



Professor



Norman Sleep

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Stanford University

I teach geophysics at Stanford University. I collaborate with NASA people on topics related to life on the ancient Earth and on other planets.

My areas of expertise

- Planets
- Habitable environments

How I first became interested in this profession

I collected fossils in Michigan as a child and was at Yellowstone just after the 1959 earthquake. In college, I took geology classes as a freshman at Michigan State University.

What helped prepare me for this job

Being in graduate school in the years when plate tectonics was discovered helped me to prepare. Later, I was on a committee to advise NASA on planetary habitability.

My role models or inspirations

I really did not have any. My mother taught the nature study class at the nearby college and I rebelled by avoiding biology in college.

My education and training

- Geophysics at MIT

My career path

- Taught at Northwestern University until 1979
- I became interested in Mars and how water circulates through rock. Since then I have been at Stanford.

What I like about my job

Being around in a time in history when I can do something constructive on the basic problem of the origin of life.

What I don't like about my job

Minor administrative problems are what I like least.

My advice to anyone interested in this occupation

Get a strong background in basic science.