

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism  
PRLS 531 -Natural Resources Recreation Planning (3)  
Fall2013

DAY/TIME:	Distance Education	LOCATION:	Internet
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### PREREQUISITES

Graduate student status or permission of instructor.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Origins and evolution of recreation use philosophy, policies, and service of public estate management. Examines planning for a spectrum of opportunities, from wilderness to developed sites, with attention to financial consideration and sustainable use of cultural and visual resources.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

1. The historical and philosophical roots of natural resource recreation planning;
2. The rationale for natural resource recreation planning, or why agencies plan;
3. The major theoretical traditions of planning and what constitutes effective and meaningful public participation;
4. Principles, process, and applications of the comprehensive approach to natural resources recreation planning;
5. Principles, process, and applications of the protected area approach to natural resources recreation planning;
6. Issues and trends in natural resource recreation planning; and
7. How to apply planning knowledge to a real-world recreation planning project.

### COURSE OVERVIEW

Natural resource recreation planning frequently occurs in a turbulent environment of shifting political forces, interest group pressure, interagency conflict, changing economic conditions, and media scrutiny. It can be an expensive, time consuming, and complex undertaking that almost never results in an optimal "solution" for all interests involved. This course is designed to help you develop the conceptual background needed to participate in and eventually lead recreation planning processes in an era of turbulence.

Planning is a broad subject that demands a breadth of knowledge of the field of natural resource recreation. For this reason, you will be exposed to the historical and philosophical roots of natural resource recreation planning. Through various readings the antecedents of modern natural resource recreation management, policy-making, and planning will be articulated. In addition, you will be challenged to understand the rationale for natural resource recreation planning, or why agencies plan. As suggested by Manning (1999), the focus of natural resource recreation planning and management is on providing the visitor with high quality recreation opportunities that do not compromise the integrity of biophysical and social systems. Throughout this course you will be exposed to a variety of topics relevant to natural resource recreation planning, including carrying capacity, crowding, conflict,

Specialization, indicators and standards of quality, motivations and benefits in recreation, and the recreation opportunity spectrum.

You will be introduced to two planning approaches that are common in the field of natural resource recreation: the comprehensive planning approach and the protected area planning approach. Comprehensive planning has been widely used by natural resource agencies for such efforts as river management planning, greenway planning, regional tourism and recreation planning, and state comprehensive outdoor recreation planning. The protected area planning approach, which is sometimes referred to as the limits of acceptable change planning framework, has been used primarily to deal with the carrying capacity issue in wildernesses and national parks. A set of readings will guide you through the background, process, and case studies associated with each approach. This course does not focus on site planning or park master planning, though many of the concepts and skills associated with comprehensive and protected area planning are transferable to these types of planning.

Natural resource recreation planning may be thought of as a very specialized subset of the broader field of urban and regional planning. Relying on the more theoretically mature tradition of this field, your readings will expose you to the "big ideas" of planning, especially to the trans active planning paradigm, which increasingly informs contemporary natural resource recreation planning. As an extension of the discussion of the transactive planning paradigm, you will be challenged to think about what constitutes effective and meaningful public participation in natural resource recreation planning.

The final section of the course considers issues and trends in natural resource recreation planning, including the topics of the planner's roles/competencies and how to measure plan implementation.

Since contributions are such an important part of this course, we will each 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 will 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 each be asked to treat our colleagues with respect in all types of communications (such as e-mail, class conversations, etc). Since we are meeting online, it will also be critical to check our e-mail daily. This will be the primary method of communication used outside of our class meeting time. 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.

Please use Blackboard 9.1 for all communications. To access Blackboard, go to "MyMason" (found at the top of the gm.u.edu webpage), log in with your username & password, click on the "Courses" tab along the top right of the page, and go to the "9.1 Course List" to find our course.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see our University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. Academic integrity means when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task and will submit your own, original work. When you rely on another author's work in

an aspect of the performance of that task, you are to give full credit in a professional, accepted form (in our course, that means you'll need to cite & reference using the style put forth in the American Psychological Association Publication Manual, 6th Edition). "Someone else's work" could include that which is written in a book, published on the internet, spoken on a television show, or in some other way communicated.

Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Critical discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions, i.e. we all have the right to disagree without being disagreeable. When in doubt, please feel free ask for guidance or clarification.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Readings are noted on the Weekly Schedule and are all accessible via hyperlinks or via George Mason University Libraries.

## EVALUATION

All work should adhere to the guidelines of the most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) for format. Please use 12-point font, 1" margins, and double-space for submitted work (except, of course, when posting Discussion Boards or online information).

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

**Class Participation/Discussion Boards:** Each of you will be expected to contribute insightful, meaningful, and relevant information via our regular Blackboard Discussion Boards.

**Class Moderator:** Each of you will present and moderate two of our weekly sessions. For that moderator session, you will synthesize the required articles after which you will facilitate a Discussion Board on Blackboard. Syntheses should include thoughtful feedback and critiques of the methods used, analyses conducted, and conclusions drawn in each article. When you are moderator, you should assess the soundness of the theoretical framework as well as the contributions of the results to the body of knowledge. Outlines, visual materials, and creative approaches are encouraged.

**Recreation Plan Assessment:** Each of you will also have the opportunity to review and evaluate an existing natural resources recreation plan or report on a topic of local or national interest that reflects your understanding of the comprehensive planning approach and/or the protected area planning approach. If you choose to report on one of the identified *existing natural resources recreation plan*, you will be asked to share a brief description of the project, an approximate preparation time of the plan, challenges which were encountered (or which were likely to have been encountered), key stakeholders, and your assessment of the overall success of the plan. This means you will have to do some digging and likely contact the agency who developed the plan. As a final component, you will be asked to identify what components of the plan you agree with as well as those with which you disagree, and provide rationale for your decision based on your application of planning theories from our course.

If you choose to report on a topic of local or national interest (such as the ramifications of the proposed Bi-County Parkway or the effects of sequestration on the National Parks); you will be asked to share a brief description of the topic, how it is a reflection of one or both of the planning approaches, key stakeholders, how the project/decision may affect (or has affected) the economy of the local community and/or the nation, and the impact on existing lands. You will also be asked to identify what components of the plan you agree with or disagree with along with rationale for your decision based on your application of planning theories from our course.

**Recreation Planning in Action:** As an important component of this class, you will each be asked to attend at least one public recreation planning meetings. These might include community based meetings, recreation & park planning board meetings, or some equally relevant meeting. Please be sure and clear the meeting you choose with me so we can be sure it aligns with the goals of our course. You will be asked to share your thoughts about the meeting, e.g. purpose, agenda, attendees, organization, discussion mechanisms, and your own perspectives on the meeting.

## EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a percentage system for a total of 100% distributed as follows:

Assignments	Percentage
Class Discussion Boards	30
Class Moderator	10
Recreation Plan Assessment	40
Recreation planning in Action	20
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TOTAL	100
Grading Scale (percent)	

A	94 – 100	B+	88-89	C	70 – 79
A-	= 90 – 93	B	84-87	F	= 0 – 69
		B-	= 80 – 83		

## Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- 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/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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.

## 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/>].

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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

