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# Soil: A Living System

## Syllabus Fall 2009

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- **Course:**

Soils 201, Soil: A Living System (GER, Tier II, Biological Science [B])

Lectures: Monday, Wednesday 10.10-11.00 am, Johnson C105

Demonstration/discussion section: Wednesday 1.10-2.00, 2.10-3.00, 3.10-4.00 pm, Vogel Plant Bio-sciences, Room 43

- **Website:**

<http://akasha.wsu.edu> (then click on the teaching button)

- **Instructor:**

Markus Flury, Johnson 243 (email: [flury@wsu.edu](mailto:flury@wsu.edu), phone: 335-1719)

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 11.00-12.00 pm in Johnson 243

- **Teaching Assistant:**

Olivia Saunders Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 11.00-12.00 pm  
in Johnson 235 (e-mail: [osaunders@wsu.edu](mailto:osaunders@wsu.edu))

- **Course Objectives:**

1. To provide an understanding of the fundamental physical, chemical, and biological properties of soils.
2. To provide an overview over the different aspects and disciplines in soil science, such as soil physics, soil chemistry, soil genesis, soil morphology, soil fertility, soil biology, soil management, and environmental pollution.

- **Textbook and Reading Assignments:**

Required textbook: Singer, M.J. and Munns, D.N. 2006. *Soils. An Introduction*, 6th edition, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

You are responsible for the reading assignments in the text, which are listed on the class schedule. It is strongly recommended that you read the assigned pages either before coming to the lecture or immediately after class.

- **Discussion Sections:**

The discussion sections consist of in-depth discussion and demonstrations of the lecture topics. The discussion sections are led by the course TA. Active student participation in discussions is required. Writing assignments and exercises are usually handed out in the discussion sections.

- **Writing Assignments:**

Writing assignments are short two-page essays on a specific topic in soil science, such as soil minerals, soil water management, soil erosion, etc. Writing assignments are based on the text book, the lectures, and the demonstration/discussion sections. They are not accepted if handed in late.

- **Exercises:**

There will be four take-home exercises to topics covered in the lectures. They are not accepted if handed in late.

- **Exams:**

There will be three midterms and a comprehensive final exam. All midterms and the final exam will cover lectures, reading assignments, exercises, and discussion sections. Midterms and final exam are closed books. Calculator is allowed and recommended in all exams. Please bring a #2 pencil and an eraser.

- **Grading Distribution:**

Writing assignments (2)	12%
Exercises (4)	12%
Midterms (3)	51%
Final Exam	25%
TOTAL	100%

- **Grading Scale:**

A- to A	86-100	B- to B+	76-86
C- to C+	66-76	D to D+	59-66
F	< 59		

- **Website for Soils 201:**

Current exams, old exams, and student scores on the exams, writing assignments, and exercises are listed on the Soils 201 website: <http://akasha.wsu.edu> (then follow the links to teaching and the Soils 201 class).

An online tutorial of the textbook, including example exam and test questions is available at the website [http://wps.prenhall.com/chet\\_singer\\_soilsanint\\_5/203/52020.cw](http://wps.prenhall.com/chet_singer_soilsanint_5/203/52020.cw)

- **Students with Disabilities:**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Admin Annex Bldg, Room 205). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

- **Plagiarism:**

There are two circumstances that could give rise to a charge of plagiarism:  
(taken from <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism>, visit this site for more details)

1. **Intentional Plagiarism (Cheating):** Intentional plagiarism is where one knowingly appropriates the work of others and passes it off as their own. This can include:
  - copying entire documents and presenting them as your own;
  - cutting and pasting from the work of others without properly citing the authors;
  - stringing together the quotes and ideas of others without connecting their work to your own original work;
  - asserting ideas without acknowledging their sources, reproducing sentences written verbatim by others without properly quoting and attributing the work to them.

Intentional plagiarism can also involve inventing sources to which you would attribute your own ideas to make them seem credible. Intentional plagiarists can be either ignorant of the seriousness of the offense, or disrespectful of the seriousness of the offense.

2. **Unintentional Plagiarism (Misuse of Sources):** Unintentional plagiarism, or the misuse of sources, is the accidental appropriation of the ideas and materials of others due to a lack of understanding of the conventions of citation and documentation. Misuse of sources might include a lack of understanding of paraphrasing, not being clear about the parameters of common knowledge, and/or the statute of limitations on the attribution of ideas. Since rules of attribution are culturally determined, much of unintentional plagiarism could also be the result of writers not understanding the sanctity with which American academics endow the concept of idea ownership. The misuse of sources can be the result of ignorance or laziness, but is not the result of a desire to cheat.

Students enrolled in all Washington State University courses are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity and are subject to WSU's rules governing plagiarism. Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. If you commit the first type of plagiarism on any assignment, you will be given an F for the course, and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. If you commit the second type of plagiarism, you may receive a zero grade for this particular assignment, or your instructor may ask you to rewrite the assignment.

I encourage you to work with classmates on assignments. However, each student must turn in original work. No copying will be accepted. Students who violate WSU's Policy on Academic Integrity will receive an F as a final grade in this course.