What kinds of work will I do?

Geoscience is not just rocks, minerals and fossils. Prospective students should appreciate that people with B.S. degrees in geoscience work in a wide variety of positions in research, industry, government, academia and nonprofit organizations.

In most geoscience careers, you should expect to:
- collect and analyze data in the lab or the field,
- work with computers and other high tech instruments,
- effectively communicate the results of your work;
  verbally, in writing, and in visual, electronic formats
- collaboratively work with colleagues,
- integrate and interpret data from a wide variety of sources and in a wide variety of formats,
- creatively develop new ways to solve problems.

Studying geoscience prepares you for careers outside of the field too. Did you know these people had geology degrees...

- General Colin Powell, former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- Herbert Hoover, 31st President of the United States
- Harrison Schmitt, Apollo 17 astronaut and former U.S. senator
- Cynthia Carroll, former CEO of Anglo American PLC, the world's largest producer of platinum
- Greg Graffin, singer, songwriter and founder of the band, Bad Religion

Career Opportunities in Geoscience

Why study geoscience at NIU?

The NIU Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences is small enough to feel like home, but big enough to have world-class faculty, staff and research facilities. Having 60-80 undergraduate majors enables us to give you the close personal interaction you deserve, including involving you in research.

- We will challenge you to be your best, and help you get there!
- We annually award nearly $3000 in undergraduate scholarships
- NIU offers abundant support and opportunities for undergraduate research and engaged learning

http://www.niu.edu/engagedlearning/engaged_learning/CLAS_Engagement_Funding/

Check out the link below to see the NIU Career Services list of career information for geoscience graduates.

http://www.niu.edu/careerservices/weblinks/majors/geology.shtml

We care about your Career Success!
Our Geoscience Career Preparation course will start your professional network of employer connections, and help you develop the professional and technical skills necessary to land the job you want!

Have questions?

Visit our website:
http://www.niu.edu/engagedlearning/CLAS_Engagement_Funding/

Get answers to your questions:
askgeology@niu.edu

Call us:
815-753-1943
Why Geoscience?

Geoscience provides curious, creative problem solvers with a way to better understand, appreciate, preserve, protect, and wisely utilize the world around them. Geoscientists care about the environment. They understand that the Earth is a system, and that humans impact the natural world on which we depend for our survival.

Studying geoscience gives you an opportunity to put your curiosity and creativity to work defining and solving important societal problems; as well as fundamental scientific questions.

- How will we balance the need for inexpensive energy resources with the impact of fossil fuel consumption on the global climate system?
- Can we develop tools and models to accurately predict and prepare for natural hazards like earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, climate change and mudflows?
- How can we wisely manage our water resources to meet the growing demand for clean water?

Answering these and other questions requires an understanding and integrated application of geology, chemistry, physics, engineering, biology, math, geography and anthropology. It can also involve politics, law, medicine, ecology and communication.

Would you like to see the world?

- Many geoscience careers provide an opportunity to travel the world and work in beautiful, exciting settings.
- NIU undergraduate geology students have worked in places like Antarctica, Israel, Mexico, Portugal, Svalbard, Peru, Chile, and many of our National Parks.

What are my job prospects?

The best insurance for good job prospects is to earn good grades and the respect of the faculty with whom you work. Our Geoscience Career Preparation course will help you network with employers, develop a strong résumé, and build your interviewing skills. Our curriculum will provide you with the technical knowledge, writing, computer and field skills necessary to impress a wide variety of employers.

Your job prospects increase tremendously with a M.S. degree. Graduate school isn't for everyone, but the M.S. degree is widely considered the “working” degree for geoscientists.

- In 2012 Forbes Magazine listed Geology as #7 on their list of the 15 most valuable college majors.
- In 2014 the Washington Post listed geology as one of the least underemployed majors.
- A 2008 article in The Guardian reported that in a survey of 220,000 students across the U.K., 95% of those studying geology were happy with their degree choice.

Check out the link below to see the NIU Career Services list of career information for geoscience graduates.

http://www.niu.edu/careerservices/weblinks/majors/geology.shtml

How much can I make?

Salaries vary with the economic climate, with employment sector (e.g., private vs. public, environmental vs. petroleum), and with individual skills and knowledge.

- In their 2013 survey, the American Geosciences Institute reported that most bachelors graduates found starting salaries ranging from $20,000 - $60,000.
- In their 2014 survey of industry salaries, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists reported salaries in the petroleum industry for M.S. degree holders with 0-2 years of experience averaged $102,400.
- In 2012 the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported $98,890 as the average median salary of geologists across all states and all employment sectors.
  - the lowest 10% earned less than $48,270
  - the highest 10% earned more than $187,200

M.S. degree holders will have significantly higher starting salaries and job growth potential than B.S. degree holders.

Many students work for a few years after graduation and then return to complete an M.S. degree. Employers often provide incentives for this retraining.

Check out these resources for more salary info...


http://www1.salary.com/Geologist-I-Salary.html

2013 Median Annual Salaries for Geoscience-Related Occupations