

JOURNAL #3 - MARCH 2017



Sandcastles in the Felicianas: The geomorphology of South Louisiana sometimes results in unusual surface features, such as this erosional feature near St. Francisville, Louisiana.

News from the Bayou State

ASBOG Testing in Louisiana

Twice a year – in spring and fall – the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology (FG) and Practice of Geology (PG) examinations are administered at the same time across the U.S. The next testing date is scheduled for Friday, March 17, 2017. In Louisiana, eight candidates will be taking the FG exam, and two will be taking the PG exam. One of those candidates is taking both the FG and PG exams on the same day – yes, that *can* be done.

The fall examination date is Friday, October 6, 2017. The deadline for applying to LBOPG for approval to take the examinations is July 21, 2017; the cutoff date for getting the examination requests to ASBOG is August 22, 2017.

The requirements for the taking the FG exam are that the applicant must be at least in the senior year of a program of study in geoscience that meets the LBOPG standards, must

submit one letter of reference that attests to the applicant's character, must have completed the online LBOPG application, and must have submitted the required fee for either Geoscientist-In-Training (GIT) certification or Professional Geoscientist licensure.

The requirements for taking the PG exam are similar to those for licensure: The applicant must have five years of geoscience (not supervisory) work experience and must have completed the online application – including submission of at least one transcript indicating a degree in a geoscience field and three letters of reference from geoscience professionals – and submitted the \$200 license fee.



GIT Certification Steps

The board has embarked upon a campaign to inform students who are within a year of graduation about the GIT certification program. Students can apply before graduation and can begin the process of building their professional credentials well before they have reached the five-year work experience requirement for licensure. Please help us reach these students by giving them this step-by-step guide to applying for the GIT certification.

The steps to apply for the Geoscientist-in-Training (GIT) Certificate are:

1. Read the GIT certification requirements found at www.lbopg.org by clicking on the "About" tab at the top and scrolling down to "GIT Certification Requirements." Because the application fees for both the GIT and the PG license are non-refundable, it is very important that all requirements are met before you submit your application and fee. If you meet these requirements, then the next step is to:
2. Create an account through the "Apply for License" page, and fill out the online form. There is no cost for this. Fill in the GIT Certification application at www.lbopg.org. This application is the same one used to apply for a PG license, but you will select the field for the GIT certificate.
3. Submit one letter of reference. The reference is also completed online.
4. Have all universities from which you have received (or will receive) geoscience degrees submit transcripts to the LBOPG office at 9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809. You can make the requests for transcripts after your junior year in college. You do not need to wait until graduation.

5. When the application is complete, send your payment of \$100 for GIT certification to LBOPG, 9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, with a note that you are applying for GIT certification.
6. Apply for the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology Exam through the LBOPG office. Once the LBOPG Licensing Application Review Committee verifies you to take the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology exam, you will be sent ASBOG's "Geology Examination Candidate Request Form" that you must, in turn, send to ASBOG with your testing fees.
7. Fill in the LBOPG Proctoring/Verification form found at www.lbopg.org by clicking on the "Resources" tab at the top and scrolling down to "ASBOG;" sign it and submit it with the proctoring fee of \$25.00.

Upon completing the application process and paying the \$100 application fee, successfully passing the Fundamentals of Geology Exam, and graduating from a course of study in a discipline of geoscience,* the LBOPG Board will vote to approve your application for Geoscientist-in-Training.

With five years of accepted geoscience work experience, you may then apply for the ASBOG Practice of Geology Exam. If you have a Masters or Doctoral degree, you may substitute education for up to two years of work experience.

*Note: the undergraduate course of study should consist of at least four years of study and include at least thirty semester hours or forty-five quarter hours of credit in geoscience, of which at least twenty semester hours or thirty quarter hours of credit must be in upper-level college courses.



Continuing Education Requirements and Audits

By law, LBOPG requires that each licensee complete fourteen hours of professional continuing education and one hour of ethics training each year. Please keep records of your professional development activities, and document having completed short courses and/or attended relevant technical presentation sessions at professional meetings pertaining to geoscience. Examples include meetings and courses through GCAGS, AAPG, AIPG, and GSA. Activities within your local geological society are also considered continuing education, as are writing technical papers and other academic presentations that are directly related to geoscience. These professional development activities should maintain, enhance, or expand your geoscience skills and knowledge. LBOPG does not

endorse any specific courses or meetings; you can use your best judgment regarding the value of a particular course to enhance your skills and education. Extra hours can be carried over for up to three years.

On the LBOPG.org site, you will find helpful information and tools under “Resources,” then “Continuing Education.” One of those tools is a spreadsheet designed to be used as a log for your continuing education activities. Another is that same spreadsheet filled in with examples. Consider maintaining a similar log of your own continuing education activities. LBOPG will begin conducting periodic audits of licensees in the near future, and you may be asked to submit proof of your activities to the board. Having these logs already prepared will assure that you ace the audit.



FAQs: Questions You Have Asked That Initially Stumped Even Us

Occasionally, licensees or company representatives call or write with questions that the board as a whole had not yet even thought about, and we welcome those head-scratchers. During regular meetings for the last few months, the board has allotted time to discuss questions and come up with our best answers. Here are a few that have arisen:

Q: If a licensee who originally grandfathered – i.e., has never taken the ASBOG FG and PG exams – allows his/her license to lapse for three years or more and then wants to reapply, does this board require that person to take the exams before the license is reinstated?

A: According to the rules promulgated at the inception of the LBOPG, “A license/certificate that has been expired for a period greater than three years after the expiration date is considered permanently retired and may not be renewed. The former license holder may re-apply for a new license as provided by the Act at the time of re-application” (Section 1109.A.6). The board’s interpretation of this rule is, if a licensee has not renewed his/her license after three years, then that licensee must begin the process of application as a new licensee, and grandfathering no longer applies. That person, then, must take the requisite exams in order to be considered for licensure.

Q: What approach will the board take to assist licensees in researching continuing education opportunities?

A: The board does not endorse, authorize, or in any way promote a specific course, set of courses, activity, seminar, conference, or any other type of educational opportunity per se. We believe our licensees have the experience and ability to select educational opportunities that are appropriate for their continuing education in the field of geoscience. State and national geological/geoscience organizations and local universities

and geological societies offer excellent programs, courses, and presentations that fulfill the requirement for continuing education hours, and we expect that licensees can find enough of these opportunities in their area to meet the requirement of 15 hours of professional and ethics continuing education. See the section, “Continuing Education Requirements and Audits,” above for more information on these requirements.

Q: Does the board allow organizations, companies, or institutions to post job opportunities on the LBOPG.org website?

Again, LBOPG does not endorse or promote any institution, company, or organization over another. To avoid situations in which some type of bias could be perceived, the board does not post job opportunities on its website.

Q: Must the official Professional Geoscientist seal be embossed, or can a stamp (with ink) be used?

A: Neither the rules nor the statute specifies that the seal must be one or the other; both are deemed acceptable. In fact, during discussion of this answer, board members also decided to research the option of using an electronic seal. This option is currently being investigated.



Remembering Dr. Madhurendu Bhushan Kumar – Our Colleague and Friend

Known affectionately as “MB” by his associates, peers and friends, Dr. Kumar passed away February 2, 2017. MB’s background and experience in the geosciences resulted in his appointment by Gov. Bobby Jindal in 2011 to head and aid in building the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists. With the required nine members appointed, the board formally began operations in September 2013. MB was unanimously elected to be Chairman of the Board, a position he held for two years. His insight and leadership made the board a functioning reality. While his presence will always be with us, we will miss his input, spirit of cooperation and most of all his smile.

MB was born in India on January 4, 1942, which may have been an interesting time to grow up, considering the turmoil the world was in at that time. I do not have insight into these formative years, but do know that he received an undergraduate degree from the Indian School of Mines in Dhanbad, India. While there, he was awarded the Hayden Medal for academic excellence. He also set the highest achievement record for the school that remains unbroken to this day. After graduation, he went to work for the Oil India Limited Company. As a high achiever, he eventually decided to further his education and left India

to pursue a Ph.D. degree at the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. The emphases of his studies were in geology and petroleum engineering.

After completing these studies, MB obtained a position at the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. While there, he became a highly respected researcher, working his way up the ranks to become the director of the Geological Oil and Gas Division of the Office of Conservation, a position he held for fourteen years. His research and work is frequently cited by others in the geoscience community. Many also have memories, some fond and some apprehensive, of their interaction with MB in the Oil and Gas hearings reviewed at the Department of Conservation.

But MB was not only a geoscientist. He was also a scholar of Vedic studies and the Sanskrit language. Leading perhaps to the obvious connection, MB was also a Hindu priest. In this role, MB became a beloved spiritual leader and mentor. One of his favorite books was the Bhagavad Gita. Two fond quotes follow.

Death is as sure for that which is born, as birth is for that which is dead. Therefore, grieve not for what is inevitable.

As a person abandons worn-out clothes and acquires new ones, so when the body is worn out a new one is acquired by the Self, who lives within.

Dr. Kumar (MB) is survived by Sharda Kumar, his wife of fifty-one-and-a-half years; Vinita Gandhi, his daughter and her fiancé, Andrew Fordham; Madhuresh Kumar, his son, and Kristen M. Kumar, his daughter-in-law, and their children – MB's grandchildren – Rohan, Mallika, and Kamryn.

