

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism**

PRLS 303 (001) - People and Nature  
3 Credits, Fall 2016, Bull Run Hall Room 253  
1:30 to 4:14 p.m. Mondays

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

PRLS 300

**University Catalog 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 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.

**Course Delivery Method**

Face to face in the classroom.

**Learner Outcomes or 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.

**Professional Standards** (Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT):)

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:  
Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT):

7.01	Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in these industries; and c) the foundation of the profession in history, science and philosophy.
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**Required Texts**

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

Handouts and other assigned reading will be distributed in class

**Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy). In addition there will be 2 exams and assignments in class that will be part of a class participation grade. Attendance will be taken at every class and a grade for attendance will be part of the overall class participation grade.

**Assignments and Examinations**

1. Semester Project (30% of overall grade):

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. Project will be evaluated on project proposal, written paper and oral presentation to class.

2. Exams (30 % of overall grade):

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.

3. Class Participation (40% of overall grade):

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- 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
- 3 In Class or homework Assignments
- 4 Potential Pop Quizzes
- 5 Weekly attendance

### Course Performance Evaluation Weighting

#### Requirements

Final Project	30%
Exams	30%
Class Participation	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading Policies

#### Grading Scale

A+	97 – 100	B+	87 – 89	C+	77 – 79	D	60 – 69
A	94 – 96	B	84 – 86	C	74 – 76	F	0 – 59
A-	90 - 93	B-	80 – 83	C-	70 – 73		

## Professional Dispositions

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

## GMU Policies and Resources for Students

### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- 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 Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. 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 stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.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/>).
- 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 Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in

need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.**

### Class Schedule

DATE			TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENT DUE
M	August	29	Course Introduction/ History/ Park systems	
M	Sept.	5	Labor Day Holiday	
M	Sept.	12	Land Acquisition & Planning	Handouts ; Project Proposals Due
M	Sept.	19	Managing Park Resources	Chapter 2-5 & 8
M	Sept.	26	Field Trip	Chapter 9-11, Mid-term questions dues
M	October	3	Visitor Impacts/ Exam Review	
T	October	11	Mid-term	
M	October	17	Visitor/Site Management	Chapter 12-13
M	October	24	Crowding/ Recreational Conflict	Articles
M	October	31	Field Trip	
M	Nov.	7	Planning & Public Involvement	Articles/ web Reading
M	Nov.	14	Planning & Public Involvement	
M	Nov.	21	Field Trip	Articles/ Web Reading
M	Nov.	28	Maintenance Management	
M	Dec.	5	Urban Park Management/ Partnerships	Handouts / Web Reading Assignments/ Projects Due, Final Exam Questions Due/
M	Dec.	12	Contemporary Management Opportunities Final Exam Review/ Project Presentations	Projects Due
M	Dec.	19	Final Exam	

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

**Assessment Rubric(s) can be found on individual assignment sheets.**

