Petroleum Geology

Western’s Moncrief Petroleum Geology program is for students who are interested in seeking careers as geoscientists in the oil and gas industry.

What Is the Western Difference?

The Petroleum Geology program focuses on building a strong scientific background to help you explore for and direct oil and gas extraction. We combine that with comprehensive technology use and an emphasis on written and oral communication.

Our well-funded program counts among only 10 such undergraduate programs in America and one of only two in Colorado. Generous donors include legendary oilman Tex Moncrief and Western graduate Paul Rady, cofounder of Antero Resources, a Denver-based, independent exploration and production company. Industry leaders also have contributed to the program more than $1 million in software for subsurface data analysis.

We foster professional contacts with industry geoscientists; promote industry internships for early career development; mentor students toward relevant graduate programs; and offer students a chance to engage in applied and fundamental research.

Quick Facts

About half of all geoscientists will retire during the next 10 years. Companies will replace them.

The American Association of Petroleum Geologists reports an average starting salary of $96,000.

Western’s extraordinary location provides a wide range of undergraduate field and research opportunities.

The Geologic Computing lab has 18 student stations for highly interactive instruction, and uses the most up-to-date industry software and datasets.

More Information: 800.876.5309 | admissions@western.edu
What Skills Will I Learn?

In Petroleum Geology, you will gain a strong foundation in science and mathematics as part of a well-rounded education based on Western’s tradition of connecting the academic domains of science, liberal arts, and professional programs.

Geology requires proficiency in spatial thinking, visualization and creativity, as well as sound foundations in physics, chemistry and mathematics, all of which help you understand and interpret natural processes.

In your classes you will combine this knowledge with subsurface geophysical and geologic datasets to understand the distribution of petroleum resources, and the work required to explore for and produce petroleum.

What Can I Do With My Degree?

Western graduates work in exploration and drilling programs around the world.

Our graduates are highly qualified for entry-level work in the industry or for continued study in graduate programs throughout the country.

Those who succeed in Petroleum Geology at Western face bright prospects at dozens of companies that know the university’s program.

Meet Tom Jeute

Western’s proximity to great skiing and hiking appealed to Tom Jeute, but he also liked what he saw on campus – Geology instructors who clearly enjoyed teaching, small classes and the chance to personally know his instructors, all without piling on student debt.

Jeute, who is getting a bachelor’s degree in Geology, with an emphasis in Petroleum Geology, and a minor in Mathematics, says the opportunity for field experience sets apart the program.

“The mix between classroom experience and getting out to look at the rock types and structures you learn about puts Western students a step ahead of the competition,” he says.

Add access to state-of-the-art industry software and the faculty’s strong professional ties, Jeute says, and Western’s Petroleum Geology students really have a competitive edge.

“Professors have lots of industry experience, which is really important when you are trying to gain entrance into such a competitive industry,” he says. “Their many industry contacts seem to really like Western and the types of students the university produces.”

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western.edu/petroleum