

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism  
PRLS 402—Human Behavior in Natural Environments  
Spring 2012

DAY/TIME:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	LOCATION:	258 Bull Run Hall PW Campus
PROFESSOR:	Dr. Laurie Harmon	EMAIL ADDRESS:	lharmon3@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	204 Bull Run Hall	PHONE NUMBER:	703-993-4565
OFFICE HOURS:	Tuesdays 12-1:00 pm & by appointment	FAX NUMBER:	703-993-2025

**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.

Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards as set forth by the *Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Related Professions*:

- 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.
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- 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.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Since your contributions are such an important part of this course, we'll all be expected to actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises, and fulfill all assignments on time. Assignments will be due at 5:00 p.m. on the specified date due. Assignments received AFTER 5:00 p.m. will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24 hour period. If you have an extreme emergency there may be some exceptions; however, you'll need to discuss these issues with me prior to the due date to be considered for exception. I also recommend you make back-up copies of your assignments since computers have been known to crash at the most inopportune moments.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication is an important part of our lives and this course. Therefore, we will all be asked to treat our colleagues with respect in all types of communications (such as e-mail, class conversations, etc).

Communication is an important facet of this course. As such, I ask that you **check our Blackboard account daily for messages**. Keep a special eye out for weather related announcements. However, since I hope we can all consider outdoor recreation as another important part of our life, I wouldn't expect you check e-mails as on the weekend. And, I will likely not access e-mails on the weekend since I hope to be engaging in outdoor recreation activities during those times.

Unless otherwise noted, all written papers will be submitted electronically through Blackboard.

Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the specified date due. All written papers are to be submitted using WORD (with a .doc or .docx file extension) - .pdf or other formats are not permitted in this course. **Papers received AFTER 9:00 a.m. will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24 hour period.** If you are confronted with extreme emergencies or are participating in a pre-approved university-sponsored function, exceptions may be made; however, this is only applicable if pre-approved with me (your instructor). In addition, I strongly encourage you to make a back-up copy of any work submitted since computers have been known to crash at the most inopportune times.

### **NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

Our course will meet in person every Tuesday & Thursday unless otherwise noted on our Course Schedule. In rare cases, we may have to respond to inclement weather. If this is the case, any change in venue (i.e. from in-person to an online virtual class meeting) will be determined by 6:00 a.m. on the day of class and I will e-mail everyone at that time. Please note – this is a rare exception – but I recognize everyone travels from various distances so I want to respect each of your travel needs by making any inclement weather decision in as timely a manner as possible.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

In this course, we are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code. We will all be expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises, and fulfill all assignments. Further, I would encourage you to share ideas, concerns, and contributions in our class daily. And, to ensure a fair, equitable, and respectful environment, it is important to remember that regardless of how much we may agree or disagree, we should always approach our discussions in a way that shows respect for colleagues' ideas. Included in that is the need to appropriately cite any ideas, words, or concepts which are not our own.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

Clayton, S. & Myers, G. (2009). *Conservation Psychology: Understanding and promoting human care for nature*. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester: UK.

Additional readings as indicated on the course reading list (these are available on our Blackboard).

## **EVALUATION**

Following is the breakdown of the grading system for our course:

<b><u>Requirement/Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Percentage of final course grade</u></b>
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Vandalism Project	10%
Semester Project (Sustainability in Natural Resource-Based Recreation)	30%
Class Participation (*No credit given for late arrivals or leaving class early)	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Grading Scale**

A+ = 98 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A = 94 – 97	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
A- = 90 – 93	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	

**CLASS PARTICIPATION**: 20% of your final course grade will consist of “Class Participation”. Your participation is an important part of our course development and I will encourage you to keep up with our readings and be actively engaged in class discussions throughout the semester. In order to quantitatively assess your participation, I will give unannounced quizzes (3 points each) throughout the semester. These may be given at the beginning, middle, or end of any class period and may include questions designed to assess the readings due that day or information discussed in class on that day. There is no make-up opportunity for missed quizzes, however, the lowest quiz score will be dropped in the final calculation of your course grade. Additionally, we may use in-class assignments to further assess participation.

## **HOW TO GET TO BLACKBOARD**

Getting to Blackboard is becoming easier every semester. To find our class Blackboard, you’ll want to go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu), click on “MyMason” and sign in with you Mason Username & ID. Then, click on the “Courses” tab along the top right of the page, and click on our course, “PRLS 450” (you’ll find that link in the middle of the page). And, there you have it – you’re now accessing our Blackboard! If you have any troubles with downloading items or accessing information, please visit <http://doit.gmu.edu/index.html>



### *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>].
- ❖ University Libraries: "Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

## **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

**The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. We are all expected to adhere to these principles.**

DATE			TOPIC	CHAPTER/ASSIGNMENT DUE
Tue	Jan	24	Introductions & Foundations	
Thur	Jan	26	State of the Global Environment	<b>Introduce Semester Project</b>
Tue	Jan	31	Historical Context	READ: Chapter 1 in Conservation Psych. (Introducing the field of conservation psychology)
Thur	Feb	2	Attitudes toward the natural environment (Colorado River Video – in class)	
Tue	Feb	7	Attitudes toward the natural environment (readings)	READ: Chapter 2 in Conservation Psych (Attitudes, values, and perceptions) “Attitudes Toward National Forests”
Thur	Feb	9	Attitudes toward the natural environment (readings)	READ: Chapter 3 in Conservation Psych (Moral psychology and the environment) “Marine Protected Areas” <b>Introduce Vandalism Assignment</b>
Tue	Feb	14	Introduction to Sustainability – what is it?	READ: “Ecolodge Publication”, Chap 9 in Conservation Psych (Promoting Sustainable Behavior)
Thur	Feb	16	Sustainability and Natural Resource-based Recreation	
Tue	Feb	21	Social Influences on OR behavior	READ: Chapter 5 in Conservation Psychology (Theoretical foundations for the human response to nature)
Thur	Feb	23	Vandalism – What is it?	READ: Chap 6, 7, & 8 in Conservation Psych (Domestic nature, Managed nature, & Wild nature)
Tue	Feb	28	Vandalism – Motives & Consequences	
Thur	Mar	1	Vandalism – Student Presentations	<b>Vandalism Assignment Due</b>
Tue	Mar	6	Exam Review	
Thur	Mar	8	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>	
Tue	Mar	13	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
Thur	Mar	15	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
Tue	Mar	20	Tools for sustainable management - education	Read: Chap 11 in Conservation Psych (Environmental Education)
Thur	Mar	22	Managing natural resource based recreation behavior – Carrying Capacity	READ: Parks & carrying capacity (Chap. 1 - Tragedy of commons and Chap. 2 - Carrying capacity of parks and protected areas)

DATE			TOPIC	CHAPTER/ASSIGNMENT DUE
Tue	Mar	27	Managing natural resource based recreation behavior – ROS	READ: Rec Opp Spectrum 1 & Rec Opp Spectrum 2
Thur	Mar	29	Managing natural resource based recreation behavior – VIM/VERP	READ: Parks and people (Chap 1 – Visitor use of Acadia National Park & Chap 2 – Standards of quality in parks and outdoor recreation,
Tue	April	3	Managing natural resource based recreation behavior – Carrying Capacity	READ: Parks & carrying capacity (Chap. 3 – Indicators and standards)
Thur	April	5	Summarizing indicators and standards (be prepared for outdoors!)	READ: Parks and people (Chap. 3 – Indicators and standards for the Schoodic Peninsula, Chap.4 – Indicators and standards for trail and campsite, & Chap. 7 – Indicators and standards across space & time)
Tue	April	10	Workshop – Semester Projects	
Thur	April	12	Workshop – Semester Projects	
Tue	April	17	Share Semester Projects at Prince William Earth Week	<b>SEMESTER PROJECT POSTERS DUE</b>
Thur	April	19	<b>STUDENT SEMESTER PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Tue	April	24	<b>STUDENT SEMESTER PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Thur	April	26	Adaptive Management	READ: Adaptive Management
Tue	May	1	Pulling it all together Student Course Evaluations	READ: Chap 10 in Conservation Psych (Community Psych and International Biodiversity Conservation) and Chap 12 in Conservation Psych (The Psychology of Hope)
Thur	May	3	Final Exam Review	
Thur	May	10	<b>FINAL EXAM (7:30 – 10:15 a.m.)</b>	

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