

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

PRLS 533 – 001 —Visitor Services
Spring 2016

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|------------------|---------------------|----------------|--|
| DAY/TIME: | M 7:20 -10:00 p.m. | LOCATION: | RAC Room 2203 |
| INSTRUCTOR: | Dr. Adam Beeco | EMAIL ADDRESS: | jbeeco@gmu.edu |
| OFFICE LOCATION: | N/A | PHONE NUMBER: | 864-979-1926 202-502-8655 |
| OFFICE HOURS: | By Appointment Only | FAX NUMBER: | N/A |

PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES
None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examines motivation of resource-based recreation participants. Covers visitors' expectations and perceptions, with emphasis on implication for service quality, staff training, and other management responsibilities. Discusses use and user conflicts and placement, information and interpretive service, and human and other interpretive service resources.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Study park and wilderness use and users, including recreation-related behavior
2. Study impacts of recreation on park and wilderness environments
3. Outline alternative strategies and tactics to manage recreation use of parks and wilderness
4. Introduce and consider a diverse array of contemporary park and wilderness management issues
5. Help develop skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity) necessary to address the multidimensional/interdisciplinary issues that face park and wilderness managers

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course will be taught using a mixed delivery mode – both online and in person. Most of your “book learning” will take place on-line. This will allow us to focus more on exploring, discussing, and critically examining the concepts and knowledge presented in our textbooks when we meet as a group. Our group meetings will take place as face-to-face discussions or face-to-face online meetings.

REQUIRED READINGS

The amount of reading required for this class is moderately heavy. The combination of the course being a graduate class and the need to cover a wide array of closely-related topics requires us to cover a large quantity of material. You are expected to contribute to class discussions on the reading material. I would highly recommend outlining the key points in the readings and preparing a number of questions and/or observations based on the reading. This work is best finished as you are doing the readings.

The textbooks for the course are:

Hammitt, W. E., Cole, D. N., & Monz, C. A. (2015) *Wildland recreation: Ecology and management*. (3rd ed.) New York: Wiley.

Manning, R. E. (2011). *Studies in outdoor recreation: Search and research for satisfaction*. (3rd ed.) Corvallis: Oregon State University Press.

The textbooks will be supplemented with readings from academic, professional, or popular sources. Supplemental readings will be made available by electronically posting them as Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) files on our course website.

EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

| | Points |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Requirements | |
| Mid-term Exam | 25 |
| Final Exam | 25 |
| Response Papers | 20 |
| Presentation | 20 |
| General Class Participation | 10 |
| TOTAL | 100 |

Exams: Your mid-term and final exams will be in a take-home format. They will focus mostly on processing, evaluating and applying the course content. Most questions (if not all) will take an essay format. If an exam is missed (George Mason University recognized excuses ONLY), you will have 24 hours to schedule a make-up or you will receive a zero. If you know in advance that you will be unable to take the exam on the scheduled day, please see me before the exam is administered.

Response Paper: Each week you will be required to write a response paper on that week's readings to help evaluate your understanding of the associated readings. The response paper should be single space, 12 point font, Times New Roman, in paragraph format, and at least 1 page (no more than 2). The content of the response paper should **not** be a summary. Rather the response paper should reflect your critical thinking in response to the readings and discussion topics for class. For example, when discussing recreation conflict you might reflect on your experience managing or dealing with conflict as a visitor. This response paper must be submitted to me by email prior to the start of class, but you should also have a copy for yourself during class discussion.

General class participation/preparedness: An individual's constructive contribution to the class (e.g., participating in discussions, sharing opinions/experiences, asking questions, etc.) will positively affect the participation component of your grade. While each person is not expected to contribute in every class period, all are expected to contribute to the discussion in a majority of the class periods.

Presentations – As graduate students it is important you have the opportunity, experience, and skills to lead discussions on complex topics. Developing the skills to lead discussion groups will suit you in any position you may find yourself after graduation. Therefore, each of you will be required to lead one class during the semester. This will require you to (1) read and prepare slides for the assigned readings for that class, (2) identify additional materials [e.g., journal articles, reports, current events facing parks] to assign to the class for reading at least one week prior to class, (3) if possible, lead the discussion in the format of your choosing (i.e., in class or face-to-face online).

You should submit the additional readings to me at least 1.5 weeks in advance for approval. You must also sign up for a week to make your presentations, first-come, first-served. Beware however that the schedule below is fluid and will most likely change throughout the semester.

Grading Scale

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

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule is **subject to change based upon class progress and needs!!!**

| Class Date | Topic | Preliminary list of Readings (Others may be added during the semester) | Discussion Leader |
|-------------------|---|---|---|
| 1/25 | Introductions, syllabus, class | Manning (2011) – Chapters 1 Shafer (1969) | Adam Beeco |
| 2/1 | Social aspects, attitudes, preferences | Manning (2011) – Chapters 2-3 | |
| 2/8 | Carrying capacity, crowding, indicators and standards | Manning (2011) – Chapters 4-6 | |
| 2/15 | Motivations and benefits, ROS, Recreational Conflict | Manning (2011) – Chapters 7-9 Driver (2008) | |
| 2/22 | Substitutability, Specialization, Sense of Place | Manning (2011) – Chapters 10-12 | |
| 2/29 | Managing Outdoor Recreation, Putting principles to action | Manning (2011) – Chapters 13-14 | |
| 3/7 | Spring Break | | |
| 3/14 | ADA | See BB | Tara Perry |
| 3/21 | Protecting Nightsky and Soundscapes | See BB | |
| 3/28 | Spatial Considerations | See BB | Adam Beeco |
| 4/4 | Recreation Impacts | Hammitt, Cole, & Monz (2015) See BB | |
| 4/11 | Partnering with Non-Profits | See BB | National Park Conservation Association |
| 4/18 | Recreation at Hydro Projects | See BB | Adam Beeco |
| 4/25 | Customer Service | See BB | NOVA Parks |
| 5/2 | Interpretation and Visitor Services | See BB | NPS Interpreter, Meeting on the National Mall |
| 5/9 | Final Exam | | |

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

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor [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.