

**George Mason University
School of Recreation, Health and Tourism**

**PRLS 302- Park Management and Operations
3 Credits
Fall 2011**

Day/Time:	Wednesday 1:30 – 4:15 p.m.	Email:	jkutruff@gmu.edu
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Location:	PW Campus Bull Run Hall 246		(703) 339-2126 (h)
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Pre-Requisites: PRLS 300

Course Description

Focuses on management and operations of park resources, including the management of visitors and recreation development. Emphasizes understanding of contemporary threats to park integrity and preservation of resources. Also covers maintenance management systems.

Course Objectives

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

1. Identify the types of agencies that manage parks and the roles these agencies play in land management and provision of recreational opportunities.
2. Describe how land is acquired for parks and how parks are planned/ developed.
3. Define resource management in the context of park management and be able to discuss how managers balance the need for resource protection with recreational needs.
4. List indicators of resource overuse or increased visitor impacts to the park resources/ facilities and be able to discuss management alternatives for reducing impacts or recreational conflicts.
5. Discuss issues/ problems related to contemporary park operations and maintenance.

Required Readings:

William E. Hammit and David Cole. (1998) “Wildland Recreation: Ecology and Management” 2nd Edition.

Handouts and other assigned reading will be distributed in class.

Course Overview:

This course will include field trips, speakers, in class lectures, group activities and discussions. Class assignments and projects will require students to use critical thinking skills, practice public speaking and written communication.

Students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code. You are expected to attend all class sessions. Students missing more than one class must have a doctor’s or other excuse and may fail the class as a result of multiple unexcused absences.

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, complete in class exercises and fulfill all assignments. **Assignments must be turned in during class on the specified date due or no credit will be given.**

Evaluation:

This course will be graded on a point system with a total of 500 possible points.

Mid-Term Exam	150
Final Exam	150
Class Participation	100
Semester Project	100
Total	500 Points

Grading Scale

A = 94 – 100	C+ = 78 - 79
A- = 90 - 93	C = 74 - 77
B+ = 88 – 89	C- = 70 - 73
B = 84 - 87	D = 60 - 69
B- = 80 - 83	F = 0 - 59

Semester Project (100 Points):

Students will be required to visit 3 parks during the course of the semester (one National Park, one state park and one local park) and gather information as outlined on the assignment sheet and write a brief report on each park. Students will also be required to give a presentation to the class on their park visits. Students may not report on any of the parks that we visit together as a class or a park in which they are employed.

Exams:

There will be one mid-term exam and one final exam. The content of the exams will be based on the course objectives for each unit of the course. Study questions will be provided in advance of all exams along with student generated exam questions. Expect exams to be largely short answer and brief essay type questions. You will be expected to apply what you have learned to solve problems; to integrate and synthesize material; and to think critically and analytically.

Class Participation:

Class participation is important in this course given the long time block of each class. The students in this class have diverse backgrounds and experiences, which can definitely add new perspectives and insights into the course material. In addition, public speaking skills are becoming more important in all careers and participation gives everyone the chance to practice communication and oral communication skills.

Class participation grades will be based on the following:

1. Student generated exam questions (20 points)- each student must submit 5 practice exam questions for each exam (5 for the mid-term and 5 for the final exam). Answers should be included with each question. Questions may be turned in any time but will not be accepted after the due date noted on the course schedule. These questions and the answers will be printed with study materials for the exam and given to all students in the class the week prior to the exam. Some of the better questions may appear on the exam.
- 2 Participation in class field trips (10 points per field trip)
- 3 In Class Assignments
- 4 Potential Pop Quizzes

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading/ Assignments
August 31	Course Introduction/ History	
September 7	Park Systems and agencies that manage recreation	Handouts
September 14	Land Acquisition and Planning	
September 21	Master Planning	Project Outlines Due
September 28	Field Trip	
October 5	Resource Management	Exam Questions Due
October 12	Management Strategies for limiting impacts to parkland Mid-Term Review	Chapters 2-5 & 8
October 19	Mid-Term Exam	
October 26	Field Trip	
November 2	Field Trip	Chapters 10 -13
November 9	Management Strategies for limiting impacts to parkland	Chapter 9
November 16	Crowding/ Recreational Conflicts	
November 23	No Class Thanksgiving Break	
November 30	Managing Risks and Safety	
December 7	Park Operations and Maintenance Final Exam Review	
December 14	Final Exam	Project Presentations cont. All project papers due

Student Expectations

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Students with disabilities seeking 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/>].