



Brad Raffensperger, Secretary of State

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## GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGIST

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# Georgia Professional Geologist 2019 Status Report

The Georgia State Board of Registration for Professional Geologists has licensed over 2,300 Professional Geologists since its inception in 1975, currently with 1,106 active licenses. The Georgia Board is comprised of seven members. Six members are appointed by the Governor. Five of the appointed members are registered geologists, and one member is appointed from the public at large. The seventh member is the commissioner of natural resources, or their designated agent, who serves as a permanent ex officio member. The Georgia Board has the authority to adopt rules, set standards for licensure, adopt mandatory standards of professional conduct, and investigate and discipline unauthorized, negligent or incompetent practice.

The Fundamentals of Geology (FG) Examination and the Practice of Geology (PG) examination are administered twice per year by the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG®) for professional licensure. In 2019, Georgia's geology candidates performed as follows on ASBOG examinations:

<b>ASBOG® Testing Date</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Tested for FG (Part I)</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Passing FG Exam (Part I)</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Tested for PG Exam (Part II)</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Passing PG Exam (Part II)</b>
Spring 2019	36	23	6	4
Fall 2019	19	10	20	13

The Georgia Board encourages state universities with geology or geoscience departments to use the FG examination for program review and curriculum assessment. Currently, the University of West Georgia (UWG) Department of Geosciences requires students to take the FG examination and uses the data from this examination for curriculum assessment. Additionally, UWG has used these data for their Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) review which occurs every five years. Although other institutions within the University System of Georgia use the results from the FG examination for curriculum assessment, they have not yet required students to sit for the FG examination as part of their geology curriculum.

The Georgia Board has been discussing the potential merits of continuing education as it relates to professional licensure. Currently, there are ten geology Boards in the United States that require continuing education out of the 30 states that have professional geology licensure, one Board (Mississippi) which has voluntary continuing education, and one Board (Oregon) that has passed legislation and will implement continuing education in 2020.

Web site: <http://www.sos.georgia.gov>

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With the overall increase of geologists seeking licensure in the State of Georgia, the Board has been assessing the availability of using additional testing centers in the State to allow for a larger geographic diversity and accessibility. A pilot program was initiated for the Spring 2019 administration of the FG examination. Based on this pilot program, the Board may evaluate allowing both the FG and PG examinations at testing centers in addition to the Secretary of State's main testing center in Macon.

The Georgia Board is in the process of updating the language of our 1975 Geology licensure law. The existing licensure law states the following:

*"Have graduated from an accredited college or university which has been approved by the board with a major in either geology, engineering geology, or geological engineering; or have completed 45 quarter hours or the equivalent in geological science courses leading to a major in geology, of which at least 36 hours or the equivalent were taken in the third or fourth year or in graduate courses."*

Because most universities in the United States no longer are on a quarter-based system and due to the changing landscape/diversity in geology degree programs, the Georgia Board has proposed to modernize the statute to the following draft language as follows:

*"Have graduated from an accredited college or university which has been approved by the board with a degree in geology, engineering geology, or a related geological science; or the applicant shall have successfully completed 30 semester hours (45 quarter hours) including core academic courses in physical and historical geology, mineralogy, structural geology, igneous and metamorphic petrology, stratigraphy and sedimentation, and field geology, or the equivalent of such core academic courses as determined by the board; and the applicant shall have completed, in addition to the core academic courses, at least one board approved elective (if needed to complete the 30 semesters hours) including but not limited to, hydrogeology, economic geology, geochemistry, paleontology, environmental geology, engineering geology, geomorphology, or geophysics."*

Additionally, the Georgia Board is evaluating a statutory change to update Rule (265-4-.07) to include the use of an electronic seal/stamp for sealing geology-related documents.