

AOSC - ATMOSPHERIC AND OCEANIC SCIENCE

AOSC400 Physical Meteorology of the Atmosphere (3 Credits)

The application of basic classical physics, chemistry and mathematics to the study of the atmosphere. Composition of the atmosphere; energy sources and sinks (radiation in the atmosphere; radiative balance and radiative forcing of atmospheric processes); atmospheric thermodynamics; clouds and precipitation physics; atmospheric electricity and optics; mesoscale processes (e.g., orographic mesoscale phenomena and instabilities); air mass boundaries; severe weather, tropical cyclones; storms; global circulation.

Prerequisite: 1 course with a minimum grade of C- from (PHYS171, PHYS161, MATH141); or permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department.

Formerly: METO400.

AOSC401 Climate Dynamics and Earth System Science (3 Credits)

Introduction of the earth and global climate systems and their major components: atmosphere, land, ocean, biosphere and cryosphere. Key processes governing the function of the earth's climate: Global energy balance and water cycle, climate dynamics (general circulation of the atmosphere and ocean) and climate physics (aerosol, cloud and rain), as well as climate variability and climate changes. Phenomena resulting from this coupled system including El Nino-Southern Oscillation, monsoons, and the hydrological cycle will be discussed, with a focus on how the Earth System responds to global warming.

Prerequisite: AOSC400 or AOSC200; and MATH141; and (PHYS161 or PHYS171). Or permission of instructor.

AOSC420 Physical Oceanography (3 Credits)

Ocean observations. Water masses, sources of deep, intermediate, and surface water. Mass, heat, and salt transport, and the meridional overturning circulation. Geochemical tracers and cycles, including carbon. Western boundary currents, mixed layers, and processes maintaining the thermocline. Coastal and estuarine processes. Surface waves and tides. the ocean's role in climate.

Prerequisite: MATH141 and PHYS141.

Recommended: AOSC200. Also offered as: GEOL670, AOSC670.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC420, AOSC670, or GEOL670.

AOSC424 Remote Sensing of the Atmosphere and Ocean (3 Credits)

Many of the properties of the atmosphere, ocean, and land surface are most easily observed from satellite remote sensing. This course will provide students with a hands-on introduction to a variety of passive and active sensing techniques and sensors observing our changing environment. Topics include: orbital dynamics and electromagnetic properties of the atmosphere and surface; atmospheric emission characteristics and scattering; chemical composition and spectroscopy; temperature retrievals; detection and retrieval of aerosol, cloud and rain; ocean surface properties; sea surface temperature and color; active sensing of wind stress, sea level, and internal waves; time-dependent gravity; properties of vegetation and ice.

Prerequisite: 1 course with a minimum grade of C- from (PHYS171, PHYS161, MATH141); or permission of instructor.

AOSC431 Atmospheric Thermodynamics (3 Credits)

Classical thermodynamics applied to both the dry and the moist atmosphere. Composition; phase changes of water; stability concepts; Properties of aerosols and clouds, cloud nucleation and precipitation processes, atmospheric electricity, cloud and precipitation chemistry.

Prerequisite: 1 course with a minimum grade of C- from (PHYS171, PHYS161, MATH141).

Recommended: MATH246.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC431 or METO431.

Formerly: METO431.

AOSC432 Dynamics of the Atmosphere and Ocean (3 Credits)

Equations of motion and their approximation, scale analysis for the atmosphere and the ocean. Conservation properties. Fluid motion in the atmosphere and oceans. Geostrophic/balanced and ageostrophic/unbalanced motion. Circulation, vorticity, and potential vorticity. Introduction to the boundary layer.

Prerequisite: AOSC431.

Corequisite: MATH246.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC432, METO432, or AOSC632.

Formerly: METO432.

AOSC434 Air Pollution (3 Credits)

Production, transformation, transport and removal of air pollutants. The problems of photochemical smog, the greenhouse effect, stratospheric ozone, acid rain and visibility. Analytical techniques for gases and particles.

Prerequisite: MATH241; or permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department.

Formerly: METO434.

AOSC436 Principles of Biogeochemistry (3 Credits)

An introduction to the basic principles of biogeochemistry including aspects of organic geochemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, global geochemical cycles, the origin of life and paleoenvironmental evolution.

Prerequisite: MATH120 or MATH140; or must have completed MATH220. And (GEOL100 or GEOL120); and GEOL322. And CHEM131 and CHEM132; or (CHEM135 and CHEM136).

Restriction: Non-degree-seeking students require the permission of the instructor. Cross-listed with: GEOL436.

Credit Only Granted for: GEOL436 or AOSC436.

AOSC437 Global Climate Change: Past and Present (3 Credits)

A highlight to the fact that global climate change is part of the Earth's past as well as of its present and future. Changes in climate that have occurred in the geologic past can be viewed as the Earth's natural climate variability. These changes are different from, though could be linked with, historical and present anthropogenically-induced climate change. We will discuss the modern climate system, the factors capable of forcing climate change on various time scales, the geologic proxies of past climate change and what these proxies tell us. Finally, we will compare and contrast past climate change with what is understood (and not understood) about modern climate change.

Prerequisite: MATH115 or MATH140; and (GEOL100 or GEOL120); and (CHEM131 or CHEM135); and (CHEM132 or CHEM136).

Restriction: Non-degree seeking students require permission of the instructor.

AOSC447 Machine Learning in Earth Science (3 Credits)

A comprehensive introductory course designed to prepare undergraduate and graduate students for applying machine learning techniques to solve real-world problems in Earth science. It emphasizes practical solution implementation, providing students with essential hands-on experience using the most popular open-source analytics tools based on Python, a general-purpose programming language. The course works through all steps in machine learning, from problem specification, data analytics to analytical solution, and applies advanced statistical and analytical algorithms to uncover hidden data relationships and transform them into predictive understanding or decision support. The topics covered include: Python programming, SciPy and Scikit-learn utility, data engineering, visualization, classifiers, regression models, canonical correlation analysis, structural equation models, decision trees, random forests, boosting machines, support vector machines, clustering, dimensionality reduction, principal component analysis, and neural networks.

Prerequisite: Must have completed MATH140.

AOSC458 Advanced Topics in Atmospheric and Oceanic Science (1-4 Credits)

Special topics in atmospheric and oceanic science are given intensive study. The topic of concentration varies, from semester to semester and depends on student and faculty interests. Often, specialists from other institutions are invited to the campus on a visiting lectureship basis to conduct the course.

Repeatable to: 12 credits.

AOSC462 Ecohydrology (3 Credits)

Focuses on the study of hydrologically-controlled ecosystems, e.g. systems in which either excess and/or deficit of water and nutrients are determinants of its structure and function. Such systems have complex dynamic characteristics that depend on many interrelated links between climate, soil and vegetation.

Prerequisite: MATH240, MATH241 and MATH246; or permission of instructor. Jointly offered with: AOSC662.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC462 or AOSC662.

AOSC463 Water and Climate Systems (3 Credits)

Focuses on exploring the relationships between water, climate, land, energy, and the economy (the so called "nexus") through an interwoven understanding of the physical, economic, and institutional relationships and constraints that influence management and decision-making process in water supply, energy generation and food production. The course emphasizes the use of integrated assessment (IA) modeling tools as a way to formalize these relationships and explore their implications. Lectures will be complemented with online discussion sessions and applied modeling exercises to get hands-on knowledge of practical solutions to nexus challenges.

Prerequisite: MATH240, MATH241 and MATH246; or permission of instructor. Jointly offered with: AOSC663.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC463 or AOSC663.

Additional Information: This course is offered through a joint effort of the Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center (ESSIC, part of UMDb Sciences) and the Joint Global Change Research Institute (a collaboration between UMD and the US Dept of Energy's Northwest National Laboratory).

AOSC470 Synoptic Meteorology (3 Credits)

Atmospheric properties and observations, meteorological analysis and charts, operational numerical forecasts. Application of quasigeostrophic theory, baroclinic instability, midlatitude and mesoscale weather systems. Tropical meteorology. Weather forecasting using numerical and statistical models. Prediction of weather phenomena on the global, synoptic, meso, and local scales. Analysis of surface and upper air data; Norwegian cyclone model; introduction to weather forecasting.

Prerequisite: Minimum grade of C- in AOSC431 and AOSC432.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC470, AOSC600, or METO600.

AOSC472 Mesoscale Meteorology (3 Credits)

Survey a broad range of mesoscale meteorological features with emphasis on convection and associated phenomena. Define the mesoscale and understand its underlying principles; Introduce non-convective circulations and their importance for weather forecasting; Understand the precursors and occurrence of deep moist convection.

Prerequisite: AOSC432, AOSC600, AOSC610, or AOSC470.

Restriction: Non-degree-seeking students require the permission of the instructor. Jointly offered with AOSC602.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC472 or AOSC602.

AOSC475 Carbon Cycle and Climate: Past, Present, and Future (3 Credits)

The fundamentals of the Earth's carbon cycle, a key biogeochemical cycle that controls Earth's climate and life. The changing characteristics of the carbon cycle on several timescales, ranging from geological, interannual, and the more recent anthropogenic influences on carbon cycle and climate. The carbon cycle in the atmosphere, land, ocean, and the biosphere. The underlying human activities such as fossil fuel burning and deforestation that are responsible for the increase in the atmosphere CO₂ and our future options in dealing with the carbon problem such as alternative energy and carbon sequestration. Jointly offered with AOSC675.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC475 or AOSC675.

AOSC480 Introduction to Earth System Science (3 Credits)

Focuses on exploring the relationships between the atmosphere, the oceans, water, climate, land, vegetation, energy, and human systems through an interwoven understanding of the physical, biogeochemical and socioeconomic relationships and constraints that influence management and decision-making processes in societal issues such as water supply, power generation, food production, ecosystem services and others. The course introduces integrated assessment (IA) science as a framework to formalize these relationships and explore their implications.

Prerequisite: MATH240, MATH241 and MATH246; or permission of instructor. Jointly offered with: AOSC680.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC480 or AOSC680.

Additional Information: This course is offered through a joint effort of the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Science (AOSC) and the Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center (ESSIC).

AOSC484 Climate System Modeling (3 Credits)

Fundamentals in building computer models to simulate the components of the climate system: atmosphere, ocean ice, land-surface, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and the biogeochemical cycles embedded in the physical climate system, in particular, the carbon cycle. Simple to state-of-the-art research models to tackle problems such as the Daisy World, El Niño and global warming. Jointly offered with AOSC684.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC484 or AOSC684.

AOSC493 Senior Research Project I (3 Credits)

Technical writing and oral presentation skills. Planning, writing, and presenting a plan for research in the geosciences.

Prerequisite: Permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department.

Restriction: Must be in Atmospheric and Oceanic Science program; or permission of instructor.

AOSC494 Atmospheric and Oceanic Science Seminar (1 Credit)

Exposure to a wide range of contemporary topics in atmospheric, oceanic, and climate sciences, to foster research interests and promote critical thinking through the weekly AOSC departmental seminar series.

Prerequisite: Minimum grade of C- in AOSC431 and AOSC432.

AOSC498 Senior Research Project II (3 Credits)

The project will be based on the research or development plan created in AOSC493. It may be completed with the approval of a faculty advisor in conjunction with an internship. Final written thesis and oral defense will be expected.

Prerequisite: AOSC493.

AOSC499 Special Problems in Atmospheric Science (1-3 Credits)

Research or special study in the field of meteorology and the atmospheric and oceanic sciences.

Prerequisite: Permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department.

Repeatable to: 6 credits.

Formerly: METO499.

AOSC600 Synoptic Meteorology I (3 Credits)

Atmospheric properties and observations, meteorological analysis and charts, operational numerical forecasts. Application of quasigeostrophic theory, baroclinic instability, midlatitude and mesoscale weather systems. Tropical meteorology.

Prerequisite: AOSC610.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC470 or AOSC600.

Formerly: METO600.

AOSC602 Mesoscale Meteorology (3 Credits)

Survey a broad range of mesoscale meteorological features with emphasis on convection and associated phenomena. Define the mesoscale and understand its underlying principles; Introduce non-convective circulations and their importance for weather forecasting; Understand the precursors and occurrence of deep moist convection.

AOSC610 Dynamics of the Atmosphere and Ocean I (3 Credits)

Equations of motion and their approximation, scale analysis for the atmosphere and the ocean. Conservation properties. Fluid motion in the atmosphere and oceans. Circulation and vorticity, geostrophic motion and the gradient wind balance. Turbulence and Ekman Layers.

Prerequisite: Must have completed or be concurrently enrolled in MATH462; or students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department.

Formerly: METO610.

AOSC611 Dynamics of the Atmosphere and Oceans II (3 Credits)

Waves and instabilities in the atmosphere and the ocean. Gravity, Rossby, coastal and equatorial waves. Flow over topography. Dynamic instabilities including barotropic, baroclinic, inertial, and instabilities of the coupled ocean-atmosphere system. Stationary waves and multiple equilibria.

Formerly: METO611.

AOSC614 Atmospheric Modeling, Data Assimilation and Predictability (3 Credits)

Solid foundation for atmospheric and oceanic modeling and numerical weather prediction: numerical methods for partial differential equations, an introduction to physical parameterizations, modern data assimilation, and predictability.

Prerequisite: AOSC610; or permission of instructor.

AOSC615 Advanced Methods in Data Assimilation for the Earth Sciences (3 Credits)

An overview of the most important methods of data assimilation. Theory, techniques and strategies of these methods, as well as their possible drawbacks. Hands-on experimentation with variational and other data assimilation systems.

Prerequisite: AOSC614; or permission of instructor.

AOSC617 Atmospheric and Oceanic Climate (3 Credits)

The general circulation of the atmosphere and oceans, historical perspective, observations, and conceptual models; wind-driven and thermohaline circulation of the oceans. Seasonal cycle and monsoon circulations; interannual to interdecadal climate variability; climate change.

Prerequisite: AOSC610; or permission of instructor.

Formerly: METO617.

AOSC620 Physics and Chemistry of the Atmosphere I (3 Credits)

Air parcel thermodynamics and stability; constituent thermodynamics and chemical kinetics. Cloud and aerosol physics and precipitation processes.

Prerequisite: MATH461; or students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department.

Formerly: METO620.

AOSC621 Physics and Chemistry of the Atmosphere II (3 Credits)

Spectroscopy; basic concepts in radiative transfer and atmospheric chemistry; photolysis rates for atmospheric molecules.

Prerequisite: MATH462; or students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department.

Formerly: METO621.

AOSC624 Remote Sensing of Surface Climate (3 Credits)

The theory and principles of remote sensing as applicable to earth observing satellites. Discussed will be current methods to interpret satellite observations into useful climate parameters. Emphasis will be placed on parameters that provide information about the climate close to the earth surface, and that can be inferred on regional to global scales. Examples are: surface temperature and reflectivity, radiation budgets, soil moisture, and vegetation cover.

Prerequisite: MATH240 and MATH241.

AOSC625 Remote Inference of Atmospheric Properties by Satellite (3 Credits)

Fundamentals of radiative transfer concepts, theories and models pertinent to remote sensing. Satellite platforms, sensors and systems used for operation and research in atmospheric remote sensing. Concepts and technologies of passive and active remote sensing. Remote sensing methods and products of atmospheric constituents, aerosol, cloud, precipitation, temperature and water vapor profiles, precipitation in liquid and ice forms, radiation budget, and remote sensing application in data assimilation for numerical weather forecast (NWP); use of atmospheric remote sensing products for development of global climate model (GCM).

AOSC630 Statistical Methods in Meteorology and Oceanography (3 Credits)

Parametric and non-parametric tests; time series analysis and filtering; wavelets. Multiple regression and screening; neural networks. Empirical orthogonal functions and teleconnections. Statistical weather and climate prediction, including MOS, constructed analogs. Ensemble forecasting and verification.

Prerequisite: STAT400; or students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department.

Formerly: METO630.

AOSC632 Atmospheric Dynamics (3 Credits)

The equations of motion of the atmosphere are developed, and then analyzed with a focus on developing students' intuition about the behavior of the large-scale atmospheric flow in the mid-latitudes. Topics covered: Kinematics; forces in the atmosphere; apparent forces arising from the rotation of the earth; vertical coordinate systems; spherical coordinate; natural coordinates; hydrostatic, cyclostrophic; geostrophic and gradient wind balances; diagnosis of vertical motion (the omega equation); prediction of surface pressure; dynamics of fronts; lifecycle of baroclinic disturbances; introduction to climate sensitivity and climate feedbacks.

Prerequisite: AOSC431.

Corequisite: MATH246.

Restriction: Must not have completed AOSC432.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC432 or AOSC632.

AOSC633 Atmospheric Chemistry and Climate (3 Credits)

The effects of human activity on atmospheric composition, focused on global warming, the carbon cycle, air pollution, and the ozone layer. Fundamentals of atmospheric chemistry (spectroscopy, kinetics, isotopic analysis, and biogeochemical cycles) are related to the modern understanding of climate change, air quality, and ozone depletion, based on resources such as satellite missions, field campaigns, and scientific assessments published by international agencies. We also examine how society's energy needs could be met, in the future, in a manner with less impact on atmospheric composition than the present heavy reliance on combustion of fossil fuels.

Prerequisite: CHEM131, CHEM135, or CHEM146. And MATH241; or permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department; or permission of CMNS-Chemistry & Biochemistry department. Cross-listed with CHEM633.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC433, AOSC633, CHEM433, or CHEM633.

AOSC634 Air Sampling and Analysis (3 Credits)

Theory and application of analytical techniques for the analysis of atmospheric gases and particles including priority pollutants. Combined chemical and meteorological considerations in designing field experiments.

Formerly: METO634.

AOSC647 Machine Learning in Earth Science (3 Credits)

A comprehensive introductory course designed to prepare undergraduate and graduate students for applying machine learning techniques to solve real-world problems in Earth science. It emphasizes practical solution implementation, providing students with essential hands-on experience using the most popular open-source analytics tools based on Python, a general-purpose programming language. The course works through all steps in machine learning, from problem specification, data analytics to analytical solution, and applies advanced statistical and analytical algorithms to uncover hidden data relationships and transform them into predictive understanding or decision support. The topics covered include: Python programming, SciPy and Scikit-learn utility, data engineering, visualization, classifiers, regression models, canonical correlation analysis, structural equation models, decision trees, random forests, boosting machines, support vector machines, clustering, dimensionality reduction, principal component analysis, and neural networks.

Prerequisite: MATH140. Jointly offered with: AOSC447.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC447 or AOSC647.

AOSC652 Analysis Methods in Atmospheric and Oceanic Science (3 Credits)

A variety of the analysis methods used by atmospheric and oceanic scientists will be applied to observational data sets such as Vostok ice core record, temperature trends, and satellite measurements of ozone, sea ice, etc. in a hands-on, computer laboratory setting. Students will be exposed to Fortran and Python as well as modern file formats such as HDF and netCDF. No prior programming experience required.

Prerequisite: PHYS141 and MATH241; or students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department.

Recommended: AMSC460, CMSC660, AMSC660, or CMSC460.

AOSC658 Special Topics in Meteorology (1-3 Credits)

Various special topics in meteorology are given intensive study. The topic of concentration varies, from semester to semester and depends on student and faculty interests. Often, specialists from other institutions are invited to the campus on a visiting lectureship basis to conduct the course.

Restriction: Permission of instructor.

Formerly: METO658.

AOSC661 Sustainability Modeling (3 Credits)

Suitable for students who are concerned with sustainability issues, have little or no background in computational modeling, but would like to understand what modeling can do to help solve sustainability problems. By exploring a variety of contemporary societal issues (e.g., water scarcity, biodiversity loss, energy dependence), you will be introduced to modeling approaches for simulating and quantitatively understanding sustainability variables (inputs and outputs), and using modeling towards the design of policy measures that can be implemented as a response to such issues.

AOSC662 Ecohydrology (3 Credits)

The vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems are dependent on phenomena that link the cycling of water, nutrients and other biogeochemically active elements. Understanding the perturbations in these cycles that trigger impacts on ecosystem spatiotemporal characteristics is a challenge that generally transcends disciplinary and geographical boundaries, and is key to sustaining the diversity of life on Earth. This course on ecohydrology focuses on the study of hydrologically-controlled ecosystems, e.g. systems in which either excess and/or deficit of water and nutrients are determinants of its structure and function. Such systems have complex dynamic characteristics that depend on many interrelated links between climate, soil and vegetation.
Prerequisite: AOSC610; and undergraduate level hydrology and/or hydrogeology, familiarity with differential calculus and equations. Please consult with instructor for details.

AOSC663 Water and Climate Systems (3 Credits)

Focuses on exploring options for adaptation and building resilience to the possible impacts of climate change through an interwoven understanding of the physical, biological, social, cultural, economic and institutional constraints of water resources issues and consideration of climate-related risks in the management and decision-making process.
Prerequisite: AOSC610; and undergraduate level hydrology and/or hydrogeology, familiarity with differential calculus and equations. Please consult with instructor for details.

AOSC670 Physical Oceanography (3 Credits)

Ocean observations. Water masses, sources of deep water. Mass, heat, and salt transport, geochemical tracers. Western boundary currents, maintenance of the thermocline. Coastal and estuarine processes. Surface waves and tides. Ocean climate.

Prerequisite: Permission of CMNS-Atmospheric & Oceanic Science department; or permission of CMNS-Geology department. Jointly offered with AOSC420, GEOL670.

Credit Only Granted for: GEOL670, AOSC670 or AOSC420.

AOSC675 Carbon Cycle and Climate: Past, Present, and Future (3 Credits)

The fundamentals of the Earth's carbon cycle, a key biogeochemical cycle that controls Earth's climate and life. The changing characteristics of the carbon cycle on several timescales, ranging from geological, interannual, and the more recent anthropogenic influences on carbon cycle and climate. The carbon cycle in the atmosphere, land, ocean, and the biosphere. The underlying human activities such as fossil fuel burning and deforestation that are responsible for the increase in the atmosphere CO₂ and our future options in dealing with the carbon problem such as alternative energy and carbon sequestration. Jointly offered with AOSC475.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC475 or AOSC675.

AOSC680 Introduction to Earth System Science (3 Credits)

An introduction to the study of the earth as a system: atmosphere, oceans, land, cryosphere, solid earth, and humans. Cycling of materials and energy in the earth system: the energy cycle, the hydrologic cycle, the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle. Climate processes and variability: land-atmosphere, ocean-atmosphere, biosphere-climate, and human interactions, short- and long-term variability in climate.

AOSC684 Climate System Modeling (3 Credits)

Fundamentals in building computer models to simulate the components of the climate system: atmosphere, ocean ice, land-surface, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and the biogeochemical cycles embedded in the physical climate system, in particular, the carbon cycle. Simple to state-of-the-art research models to tackle problems such as the Daisy World, El Niño and global warming. Jointly offered with AOSC484.

Credit Only Granted for: AOSC484 or AOSC684.

AOSC798 Directed Graduate Research (1-3 Credits)

Formerly: METO798.

AOSC818 Frontiers in Atmosphere, Ocean, Climate, and Synoptic Meteorology Research (1 Credit)

A broad range of topics in the contemporary sciences of atmosphere, ocean, climate and synoptic meteorology are covered.

Repeatable to: 18 credits if content differs.

AOSC898 Pre-Candidacy Research (1-8 Credits)**AOSC899 Doctoral Dissertation Research (1-8 Credits)**