How to Choose an Emphasis in Geology & Environmental Geosciences

**Step 1**

**THINK:** decide what interests you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I want to pass on my passion for science to others; I want to teach high school science</th>
<th>I love earth science and want to learn all I can about it</th>
<th>I like a variety of sciences and want to combine my study of earth science with something else; I might even want to minor in another field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Choose the Earth and Space Science Education Emphasis

**STOP**

**Think some more!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Geology Emphasis is probably better for you, but</th>
<th>The Environmental Geosciences Emphasis is probably better for you, but</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Step 2**

Consider the emphasis differences and the implications of your choice

- how will my choice affect what courses I can take?
- will my job prospects be affected?
- will my prospects for grad school be affected?

**Geology Emphasis**

- requires a physically demanding, 6-week summer field class that is taught in Wyoming and South Dakota
- gives you the math and physics background that many graduate schools will expect you to have
- gives you the math and physics background the U.S. Geological Survey requires for its hydrogeologist positions
- summer field training is more closely aligned with traditional geoscience fields like mining and petroleum; some grad schools prefer this type of field experience

Don’t worry:

- it is fairly easy to switch between emphases up until you have finished the 300-level core courses

Don’t choose an emphasis just to avoid math!

**Environmental Geosciences Emphasis**

- requires a 4-week summer field class that is taught at NIU between the spring and summer sessions
- gives you an opportunity to gain HAZWOPER training that is valued by many environmental consulting employers
- greater flexibility to explore other disciplines
- may make it easier to get a minor
- summer field training more closely aligns with many environmental consulting jobs in the Chicago region

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