Q4: Which 2 courses were not very useful? Why?

1 see above comments

2 Arnold Gordon's Physical Oceanography course was pretty much a waste of time. Arnold wasn't much interested in trying to teach the material. He split his time between "covering" the curriculum, pro forma, and talking extemporaneously about his field experiences. It would have been fine to listen to Arnold's stories ex. the classroom, and get the P.O. basics from someone more interested in teaching.
Rick Fairbanks' Climate Change course was also pretty frustrating. The material was tantalyzing, (sp?) and some of the individual lectures were quite good. But Rick began with such a grandiose vision of what we would do, and no organizational effort to approach the vision ..., that the result was a kind of a hodge-podge of topics rather than a real course in the subject.

3 The ecophysiology class that I took was taught at a low level and was disorganized (but these problems have already been corrected by a new instructor).

4

5

6

7 Remote sensing--the instructors lacked clarity, the goals of the class were unclear.
Tectonophysics seminar--it was very narrowly focussed, and tended to belabor the same point week after week.

8

9 Geophysical Inverse Theory. I think that this course is currently given in a very theoretical manner, with little emphasis on the application of those abstract methods. Students need to manipulate with real data (either using the data offered by the professor, or with their own data) to appreciate the things presented so rigorously in the textbook.

10 I didnt take any courses that were not useful. the classes I even considered taking were limited, and since I had a masters degree already, my credit requirements were pretty low.

11 GRAVITY,GEODESY,ISOSTASY. (VERY BASIC,POORLY ORGANIZED,MATERIAL COVERED ELSEWHERE) INTRO TO SEISMOLOGY (PARTICULAR PROF TAUGHT OWN AGENDA AND WAS OUT OF TOUCH WITH STUDENT NEEDS)

12 Don't know yet.

13 Physical Oceanography-- Course was a mess- Arnold Gordon et al. use ancient notes, completely disorganized, etc..... Type example of what shouldn't be going on at Lamont. Complete waste of everyone's time. Any Fairbanks course: Content for all courses, whether seminar or class, is exactly the same. Applications of stable isotopes to something Rick is interested in.

14 Sed basins was good, but not useful necessarily for me as an EESJ student. Nevertheless I enjoyed

it, so does that make it useful? Probably. So, I'll say that most of my classes were useful in one way or another.

15 Every class is useful in some way or another.

16 Climate Change--very disorganized presentation of very interesting material, what I learned I got from reading.

17 Drew Shindell's Atmo Chem class had some good material, but only about 6 weeks' worth. After that, he had very little to teach. And he wasn't very good at that. Bob Anderson's half of Chem Continental waters was awful. He was mildly amusing, in a dry and very slow manner, but taught little.

18 Principles of Oceanography - supposedly an intro class but really not.

19 Bruce Shaw's 'Nonlinear Dynamics' was taught at a level far below the level of understanding you need to have to do research in this field. This course was more like a undergraduate general interest class that would be taught to sophomore humanities students. Mark Cane's 'Ocean-Atmosphere Interactions' This had the makings of a very good course in this subject. Mark is very knowledgable in this topic and the topics covered are very relevent to what is happening in research but it was very disorganized and the explanations were cryptic.

20 1) PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY (Gordon): This is a potentially super-useful course but I thought the material was not presented in a systematic, well-organized way. I think this course has tremendous potential for improvement given that the instructor is nothing short of brilliant. Physical oceanography concepts such as geostrophy and vorticity can be hard to grasp and a conscious effort must be made to present them in a clear manner. 2) ISOTOPE GEOLOGY I (Schlosser): I enjoyed this course tremendously because it went to the fundamental (quantum) level. But in retrospect I think it needed to incorporate more real-world examples of the application of isotope-geology concepts. Also, the part on radiation detectors was not well integrated with the rest of the material.

21 NONE WERE NOT USEFUL, SOME LESS ENJOYABLE, BUT ALL COURSES I CHOSE WERE USEFUL.

22 Physical Oceanography - conceptually this course should have been a course that concentrated on all the basics and could be useful a very large audience at Lamont but failed to be rigorous enough.
Field course - Does not reflect present emphasis of students at Lamont. While there should be a field requirement it should not be limited to geology.

23 1)Gravity, Isostasy, Geodesy Material is not very well organized: Some topics are redundant (e.g. theory of Gravity) at least for somebody who had physics before. Thus there is not enough time for the new and important issues (Anomalies, Isostasy).
2)Remote Sensing I Geared towards a broad audience. Did not give insights to people who had a strong scientific education.

24 Geologic Mapping - What a waste of time! Too specialized an interest for a requirement. Learned very little new stuff, only site-specific things- Devonian/Silurian limestone having undergone compression. A field course should be required, but with many more options as to what you get to examine. Inverse Theory - way too theorectical. Most useful stuff was covered in about 2 weeks - the practical stuff WAS useful, but filled less than 20% of the class.

25 Remote sensing. The subject has lots of potential, but because it is offered to everyone around and tries to appeal to non DEES students, it deals too much with vegetation etc

26 Only in my second year, so I couldn't really say. I've learned something important and applicable from all of my classes so far. Well, except for History of Mammals, which I took at the Museum of Natural History. It wasn't broad enough to be applicable to anything I do. It seemed more along the line of something a phylogeneticist might take. It seems most Lamonters wouldn't get much useful information from a class like that.

27 can't say at this point

28 1. Marra's biol. oceanography (not presented well) 2. ?

29 advanced general geology (it was not the content; it was the way it was taught--yawn.....see below)/???????

30

31 Deficiency Chemistry and Physics: Because quite frankly how could I have gotten into this esteemed department if I was really so lacking in these fundamentals?

32 Colloquium. In 1st year (1997-8) they were all oceanography aimed at oceznographers. Last year was better. But I had other things to do on Fridays (eg field work Fri-Sun, museum visits (as it was my only "free" day). Qant m,ehtods of data analaysis (spelling shuld give some indicaton of how much I enjoyed that class) - but b/c my advisor told me to take it and he loves cycles.

33 ? don't know. They're all useful in some way.

34 Geophysical theory I and II. Too little time is devoted to each topic covered for students to get more than a brief introduction into the subjects covered.

35

36

37

38 Geologic mapping: although it was pleasant to spend 2 weeks hiking in the Catskills, I could have spent the time much more productively doing research at lamont, and had many other uses for the $300 + fee associated with this course. This course taught me nothing of relevance to my research interests. Plant ecophysiology (taken in 96, not with Griffin): not relevant to my studies; compilation of random facts; better to read the book, though it too was a compilation of random facts; instructors

seemed bored. While on the subject of value, Intro to Atmospheric Chemistry' wasn't very valuable to me; it was a reasonably well taught course, but the subject matter is quite far from my research interests.

39 At this point, I can barely remember. However in my opinion advanced General Geology was pretty much a complete sham, and did not give the geological overview that it should have. Peter Schlosser's Tracer oceanography was completely lost on me during my first year. Furthermore he made a very interesting subject extremely boring.

40

41 --Arnold Gordon's Intro to Phys Ocean and Mark Cane's Ocean-Atm Interaction, largely because they were similar in subject matter and both profs used their own notes (no specific text used), which made it difficult to follow the subject matter coherently (where I didn't understand the lecture notes, I couldn't easily get a different and corroborating explanation from a book). An introductory course in particular needs to have a more clearly laid out, accessible text to follow.

42

43

44

45 1) Fault Mechanics seminar (Scholz and Anders) -- I think that the format of this class should be changed from one in which the students stand in front of the class and give a presentation every week to one that is less formal and more pro-discussion. The formal presentations every week left little time for discussion. Also, listening to four presentations at a time becomes difficult and makes general discussion more difficult. (2) Inverse theory (Lerner-Lam) -- this course was way too advanced for me to take in my first semester. I had difficulty following the lectures and found the textbook by Parker nearly impossible to understand. The course itself is very useful, but without a very strong linear algebra background it should not be attempted the first semester.

46

47

48 Carbon cycle Intro to Geology I enjoyed taking both (very rewarding) but just not applicable to my research.

49 Secondly, some materials in some courses are not quite well organized, like 4, 5, and 6. Instructors mostly talked about their own research instead of classic materials and recent "hottest" fields.

50 1) chemical oceanography- biased toward instructor's intersts (Anderson), emphasis on small scale processes 2) QMDA too much detail that I'll never use

51 Plate Tectonics was a replay of submarine geology. This issue has apparently been recognized and addressed already, so OK. And the field mapping course, for reasons stated above.

52 I am in a peculiar position where I came with a masters and therefore, did not have to take many courses. In one way this was a blessing because I could focus on my research early on. Also I

started in Fall ’96; there was an unusually low number of courses I wanted to take that semester. The following fall, when I had to go out to sea, there were courses I wanted to take. These courses were not again until this fall, my fourth year. I don’t feel like I have the time, at this point, to take anymore courses if I am to finish in the next 2 years. Thus, I don’t feel like I can comment on this question.