

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

PRLS 402 — Human Behavior in Natural Environments  
Spring 2009

DAY/TIME:	T R 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.	LOCATION:	Bull Run Hall #249
PROFESSOR:	Dr. Lori B. Shelby	EMAIL ADDRESS:	lshelby@gmu.edu
OFFICE:	Bull Run Hall #205	OFFICE PHONE:	703-993-9891
FAX:	703-993-2025	CELL PHONE:	703-895-7366
OFFICE HOURS:	12:00 – 1:00 p.m. or By Appointment		

PREREQUISITES: PRLS 210, 300, and 60 credits, or permission of instructor

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Applies social and behavioral theories to management for recreational users of land and water resources. Examines deterioration and pollution of land and water, noise, crowding, and conflicts among users. Discusses strategies for mitigation of deleterious impacts and depreciative behaviors, and attitudes toward resource conservation, preservation, and use.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the state of the natural environment enjoyed by recreation users.
2. Discuss social and behavioral influences that affect the natural environment.
3. Discuss management theories and strategies for mitigating adverse effects on land and water resources used by recreationists.
4. Discuss strategies for facilitating development of constructive attitudes, uses and behaviors for resource protection and recreation use.
5. Articulate and apply impact management principles and knowledge of human behavior to the sustainable management of recreation-related natural resources.

### COURSE OVERVIEW

- 1) **Academic Integrity** – Students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code (see <http://honorcode.gmu.edu> for details). Violations, including cheating and plagiarism, will be reported to the Honor Committee. Student assignments may be put through plagiarism detecting software.
- 2) **Academic Load** - Although many students must work to meet living expenses, employment and personal responsibilities are not a consideration for missed classes, late or incomplete assignments, the course content, or the course schedule (see <http://catalog.gmu.edu>).
- 3) **Office of Disability Services (ODS)** – If you are a student with a disability, and you need academic accommodations, contact the ODS (703-993-2474; <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>) to obtain the Faculty Contact Form. The Faculty Contact Form should be provided to the professor within the first week of the semester. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS.

- 4) **Accreditation Standards** - Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards:

*Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Related Professions standards*

- 7B.01** Understanding of the social, biological, and physical sciences that underlie sound land use planning and management.
- 7B.02** Understanding of ecology, its application to the management, and use of resources.
- 7B.03** Understanding the principles and practices of stewardship and use of natural resources and the ability to interpret them to the general public, particularly as related to the public's role in stewardship.
- 7B.03** Understanding the principles and practices of stewardship and use of natural resources and the ability to interpret them to the general public, particularly as related to the public's role in stewardship.
- 7B.05** Understanding of the relationship of business, society, the environment, and the economy, including the role of the entrepreneur.
- 9B.01** Understanding of the history and development of natural resources recreation policies and their implications for recreation resources management.
- 9B.02** Understanding of the process of natural resources recreation policy development and its implications for recreation resources management.
- 9B.03** Understanding of the principles of resource economics and their applications to recreation resource management.
- 9B.04** Understanding of the principles and practices basic to the effective management of recreation users in natural resources settings.
- 9B.07** Understanding of the principles of land-use planning, including identification, evaluation, development, and management of land and water resources and their relationship to and impact upon the natural environment.
- 9B.08** Understanding of how and why people perceive and respond to given resources and management practices.
- 9B.10** Understanding of the social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts associated with multiple use of natural resources.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Required readings will be made available prior to the class session in which they will be discussed. All of the readings, my lecture notes (PowerPoint slides), assignment descriptions, and examination reviews in this course will be available on Blackboard.

## EVALUATION

- 1) **Attendance and Participation** – Class attendance, class participation, and on-line participation is mandatory and will constitute 10% of your grade. Attendance will be taken during each class session. Arriving to class late or leaving early will be counted as an absence. One class absences (for whatever reason) will be allowed without an attendance penalty. Students must provide the dates of University approved absences within the first two weeks of class. If you miss a class, for any reason, it is your responsibility to obtain the information about announcements, assignments, lectures, and course content covered during the missed class.
- 2) **Exams** – There will be three exams covering the course material. Your highest 2 exam scores will count toward your final grade The following describes the exams in terms of material covered, exam dates, and points. No makeup exams will be given.

Exam	Topics covered on the following dates	Exam Date	Points
1	January 25 <sup>th</sup> - February 17 <sup>th</sup>	February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	100
2	February 24 <sup>th</sup> - March 24 <sup>th</sup>	April 5 <sup>th</sup>	100
3	March 29 <sup>th</sup> – April 21 <sup>st</sup>	April 26 <sup>th</sup>	100

- 3) **Assignments** – The following describes the assignments in terms of topics and due dates. Details will be provided in class.

Assignment	Topic	Due Date	Points
Assignment 1	Sustainable Recreation/Tourism	February 12 <sup>th</sup>	75
Assignment 2	Sustainability Theory	March 5 <sup>th</sup>	75
Presentation	Sustainability Management	May 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>	75
Assignment 3	Sustainability Management	May 12 <sup>th</sup>	150

### **Assignment Summaries**

#### **(See Blackboard for Full Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria)**

All written assignments must be typed. Pay close attention to spelling and grammar, as these will count toward your grade on written assignments. APA (American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition) format must be used for all written work in this class (e.g., in referencing, creation of tables, and formatting headers for paper sections). Assignments must be turned in by the beginning of class on the specified date due. **In this course, all assignments must be turned in both electronically on Blackboard, and on paper prior to class. Papers received AFTER 9:00 a.m. will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24 hour period.** Only students with extreme emergencies, a documented medical excuse or university-sponsored functions discussed with the professor prior to the due date will be given consideration for exception. Please see the professor for further clarification on individual cases. It is recommended that students keep copies of all submitted work.

#### **1. Sustainable Recreation/Tourism Assignment (Written Assignment)**

The intent of this assignment is to increase your familiarity with assessing a specific natural resource-based tourism or recreation setting and setting appropriate sustainable indicators and standards.

#### **2. Sustainability Theory Assignment (Written Assignment)**

The intent of this assignment is to encourage you to consider your community from a sustainability perspective. Specifically, you are to discuss your community from the perspective of theoretical approaches to natural resources.

#### **3. Sustainability Management Assignment (Written Assignment)**

The intent of this assignment is to develop a management plan that targets an adverse environmental impact caused by natural resource-based tourism or recreation.

### 3. Sustainability Management Presentation (PowerPoint Presentation)

The intent of this assignment is for you to share your research proposal with your colleagues via a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation. This assignment will allow you to gain experience in oral presentation skills. As part of the experience, your colleagues & I may ask questions about your study, and I will offer a summary critique intended to help you improve your Sustainability Management Assignment.

### 4) Course Grading

Grading Summary	% of Grade	Total Points
Attendance and Participation	10	65
Exams (2 highest scores @ 100 points each)	31	200
Written Assignments	47	300
Presentation	12	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>640</b>

Grades will be based on the total points accumulated:

Grade	Percent	Points
A+	98-100	627-640
A	94-97	601-626
A-	90-93	576-600
B+	88-89	563-575
B	84-87	537-562
B-	80-83	512-536
C+	78-79	499-511
C	74-77	473-498
C-	70-73	448-472
D	60-69	384-447
F	0-59	Less than 383

## PRLS 402 SPRING 2009 COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due Date <sup>1</sup></b>
Jan. 25	Introduction to PRLS 402	
Jan. 27	Philosophical Perspectives on Natural Resources Role of Public Involvement in Natural Resources	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 1	Role of Social Science in Natural Resources	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 3	Sustainability and Natural Resources	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 8	Tourism: A Natural Resources Perspective	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 10	Social Aspects of Natural Resource-based Recreation	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 12	Recreation Planning Frameworks Indicators, Standards, and Management Actions	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 15	Social Impact Assessments	<b>Sustainable Rec. / Tour. Assignment</b> Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 17	Crowding and Conflict in Natural Resource Recreation Exam Review	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
Feb. 22	No Class	<b>Exam 1 on Blackboard</b>
Feb. 24	A Social Psychological Approach to Natural Resources - Values and Attitudes	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 1	A Social Psychological Approach to Natural Resources - Norms	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 3	A Social Psychological Approach to Natural Resources - Behavior and Behavior Change	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 8	An Economics Approach to Natural Resources	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 10	Communication Research and Natural Resources	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 15	No class – Spring Break	
March 17	No class – Spring Break	
March 22	An Environmental Psychology Approach to Natural Resources No class – Blackboard Only	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 24	A Sociology Approach to Natural Resources No class – Blackboard Only	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 29	Exam Review A Global Perspective on Natural Resource Management	<b>Sustainability Theory Assignment</b> Blackboard Readings and Exercises
March 31	Collaborative Resource Management	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 5	Human Dimensions of Climate Change	<b>Exam 2 on Blackboard</b>
April 7	Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 12	Human Dimensions and Critical Ecosystems	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 14	Human Dimensions and Regional Ecosystems	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 19	Sustainable Management Principles	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 21	Sustainable Management Planning	Blackboard Readings and Exercises
April 26	No Class	<b>Exam 3 on Blackboard</b>

April 28 Final Project and Presentation Workday  
May 3 Student Presentations  
May 5 Student Presentations  
May 12 Sustainability Proposal Due

**Sustainability Management  
Assignment**

---

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.*

<sup>1</sup> Assignment descriptions and grading criteria for this course are posted on Blackboard Campus Edition 6 (CE6).

---

*Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

*Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
  - The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
  - For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu>].
- 

