Preface

It is always easier to write a textbook the second time around, or so I thought. Writing my first textbook entitled “Earth’s Materials: Minerals and Rocks” (published in 2001 by Prentice-Hall) was difficult because I had to make some tough decisions about what materials to include and what to leave out. Based on my own thinking and input from colleagues and students since that time, I decided to write a textbook on petrology and leave out mineralogy altogether. The result is the present textbook. It was anything but easy to write this book.

Petrology is a dynamic subject. Many research papers have appeared in the literature since 2001. Some important NSF-funded workshops on pedagogic practices in petrology have since occurred. It is important for any textbook to capture all these new discoveries and changes while maintaining rigor and readability. I have tried to do this and hope that students and faculty will like the book. No reward is better than that. I do not expect anyone to cover every detail in all of the chapters of the book in a single semester. There is enough useful material in this book that will make it a useful reference beyond the classroom. The format I followed is more along the lines of classical treatment of the subject, with an emphasis on phase equilibrium controlled processes. I have added some exercises that will help the student in applying their knowledge to real-world problems.

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