



COURSE SYLLABUS

SCI113A: Earth Science

Instructor Name: Mrs. Terasa Burt

Email Address: **Please use KMAIL!**

Phone Number: (616) 309-1600 ext 3045

Office Hours Link: [Please check your Class Connect section of your Daily Plan for the link!](#)
Office hours are held on Wednesdays from 1PM-2PM



Welcome to SCI113A: Earth Science!

Welcome to the course! My name is Mrs. Burt and I am thrilled to be your Earth Science teacher this year! Ms. Moore will also be teaching Earth Science this year and you will have both of us in class-connect sessions, but please come to me for questions and help needed. In this course, you will get to experience a High School Platform class and see what MVCA is like for high-schoolers! You can think of this class as a great way to transition into high school.

I am super excited to be teaching 8th grade Earth Science at a Michigan Virtual Charter Academy! Last year I taught 8th Grade Physical Science. I have always loved Earth Science and find learning about the world around us very intriguing! It's the kind of science you can apply every time you step out your door!

Earth Science is an important topic to study because many people do not really know what is going on in the world around them, despite the fact that they experience weather, seasons, and other natural phenomena every day. This course will not be easy, but it will be rewarding and even fun! A student who completes this course will gain a deeper understanding of the world around them, as well as become more familiar with designing and carrying out experiments. I hope that you are looking forward to learning more about the Earth and can even teach me a few things ☺

Why you need to read the rest of this syllabus...

You should consider this syllabus as a contract between you, the student, and me, the teacher. It includes all of the policies and procedures you need to know to successfully take this course, as well as the behavior that I expect of all of my students.

For my part, I will honor all of the specifications laid out in this document. No changes will be made without advance notice and communication given in the Course Announcements area. Students with documented individualized education plans (IEPs) will be given accommodations or accommodations appropriate for their individual plans. Feel free to contact me or the school's Special Education department for more information.

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Contacting the Teacher

It is your responsibility to contact me with any questions you may have. Don't wait until the last minute—when a question arises, ask it early.

- **The best (AND FASTEST) way to get in contact with me is always through **KMAIL**.** I am dedicated to checking my KMAIL and responding quickly. Questions about a grade earned or assignment feedback is sent privately through KMAIL.
- Additionally, you can visit me during Office Hours, or call my office phone—see the top of the syllabus or the Teacher Contact information in the Course Home for this information.

If technical difficulties prevent you from contacting me online, please call my office phone (listed at the top of the page). If my number is long distance for you, leave me a message and I will call you back as soon as possible so you will not have to pay for the call.

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A Little about the Course

SCI113A: Earth Science

This course is for students who have been introduced to Earth and Life Science topics in middle school. It focuses on topics in geology, oceanography, astronomy, weather, and climate. Students use a combination of online instruction, virtual/hands-on laboratory activities, reference book study, and collaborative activities with virtual classmates. This course prepares students to take college courses in any Earth Science areas.

Course length: Two Semesters

Materials: *Earth Science: A Reference Guide*; materials for laboratory experiments

Prerequisites: K¹² middle school Life Science, or equivalent

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Course Activities

Course activities may include:

- Reading online text and transcripts
- Viewing moving and static images and streaming video
- Listening to audio recordings and pronunciations
- Watching linear and interactive animations and simulations
- Completing hands-on and virtual activities
- Answering "Thinking Questions" and placing them in the drop-box to be graded.
- Teacher announcements
- Completing online self-check exercises
- Attending (or viewing) live sessions
- Reading and completing teacher-created instructional materials

Graded assignments may include:

- Online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets
- Quizzes
- Exams (unit, semester and final) & Study Guides

- Essays, research papers, and other writing assignments
- Presentations

All graded assignments are either Computer-Scored (CS) and automatically scored by the K¹² Learning Management System, or they are Teacher Graded (TGA), which means scored and entered into the Learning Management System (LMS) Gradebook by me.

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Course Policies

• Attendance and Activity

Students are expected to log into this course daily. While the length of time that students spend working on assignments may vary, the expectation is that you will spend approximately 60 to 75 minutes on coursework each day. Two times per week a required live session is held. Live sessions will have attendance taken and are worth five points each to just show up, pay attention, and participate – that means answer questions when asked, use voting tools, etc 😊

• Daily Student Responsibilities

Every time you enter the course and before completing any class work:

- **Read any announcements** I posted since the last time you entered the course.
- **Review the Calendar** to see what lessons and assignments you are to complete that day.
- **Check out the What's New list** at the bottom of the Course Home screen to see what's gone on in the course since you last logged in.
- **Look at the Course Checklist** at the bottom of the Course Home page to review where you left off in the course content since you last logged in.
- **Complete *all* lessons and assignments** (both graded and nongraded) as indicated on your course calendar before the end of the day.
- **Submit assignments to me through the Dropbox** tool, unless they are scored by the computer. [Assignments sent by K-MAIL or email will not be accepted unless you've made prior arrangements with me.](#)

Before you log out of the course:

- **Make sure you have completed all of the work** for the day, including the nongraded lesson work.
- **Go to the Course Checklist and check off the sections** that you completed fully that day.

- **Do NOT fall behind in this course!** Keep up with the Calendar! The weekly schedule will be sent to you via K-Mail at the beginning of each week. Students that fall behind have much struggles and difficulties catching up and lose points on late assignments. Please do not let this happen to you.

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Getting Help with Class Work

This is going to be a challenging course. When you encounter difficulty with course content:

- **You can:** Visit me in Office Hours, held on Wednesdays at 1-2PM and listed with your ClassConnect session on your OLS (See my schedule at the top of the syllabus).
- **If you require a fast response or the matter is private:** Send me **K-MAIL** or contact me by phone.

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Communication with Teacher and Classmates

Although you won't be able to send **K-MAIL** to other students, you will be communicating with other students through **Class Connect Sessions**.

Some things to keep in mind when communicating with other students:

- Respect the privacy and wishes of your fellow students.
- Flaming, spamming, bullying or other unwanted contact including inappropriate message content or attachments will be considered a breach of this policy. Infractions may result in disciplinary action by school administration.
- If a student conducts in inappropriate behavior, language, or is disrespectful of another student or teacher, they will be booted out of the Class Connect session and will not receive attendance credit for this day.
- Remember the Golden Rule – Treat others the way you want to be treated. If you have nothing nice to say, do not say anything at all.

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Due Dates

- The **course calendar** and my **weekly announcements** will list which lessons and assignments you need to complete each day.
- You'll also find assignment **due dates** in the **Course Details** area of your student landing page and in the **Course Checklist** at the bottom of the **Course Home** page.
- It is important that you stick to the course schedule indicated on the calendar and in the course announcements as well as the due dates for each assignment.
- Staying on schedule allows you to learn along with your classmates and participate in Class Connect sessions.

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Late Policy—PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- **Teacher Graded (TGA)** assignments must be:
 - Completed and submitted no later than midnight on the Sunday after the Due Date to earn **full credit**.
 - Assignments are accepted up to the end of the unit or 1 week after the Sunday deadline (whichever comes later) with a **10% deduction**.
 - Assignments received beyond one week after the end of the unit deadline will receive a **50% deduction**.
- **Computer-Scored (CS) assessments**, in most cases, can be completed after the Sunday deadline. However, in some circumstances, I may lock assignments to prevent late completion. I will let you know ahead of time when that will happen.
- **Semester Test** – The Final Exam must be taken during the school week that it is assigned. It will CLOSE at 5PM on Friday, January 23rd. Grades will become finalized at this point and any student whom has not taken the final exam will receive a zero for the test.
- **Extensions:** Please contact me as soon as possible to discuss your circumstances and need to submit work past the above-listed deadlines.
 - I will grant **Due Date** extensions on assignments under some rare circumstances. Please do not assume I will automatically grant these requests.
 - Extensions *must* be requested on a school day before the actual **Due Date** of the assignment.
 - **Requests** received on the **Due Date** or off hours will most likely not be granted. Please plan ahead accordingly.
 - **Please see and print the chart below for Due Dates this semester.**

Assignment	Date Assigned	Full Credit Due Date 10% Off After This Date	End of Unit 10% Off Due Date 50% Off After This Date
Earth Science Compact Earth Science Compact PDF	9/5/14	Midnight 9/7/14	9/21/14
Lab 1.06 Lab 1.06 PDF OR Alternate Lab 1.06 Alt Lab 1.06 PDF	9/12/14	Midnight 9/14/14	9/21/14
Lab 1.08 Lab 1.08 PDF	9/17/14	Midnight 9/21/14	9/28/14
Lab 2.09 Lab 2.09 PDF	10/2/14	Midnight 10/5/14	10/19/14
Lab 2.15 Lab 2.15 PDF	10/9/14	Midnight 10/12/14	10/19/14
Lab 3.08 Lab 3.08 PDF	10/28/14	Midnight 11/2/14	11/16/14
Lab 4.06 Lab 4.06 PDF	11/20/14	Midnight 11/23/14	11/31/14
Lab 5.05 Lab 5.05 PDF	12/3/14	Midnight 12/7/14	12/21/14
Lab 5.15 Lab 5.15 PDF	12/17/14	Midnight 1/4/14	1/11/14
Lab 6.04 Lab 6.04 PDF	1/8/14	Midnight 1/11/14	1/18/14

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Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

Dictionary.com defines plagiarism as follows:

pla-gia-rism [pley-juh-riz-uh m, -jee-uh-riz-]

-noun

1. the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.

2. something used and represented in this manner.

plagiarism. (n.d.). *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Retrieved May 17, 2010, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/plagiarism>

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and taken seriously. Students who use all or part of someone else's work without appropriate credit or citation is in violation of these policies.

Students will receive a zero on any submitted assignment containing all or part of work not completed as their own work, or properly cited within the assignment.

Students assisting other students to cheat or plagiarize are also considered academic dishonesty and in violation of this policy, and will receive a grade of zero on their assignment submission.

First Offense: The first time a student fails to cite the source of information in an essay or research paper, he/she will be advised of proper citation methods. Further infractions will result in the student receiving a grade of zero on the item or assignment. Copying and pasting full phrases or sentences from websites or elsewhere when you are not the author is considered plagiarism. Summarizing a fact that is not common knowledge without indicating where you found the fact is also plagiarism.

Further Offenses: Students who are found guilty of cheating or plagiarism more than once, are referred to the school administration for breach of the school's Academic Integrity policies and Behavior Code.

Academic Integrity Prevention: I may utilize a technology that helps to prevent cheating for some written assignments and tests. Prior to submitting a written assignment or taking an assessment, you may be prompted to install and/or use a small piece of software on your computer. You will be required to install this piece of software before continuing on to take the assessment. Once you access the test, you will be unable to copy, paste or open new browser windows or programs during the assessment. If you have trouble, contact K¹² Customer Care for assistance. Contact me immediately if Customer Care cannot resolve your issue.

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Attendance

Regular and daily attendance is required:

- You must log into the course and complete the scheduled work in it every school day.
- Unless otherwise specified, course log in is required even when assignments occur offline.
- You are expected to review any updated **Course Announcements** and **What's New** items daily.
- You should expect to spend 60 to 75 minutes each day reading, responding, and completing other activities both online and offline.
- Send me a **K-MAIL** if you cannot log into the course on any given day.

- If you are having technical difficulties, contact K12 Customer Support at (866) 512-2273 and **K-MAIL** me immediately to let me know that you are having issues and how you are trying to resolve them.
- If for some reason, K12 Tech Support is unable to help you, you must send me a **K-Mail with the Case Number Provided** and the unresolved issue. I can then help you work on the problem.
- If you do not contact me in advance of a day of missing activity, you can expect to hear directly from me through **K-Mail** or via phone call.
- Live sessions are held two times per week and count for five points each. During a live session, a link for an attendance form will be prompted for students to fill out. This form will require the students' name as well as a "secret word" from the lesson and one or two content questions from the lesson. Attendance points are a HUGE part of course grade and can be very helpful for students who struggle on tests.
- Students who do not actively log in and participate will be referred to the school administration.

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Teacher Availability and Communications

This course is designed to fit in with your schedule. Although we do meet (for attendance points) two times per week, you may access the recordings after the fact, and fill out information to receive attendance. This means that, although we're both working in the course every day, we may be working at very different times of the day. When you and I happen to be online and working at the same time, I might not be immediately available. Most of my day is spent answering **k-mails** and **phone messages**, hosting Homeroom Class Connect Sessions and Earth Science sessions, and grading and returning assignments.

Feel free to contact me when needed, but please understand that I might be in the middle of one of these tasks, or helping another student at the time. You may need to leave me a message if you call, or wait for a short time to receive answers online.

Of course, I am always available during my office hours.

The best way to get in contact with me is always through K-MAIL. I am dedicated to checking my K-MAIL and responding quickly.

If you would like to schedule time for a private conference, please request these at least three to five days before the day you are available. The more notice you provide me, the more likely I can be available at a time that fits your scheduling needs.

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Submitting Assignments and File Types

Assignment File Names: Files you submit to me through the **Dropbox** tool should have a filename that indicates which assignment it is, **followed by your first initial and last name**. You may wish to use U and L to indicate which unit and lesson it is, or simply shorten the actual title of the assignment. Example: RSMith_U4L3T (unit 4 lesson 3 for Robert Smith).

Always use the Dropbox I will only accept teacher-graded assignments (TGA) submitted through the **Dropbox** tool. Assignments sent to me through k-mail will be returned along with a request to submit through the course Dropbox properly. If for some reason you are unable to submit assignments through the Dropbox, or assignments you submit are not being returned to you, contact me immediately. I will make alternate arrangements for us to meet in **ClassConnect** and determine the issue and find a solution.

File type and size Please try to keep the size of files you submit less than 3 MB. Unless otherwise indicated in the assignment directions, the only file types you should submit to me are .doc, .txt, and .tif. Assignments in other formats will be returned for resubmission.

Doc Sharing There is an area in our course called **Doc Sharing**. I will occasionally upload documents to this area for you to download for use in class. Students can also upload files to this area. Students **must** request permission to upload documents to Doc Sharing prior to uploading any files. Students who upload files without permission will be referred to the administration for breaking the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Extra Credit opportunities are offered frequently to help students and reward efforts. Please submit all extra credit assignments to the Extra Credit Dropbox for the Unit we are working in. Students may submit the notes from the lesson (either the Student Guide or Cornell Notes) for one point extra credit each. Students will be provided with Study Guides for each exam and can turn these in for extra credit before the review session is held.

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Expectations of Difficulty, Participation and Time Commitment

Students often find that going to school online takes longer and is more difficult than going to school in a traditional setting. Be prepared to spend more time and effort than in a traditional school, however keep in mind that you have several ways to obtain assistance.

You can expect to spend at least 60 -75 minutes on this course each day, to be successful in this class. If you are not spending enough time, the class is too easy or difficult, please request an appointment to meet with me, or stop in during Office Hours so we can review what you are doing each day. If you need assistance creating a personal schedule, staying on task and motivated, or need help creating an effective home learning environment, feel free to contact your advisor or homeroom teacher. They are terrific at helping students with these types of concerns.

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Grading Policy

In the **Course Home** on the left-side of the course is an item titled **Grading Information**. In it you will find a summary of the graded assignments and assessments for this course. You will notice that some types of assignments are worth more points than others.

In many courses, it is possible to successfully complete every **Computer-Scored (CS)** quiz, with an A, and still fail the course. This happens when Computer-Scored quizzes make up a small percentage of the total points in the course.

As mentioned earlier, I only accept **Teacher-Graded Assignments (TGA)** through the course **Dropbox**. If you are unable to submit **Dropbox** items, please contact me immediately. Please refer to the **Late Policy** if you have any questions.

Teacher-Graded Assignments (TGA) are graded and returned through the **Dropbox** within 5 school days (generally) and sooner whenever possible. The first assignments to be turned in are the first assignments to be graded and returned, so be sure to complete your assignments in a timely fashion! You are expected to open each graded assignment and read the instructional feedback I provide directly in these files. Use this instructional feedback to improve your work on following assignments.

Grade Reporting

Your **gradebook** will always display points earned vs. point's possible as well as percentage grades. In most cases, assignments will be graded and returned to you in three school days. Grades will appear in

your **gradebook** and **MyInfo**, and instructional feedback and comments will often be included inside the files that I return to you.

I will be sending periodic Progress Reports with your current grades. You have the ability to check your grade at any time using the Gradebook tool and I suggest that you check your grade several times per week.

Please note that the LMS does take 24-hours for grades to be updated in the gradebook, so please be patient!

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Course Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: Earth Science and Systems

Earth Science is one of the most fascinating topics in all the sciences, and students learn about its place among the sciences in this unit. Students explore what Earth science is, learn about its breadth and history, and study the contributions of earth scientists to the betterment of life for all of us. Students also study aspects of scientific methods and use those methods in a laboratory setting.

- Semester Introduction
- Why Study Earth Science?
- Historical Contributions in Earth Science
- Spheres as Earth Systems
- Laboratory: Topographical Maps
- Earth Systems and Interactions
- Laboratory: Modeling Earth Science Processes

Unit 2: Dynamic Earth

Students confront Earth as a dynamic planet; in many ways, it is more active than any other planet in our solar system. The core idea of plate tectonics, its effect on Earth's history, and its current geological activity helps students make sense of our world. Knowledge of the origin and distribution of volcanoes and earthquakes helps students make even greater sense of Earth's dynamic nature.

- Introduction to Plate Tectonics

- Pangaea and Continental Drift
- Moving Plates
- Plate Boundaries
- Plate Tectonics: Historical Perspective
- Where Earthquakes and Volcanoes Occur
- Structure of Earth's Interior
- Laboratory: Island Chain Formation
- How Earthquakes Happen
- Locating Earthquakes
- Earthquakes and Waves
- Laboratory: Earthquake Epicenter
- How Volcanoes Form
- Volcanic Zones
- Mountain Building
- Impact of Geologic Events

Unit 3: Composition of the Earth

Study of the minerals and rocks that comprise Earth is students' most tangible way to engage in the nature of the Earth's structure. In this unit, students tackle the nature of rocks, their origin, distribution, and transformation. After establishing a firm basis of Earth materials, students confront weathering and erosion and the development and change in Earth's landforms.

- Minerals on Earth
- Mineral Properties
- Valuable Minerals
- Crystal Structures
- Rocks and Their Mineral Composition
- Three Kinds of Rocks
- Laboratory: Rocks and Minerals
- Rock Origins
- The Rock Cycle
- Earth Materials Change
- Weathering and Erosion
- Land Use and Its Effects

Unit 4: Geological History

The history of Earth is told in its rocks—how the planet was formed and what changes it has gone through. Students study changes that have taken place in Earth’s long history, examining geological time and the changes in living things over time. Students also begin an investigation of rocks and minerals.

- Earth’s History
- Earth’s History and Change
- The Fossil Record
- Age of Geologic Features
- Earth’s History Written in Rocks
- Laboratory: Interpreting Geologic History

Unit 5: Earth’s Atmosphere

The structure of our atmosphere has a profound effect on Earth and its living things. In this unit, students first develop a firm basis for understanding how the sun’s energy is the basis for many of the characteristics of our atmosphere. Knowledge of how the sun’s energy is used provides the basis for understanding wind and global circulation of air. As in other units, student understanding of facts stems from their mastery of the “big ideas” of Earth Science.

- Layers in the Atmosphere
- Composition of the Atmosphere
- History of the Earth’s Atmosphere
- Laboratory: Barometer
- The Sun and Energy
- Solar Radiation
- Temperature and Air Pressure
- Air Circulation Patterns
- Air Movement and Weather
- Wind and Human Activity
- Laboratory: Energy Absorption/Reflection

Unit 6: Weather 1

The origin of weather and its effects on Earth systems and on human life are the focus of student learning in this unit. Students explore what it means to gather weather data and work with weather maps. They

learn the factors that influence weather, cloud formation, and storm development. They also learn the level of risk of severe weather and how to prepare for dangerous weather. What Makes the Weather?

- Gathering Weather Data
- Weather Maps
- Laboratory: Weather Map Interpretation
- Cloud Formation
- How Storms Develop
- Determining Level of Risk
- Preparing for Severe Weather

Unit 7: Semester Review and Test

Students prepare for and take the semester test.

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