

# SWTJC pairs with UT Austin to offer inaugural geology courses, programs

For the first time ever, students at Southwest Texas Junior College will have the opportunity to participate in a geology course instructed by professor from The University of Texas at Austin this spring.

Physical Geology 1403, an introductory geology course, will be taught through distance learning.

It will be scheduled in Uvalde, Eagle Pass and Del Rio on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Each Friday, the instructor will travel from Austin to Uvalde to conduct lab sessions.

The course will count as a three-hour credit for Southwest Texas Junior College.

It is transferable to U.T.

"By offering this course, we give our students the opportunity to learn more about the geological wonders of the Southwest Texas area in which

we live," said director of curriculum and instruction Dick Whipple.

Whipple, who is coordinating the new course for SWTJC, also said he hopes the course offering will raise students' level of interest about geology as a major field of study.

"With the vast number of employment opportunities currently available in areas such as mining and petroleum geology, we hope students in our area will begin taking a closer look at geology as a possible field of study," Whipple said.

The course is being offered through The U.T. Jackson School of Geosciences.

"This wouldn't be possible without the support of the Jackson School of Geosciences and we thank them for affording students in our service area this tremendous opportunity," said

SWTJC Dean of Technology and Institutional Advancement Blaine Bennett Bennett.

Last summer, minority high school students from around the SWTJC service area were selected to participate in the Jackson School's GeoFORCE Texas Program.

The first summer academy program took ninth-grade students on a trip across the United States to visit various geological sites and learn about career opportunities available to geoscientists.

Bennett said that with such programs as GeoFORCE Texas and the addition of UT Austin distance learning geology courses, SWTJC hopes to stimulate interest in the geosciences.

"Through various programs offered through The University of Texas at Austin, NASA, the Department of Defense and the National Science Foundation, SWTJC has been actively expanding our math, science, computer science and engineering programs over the past six years," Bennett said.

"This new geology course offers us another opportunity to broaden our curriculum and expand options available to our students."

For more information about the new geology course call the admissions office at (830) 591-7271.