooks, Ian Hill . - 3rd ed. Oxford : Blackwell Science, 2002
- BB** Kearey, Philip. Global tectonics / Philip Kearey, Frederick J. Vine . - 3rd ed. Oxford [etc.] : Blackwell Science, 2008
- BB** Lillie, Robert J.. Whole earth geophysics : an introductory textbook for geologists and geophysicists / Robert J. Lillie Upper Saddle River (New Jersey) : Prentice Hall, cop. 1999
- BB** Milsom, John.. Field geophysics / John Milsom. . - 3rd ed. Chichester [etc.] : John Wiley & Sons, 2003
- BB** Mussett, Alan E.. Looking into the Earth : an introduction to geological geophysics / Alan E. Mussett, M. Aftab Khan ; illustrations by Sue Button. . - [1st publ.] Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- BB** Stüwe, Kurt. Geodynamics of the lithosphere : [an introduction] / Kurt Stüwe Berlin : Springer, 2002
- BC** Lowrie, William. Fundamentals of geophysics / William Lowrie . - 1st ed., 4th reprint. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2011

26418 - Geophysics and Global Tectonics

BC

Watts, A. B.. Isostasy and flexure of the lithosphere / A. B. Watts. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2001.

LISTADO DE URLs:

Atlas de perfiles sísmicos -
[<http://seismicatlas.org/>]

Geomagnetismo -
[<http://geomag.usgs.gov/>]

Geophysical data center -
[<http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/>]

Instituto Geográfico Nacional -
[<http://www.ign.es/ign/es/IGN/home.jsp>]

Instituto Geológico y Minero -
[<http://www.igme.es>]

Plate motion calculator -
[http://www.unavco.org/community_science/science-support/crustal_motion/dxdt/r]

Recursos de geofísica en la red -
[<http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/geophysics/resources.html>]