

GEL 120 - Origins: From the Big Bang to Today
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Spring, 2022

Textbook: *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything* (Christian, Brown, & Benjamin, 2014)

Goals for the course:

- To hone critical thinking skills and scientific literacy in a manner that elicits a heightened curiosity about your place in the cosmos
- To enhance your willingness to challenge assumptions about our origins
- To provide a chronology of key thresholds and events in the history of the universe, our planet, the biosphere, and humanity at a wide range of time and space

Please be sure to carefully read the homepage on the GEL120 Canvas site.

| Date | Topic | Reading |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| March 28 | What is Big History? Scales of Space & Time | pp. 1-8 |
| Mar. 30-Apr 1 | Threshold 1: Big Bang Origin of the Universe | pp. 11-22 |
| April 4-8 | Threshold 2: The Stars Light Up (<i>quiz 1: April 4</i>) | pp. 15-17, 22-24, 4-7 |
| April 11-13 | Threshold 3: Origin of the Elements (<i>quiz 2: April 11</i>) | pp. 24-30 |
| April 15-25 | Threshold 4: Origin of Earth & Early Earth (<i>quiz 3: April 18</i>) (<i>quiz 4: April 25</i>) | pp. 33-45 |
| April 27 - May 2 | Threshold 5: Emergence of Life & Early Life Great Oxygenation Event | pp. 55-57, 63-71 |
| May 4 | <i>Midterm 1 (30%)</i> | |
| May 6-9 | Snowball Earth, Metazoans | pp. 71-72 |
| May 11-18 | Phanerozoic Earth & Life (<i>quiz 5: May 16</i>) | pp. 68-76 |
| May 20-25 | Threshold 6: Quaternary Climate & Human Evolution (<i>quiz 6: May 23</i>) | pp. 79-83, 83-98 |
| May 27 | Threshold 7: Agriculture & Civilization | pp. 103-107, 127-130 |
| May 30 | Memorial Day – no class | |
| June 1 | Threshold 8: Great Acceleration, Anthropocene, the Future | pp. 215-217, 243-246, 283-285 |
| June 6, 3:30-5:30 pm | <i>Final Exam (40%)</i> | |