Welcome aboard! We will explore the immense history of Earth, its rocks, and the living things that have evolved on it. Our "voyage" is a series of visits to 28 distant and exotic ports of call: at each we travel further back in time and along the branches of the evolutionary “tree of life” leading from our species to the origin of Life itself. We'll learn a little about human history and culture at each port, but the emphasis will be on the geology and evolution that have shaped our planet and its life over 4.5 billion years.

Officers: Your captain is Eric Gaidos.

Grades: 80% of the grade will be based on two equally weighted tests covering the first 14 and second 14 lectures, respectively. The second test is not cumulative (not a "final" exam). 20% of the grade will be based on on-line open-note reading questions. I do not grade on a curve: 90+% = A, 80+% = B, 70+% = C, etc.

Lectures: Lectures begin promptly at 9:00 AM each Tuesday and Thursday in POST 723 (7th floor). If you are late, please enter quietly out of respect for your fellow students. Questions are welcome, but those requiring lengthy answers should be deferred until after lecture. Switch off or silence phones, music players and other electronic noisemakers.

Exams: Timed (75 minute) closed-note exams will be held at 9:00 AM in the lecture room on Tuesday March 4 and Tuesday May 6. Each exams will consist of 70 multiple-choice or short-answer questions. There is no final exam during exam period.

Absences: Make-up exams will be scheduled only in the case of a medical appointment or family emergency with appropriate documentation (i.e. a doctor's note). There are no make-up days for missed lectures and there is no extra credit work.

Textbook: No textbook is required. Contact me if you would like recommendations for one.

Laulima: This course relies heavily on the University's "Learning and Collaboration Server" so you need to know how to enter and navigate it: https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal

Lecture slides: Lecture slides, with some annotation, will be distributed via Laulima on a weekly basis. Slides with the words ALL HANDS in the upper right-hand corner contain material that may be covered by the quiz questions and therefore may be on one of the tests.

Reading questions: For each lecture there will be 10 multiple choice or short answer reading questions ("quizzes") that are online (Laulima). Each week's lecture slides and reading questions will be made available on Monday morning, the responses are due at 5 PM on Sunday, and the correct answers will be made available the following Monday. Every one of the questions on the two in-class exams will be a version of one of these reading questions, so it is in your best interest to complete them!