

ELEMENTS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS AT EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Christine Clark's geochemistry students

In my geochemistry class this semester, I'm requiring the students to read different issues of *Elements*, and every other week we have a discussion section. At the beginning of the term, I presented the students with a list of all the thematic issues of *Elements* to date. They all voted for four issues, and the highest vote getters were the ones we will look at this term. Everyone is required to read the first article from a particular issue, since that article is normally an introduction to the theme. Then individual students are responsible for reading the other articles. As a group we talk about the articles.

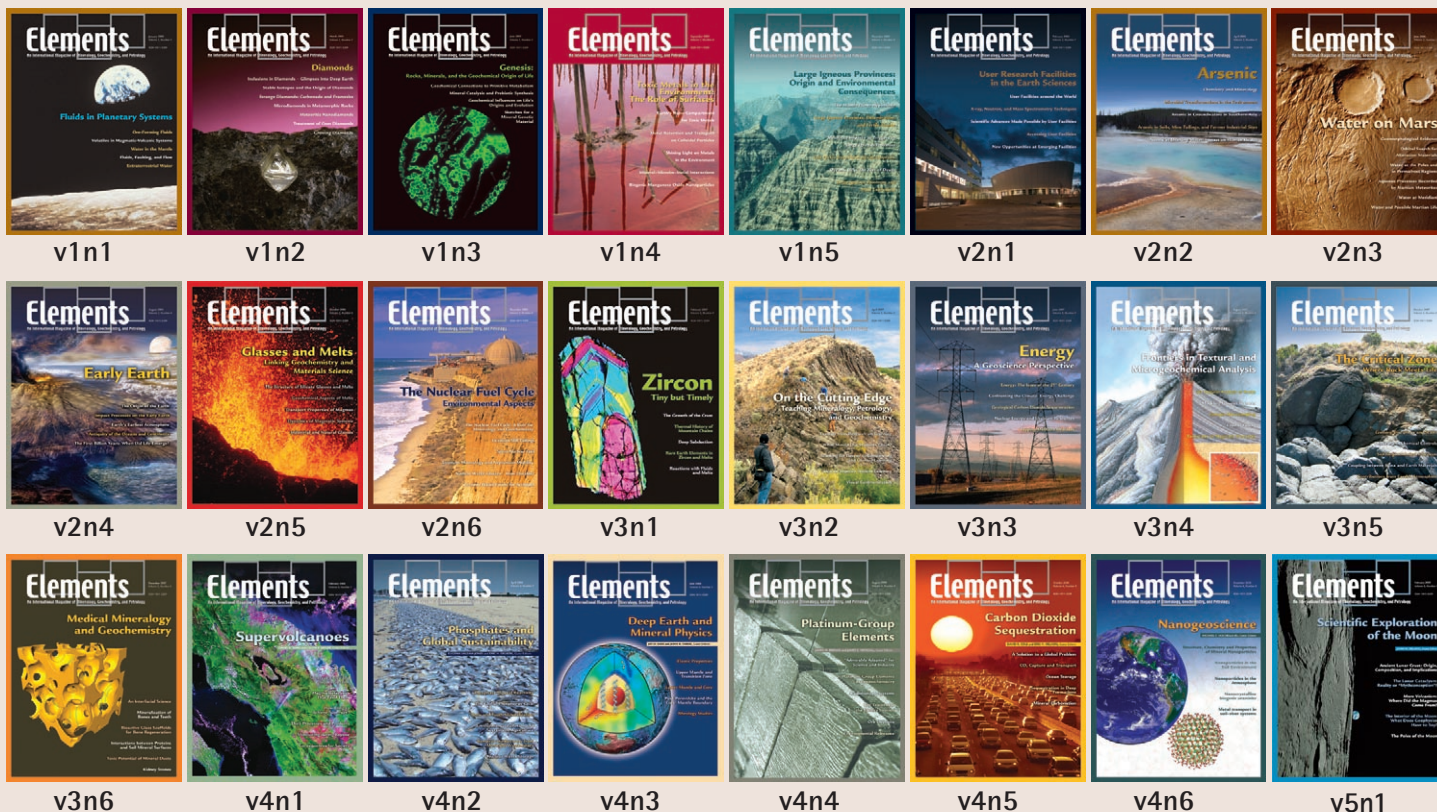
So far we've done October 2007 ("The Critical Zone") and October 2006 ("Glasses and Melts"). We're also going to be looking at "Supervolcanoes," "Zircon," "Deep Earth and Mineral Physics," and one more yet to be determined.

I think the students are enjoying reading about these different topics in greater depth. Especially interesting is the fact that I have a few non-geologists in the class; it's always interesting to see chemistry majors' reactions to how complicated things can get in Earth science! I'm enjoying it too, since I'm essentially forcing myself to read these articles, which have always looked interesting, but somehow rarely make the list of things to do!

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