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Coursework Guidelines for Professional Licensure in Geology

With respect to university coursework, Idaho Statute 54-2812(1)(a) *Qualifications for Registration* specifies the **minimum evidence** of qualification for registration as a Professional Geologist (PG) in Idaho is "Completion of thirty (30) semester units in courses in geological science leading to a degree in the geological sciences. . ." Twenty-four of the thirty semester units must be upper division (third year, fourth year, or graduate) courses. This requirement ensures that prospective PGs have sufficient depth of knowledge in geoscience **as it relates to the professional practice of geology.** Courses that fulfill the educational requirement of Idaho Statute 54-2812(1)(a) must therefore meet the following two criteria:

1. Courses must address aspects of geology and/or subdisciplines of geology as the primary subject matter.
2. The aspects of geology covered must be directly relevant to the professional practice of geology in Idaho.

By these criteria, a course in marine geology (for example) does not qualify, since it satisfies Criterion 1, but not Criterion 2. Likewise, although a course in GIS is relevant to the professional practice of geology, the content is not specific to geology, nor is geology the primary subject matter.

Specific Course Recommendations. Any courses that meet Criteria 1 and 2 above may be used to fill the six semester hours not required to be upper-division coursework. Although these are typically satisfied by an introductory physical geology class and a historical geology class, general interest courses in the earth sciences, similar to *Geology of the Pacific NW*, *Geology of the National Parks*, or *Humans and Geology*, may alternatively be used for these six credits.

The upper-division coursework should include core geology courses such as *Mineralogy*, *Igneous and Metamorphic Petrology*, *Stratigraphy and Sedimentology*, and *Structural Geology*. Some schools have chosen to offer core geology classes in non-traditional ways; for example, a combined *Mineralogy/Petrology* course under a title similar to *Earth Materials*. Such non-traditional courses are acceptable, provided they cover substantially the same material as the traditional geology core. Most geology programs also require upper-division field coursework such as *Geological Field Methods* and/or *Geology Summer Field Camp* totaling six semester credits. Courses in subdisciplines of geology, e.g., *Hydrogeology*, *Geophysics*, *Geochemistry*, and *Engineering Geology*, the content of which satisfies Criteria 1 and 2 above, can also be counted toward the required 24 upper-division or 30 semester hour totals. Although courses such as *Meteorology*, *Construction Materials*, *Environmental Systems*, or *Oceanography* may be taught in a geology department or included as part of a geology curriculum, they would not, in general, count towards the required 30 semester hours.