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GLG 494 – Interdisciplinary and Career Opportunities in the Geosciences

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Brief Summary from class discussion

Topics that were covered with respect to Mars through the looking glass: an interdisciplinary analysis of forward and backward contamination started with the question, “Do you think that the United Nations should establish an institution?” Yes was the response to the question by a person (Tom Anderson) and afterwards others raised the observation that many other countries do not participate in the UN. Further discussion concluded that the UN is not a perfect organization in the slightest. Afterwards, economy became a topic as the driving force for many goals and achievements on Earth. Some dispute and other arguments surfaced that economy cannot be the only force for planetary exploration. After great examples of how economy is a major driving force for many scientific ventures. A question of why we all want to do science came forward and a consensus was reached that we all want to add knowledge to the world for the betterment of mankind. When asked if contamination on Mars was inevitable, people quickly agreed that it was to some point and at some point small contamination may have already taken place. A good question was asked about if contamination was necessarily a bad thing. If contamination were to take place knowing that life could survive and reproduce on Mars would be valuable information.

Many topics were covered during the class period and could have gone far longer due to the many tangents were created from one topic.