What is Geophysics?

Geophysics is the study of Earth’s physical processes. There are two main categories of geophysics:

**Exploration Geophysics** uses the principles of physics to image Earth’s interior, analogous to medical imaging. Career applications include energy and mineral resources, natural and geotechnical hazards, and the environment.

**Solid Earth Geophysics** studies Earth’s dynamic processes responsible for earthquakes, volcanoes, heat flow, magnetism, mountain building, plate tectonics, planetary interiors, etc.

What do Geophysicists study?

- Geology, Environment, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Hazards, Mountain Building, Energy, Environment, Computational Modeling, Natural Resources, Groundwater, Tectonics, Geodesy, Space Sciences, Planetary Sciences

Geophysics Faculty

- **Martin Chapman**
  Research Professor
  mcc@vt.edu

- **W. Steven Holbrook**
  Professor & Dept. Head
  wstevenh@vt.edu

- **John A. Hole**
  Professor
  hole@vt.edu

- **Scott King**
  Professor
  sdk@vt.com

- **Ryan Pollyea**
  Assistant Professor
  rpollyea@vt.edu

- **Manoochehr Shirzaei**
  Associate Professor
  shirzaei@vt.edu

- **D. Sarah Stamps**
  Assistant Professor
  dstamps@vt.edu

- **Ying Zhou**
  Associate Professor
  yingz@vt.edu

Careers in Geophysics

Geophysicists work in a variety of industries:

- Environmental consulting
- Energy
- Mineral resources
- Geotechnical/engineering
- Government Research
- Education
- Data Science

**Median Geoscientist Salary**: $91,930
**Salary Range**: $49,430 - $187,990