

September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Surface Processes Group at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley headed by Dr. Tian Y. Dong, has openings for two master students [[degree plan](#)] to begin in Fall 2023, with the possibility to start as early as Spring 2023. Our group uses field and remotely sensed observations, numerical models, and theories to study the record of surface processes on Earth, Mars, and other planetary bodies. More information can be found at our group [[website](#)].

Research areas for potential student projects include use of topography (e.g., LiDAR and/or stereo-derived digital elevation models from drones and/or satellite) and field studies to characterize ancient and modern sedimentary environments on Earth, such as rivers, deltas, and barrier islands; comparative studies of surface processes across planetary bodies; and use of numerical models to predict landscape dynamics under human and natural perturbations. Available funding is not tied to any one project, so students also have the option to propose and develop their own projects in the broad theme of Earth and planetary surface processes.

Dr. Dong is strongly committed to building an inclusive research group with members that have a diverse set of perspectives and backgrounds. Applicants from historically underrepresented groups in STEM fields, with non-traditional backgrounds, and/or with a demonstrated interest in efforts to improve inclusion and diversity in STEM are especially encouraged to apply. Additional preferred technical skills include (not required): proficiency with a coding language, a GIS software, and/or a vector graphics editor.

The Surface Processes Group has our home in the [[School of Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences](#)] within the [[College of Sciences](#)]. The School of Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences is home to over 30 faculty across two campuses, including Edinburg and Brownsville, and two research facilities at Port Isabel and South Padre Island. [[University of Texas Rio Grande Valley](#)] is a minority serving institution, where nearly 90% of students are Hispanic. The McAllen–Edinburg–Mission metropolitan area is one of the [[fastest growing regions](#)] in the United States, with a current population of nearly 1 million people. This region is rich with a wide array of attractions, in terms of culture and diversity, including excellent music, food, and outdoor activities.

**Interested students are encouraged to apply and get in touch with Dr. Dong at [tian.y.dong <at> utexas.edu](mailto:tian.y.dong@utexas.edu).** When contacting me, please include an academic CV, a brief statement of your research interest and previous experience, and your academic and personal goals. More information about the application process for graduate studies at the School of Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences can be found [[here](#)]. Admissions are rolling. Two-year support for tuition and a monthly living stipend is available. Additional support for research supplies, professional development, and travel to a relevant conference, as well as opportunities to participate in research projects outside of your own project, will be available.

[MANY THANKS TO PROFESSOR TIMOTHY GOUDGE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, FOR HELPFUL TIPS ON WRITING A MORE INCLUSIVE ADVERTISEMENT]