

Santa Barbara City College
Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences
**Earth 132 - Geologic Field
Studies in Death Valley**

April 8 - 12, 2026



INFORMATION SHEET

Earth 132 is a five-day/four-night field course to study the geology and geologic history of the Death Valley region. Death Valley contains some of the most spectacular vistas anywhere including places where both the highest and lowest spots in the contiguous United States can be seen simultaneously. Death Valley is also geologically spectacular. Here the rocks reveal the geologic history of the western United States over the last two billion years. By studying the rocks and the processes that formed them, you will be able to piece together this history. In addition, you will see numerous examples of the geologic and hydrologic processes that are actively shaping Death Valley today.

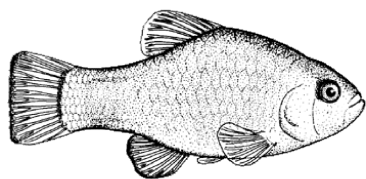
On this trip, you will travel approximately 1200 miles. The trip will take you eastward through the Mojave Desert, then you will enter the southern end of Death Valley, explore Death Valley in its entirety, cross the Panamint Mountains, and visit the mining town of Darwin before returning to Santa Barbara.

Instructional Staff

Stephanie Mendes and **Kristen Sneddon** provide instruction for first-year Earth Sciences students on the trip.

Support Staff

The **Earth Sciences** Lab Technician, Kevin McNichol, organizes and supervises the logistics of the trip and camp setup. He is assisted by a group of volunteer field trip veterans known at the **Woolly Crew**. Staff from the **School of Culinary Arts** prepares your meals. First aid kits are provided for each group and in camp if needed. **Earth Sciences** tutors are also available to help you study.



Course Credit and Grading

You will receive 2 units of credit for taking Earth 132. Grades are based on the following:

Field Trip notebook	1/3 of grade
5 quizzes @ approx. 20 points each	1/3 of grade
Final exam	1/3 of grade

Quizzes are given each morning in camp. The Geologic Time Scale will be given as a separate quiz on the first morning. Completed field trip notebooks are turned in Sunday morning when you get on the bus prior to returning to Santa Barbara. They will be graded and returned approximately ten days after the end of the trip. You will take a final exam approximately a week later. Specific dates will be announced.

Work Crews

You will be assigned to a work crew and be required to help with daily camp chores. Most work crew assignments are a one-time responsibility although you may be asked to perform other duties such as loading luggage trucks. Your crew assignment will be included in the field guidebook you will be given prior to departure.

Cost . . . \$104 (plus unit fees)

Includes: Transportation, meals, field guidebook, and entrance fees to a swimming facility.

Not included: Camping equipment and personal items and expenses, SBCC registration fees. No textbook is required for the field course.

Scholarships

Scholarships: There is a limited amount of scholarship money available to qualified students. Scholarships are based on need and merit. Email Stephanie Mendes if you wish to apply for aid. **All scholarship applications are due no later than March 20, 5:00 PM.**

How to Sign Up

Add the course on Pipeline (either CRN # 51218, 51219, or 52213), and **pay registration fee and field course fee within 7 days**. If you do not pay the fees within 7 days, you will be automatically dropped from the class. Additionally, if you have an outstanding balance of any other fees on your account and it is not paid within 7 days of registration, you will be dropped from the field course. **Be sure to check your Pipeline account!**

If applying for a scholarship, register as explained above and you will receive a credit to your account if you receive a scholarship. OR wait to register until after scholarships have been awarded and pay the balance of the course fee (\$52).

Mandatory Pre-field Trip Orientation Meetings

All students participating on the field trip **must attend** an orientation meeting on one of the following dates:

**Monday, March 30
12:30 - 1:30 in EBS 123**

**Monday, March 30
5:30 - 6:30 in EBS 123**

**Tuesday, March 31
9:30 - 10:30 in EBS 123**

At these meetings we will go over trip logistics in detail. If you do not attend one of the meetings, you will be dropped from the course. See Kristen Sneddon or Stephanie Mendes prior to the meeting if you have an unalterable schedule conflict.

Information

Announcements. You will receive all announcements via Pipeline. Please check your Pipeline account and e-mail regularly.

Field Trip Information. For equipment list, syllabus, photos and more, visit:

www.sbccc.ca.us/earthscience/erth132_dv.php

Departure and Return: 5:30 AM on Wednesday, April 8 from SBCC Earth and Planetary Sciences Dept. We will return to campus between **6:00 and 7:00 PM on Sunday, April 12.**

Please Note

Academic course. This geology field course is an academic course, not a vacation, or camp-out, or party. You should be prepared to work and study during both the day and in the evening.

Weather. You will be outside at the mercy of extremes in weather. Temperatures may soar to the 100's and may drop into the 30's at night. You should be prepared for hot and cold or wet and dry weather.

Accommodations. We do not camp at established campgrounds with rest rooms and/or shower facilities. You should be prepared to adapt as needed.

No booze or drugs. No alcohol or drugs are allowed at any time from our departure to our arrival back on the SBCC campus.

Questions

Check out our website!
SBCC.edu/earthscience

Stephanie Mendes
sdmendes@sbccc.edu
Office: EBS 110
Ext. 4113

Kristen Sneddon
kwsneddon@pipeline.sbccc.edu
Office: EBS 117
Ext: 4270

