

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

PRLS 533 – 001 —Visitor Services  
Spring 2018

DAY/TIME:	Online.	LOCATION:	Online
INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Sue Slocum	EMAIL ADDRESS:	<a href="mailto:sslocum@gmu.edu">sslocum@gmu.edu</a>
OFFICE LOCATION:	N/A	PHONE NUMBER:	864-324-2011
OFFICE HOURS:	By Appointment Only		

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

**Professional Standards** [Commission of Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA)]

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

Courses offered in the Sport and Recreation Studies (SRST) graduate program are guided by the principles of COSMA. COSMA (2016, p. 1) "bases its accrediting process on principles, rather than standards." The eight recommended principles are:

- outcomes assessment;
- strategic planning;
- curriculum;
- faculty;
- scholarly and professional activities;
- resources;
- internal and external relationships; and
- educational innovation.

For more information, please see:

Commission of Sport Management Accreditation. (2016, May). *Accreditation principles manual & guidelines for self-study preparation*. Retrieved November 30, 2016 from <http://www.cosmaweb.org/accreditation-manuals.html>

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course will be taught primarily using an online format. Most of your “book learning” will take place on-line. Group blogs will form the basis of our discussions, and I anticipate three online meetings that will be scheduled once the course begins. Our face-to-face discussions 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.

### **Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using [select either a synchronous or an asynchronous] format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on [Day and/or Time].

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

### *Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:  
○ <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

- Course Week: [Include only the sentence below that is appropriate for the course. Delete the sentence that is not applicable.]  
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on [Day], and finish on [Day].  
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least [#] times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings. [Include this sentence only if the course is synchronous. Delete the sentence if the course is asynchronous.]
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:

Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## 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*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) New York: Wiley.

Manning, R. E. (2011). *Studies in outdoor recreation: Search and research for satisfaction*. (3<sup>rd</sup> 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

Each assignment is graded on a 100 point scale, which will be converted to the following weighted percentages for your grade.

	Percentage
Requirements	
Mid-term Exam	25
Final Exam	25

Response Papers	20
Online Blog	20
General Class Participation	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

*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 contact me before the exam is administered.

*Response Paper:* You will be required to write five response papers during the semester 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. One response paper will involve a visit to an interpretive site. Please plan your semester accordingly so that you have completed the excursion before that specific response paper is due. These response papers must be submitted to me on Blackboard by the due date. **Late submissions are not accepted.**

**Please note that you are required to attend an interpretive program for response paper #5**

All response papers will be checked for plagiarism. If you need help understanding GMU plagiarism policies, please visit <https://composition.gmu.edu/faculty/policies/plagiarism>.

*Online Blog* – 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 blog 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) lead the discussion in the format of creating a blog and/or responding to the blog posts of other students. Additional information will be provided on Blackboard for this assignment. You are required to respond to 8 blogs (10 points each) and develop 1 blog (20 points).

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.

*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. Each person is expected to contribute to the discussion in all modules.

**Grading Scale**

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

**Professional Dispositions**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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

Dates	Week	Topic	Preliminary list of Readings (Others may be added during the semester)	Assignments
1/22-1/28	1	Introductions, syllabus, class	Shafer (1969) Manning (2011) – Chapters 1	Post to Online Blog
1/29-2/4	2	Social aspects, use distribution, and cultural aspects	Manning (2011) – Chapters 2 and 3	Response Paper 1 I
2/5-2/11	3	Visitor Management and impacts	Hammitt, Cole, & Monz (2015) – Chapter 9 Beeco & Hallo (2014)	Post to Online Blog
2/12-2/18	4	Visitor Satisfaction	Collaborate Session – Time TBD Manning (2011) – Chapter 4	You are expected to intelligent question guest speaker Post to Online Blog
2/19-2/25	5	ADA	Wilderness and Disabilities (2006)	Response Paper 2 I
2/26-3/4	6	Spatial Considerations	Read: (1) Landscape Mapping, (2) Wanderers and Planners, (3) Recreation Suitability Mapping, and (4) Integrating Space.	Response Paper 3 a to Online Blog #4 c
3/5-11	7	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	No reading	<b>Mid-Term Due 3/1</b>
3/12-3/18	8	Spring Break – No Assignments		
3/19-3/25	9	Carrying capacity, indicators and standards	Manning (2011) – Chapters 6 Whittaker, et al (2010)	Post to Online Blog
3/26-4/1	10	Sense of Place & Crowding	Collaborate Session – Time TBD Manning (2011) – Chapters 5 and 12	Post to Online Blog
4/2-8	11	Substitutability and Specialization	Manning (2011) – Chapters 10 and 11	Response Paper 4 d
4/9-4/15	12	Protecting Nightsky and Soundscapes	Hammitt, Cole, & Monz (2015) – Chapter 14 Newman et al. (2013), Beeco et al (2011)	Post to Online Blog
4/16-4/22	13	Recreation Impacts	Hammitt, Cole, & Monz (2015) – Chapter 8, 11	Post to Online Blo
4/23-4/29	14	Interpretation and Visitor Services	Collaborate Session – Time TBD Botha, Saayman & Kruger (2016), Merritt (2010), Hughes & Morrison-Saunders (2011) Visit to an Interpretation Program	You must visit an interpretive program write Response Paper 4/29
4/29-5/6	15	Managing Outdoor Recreation, Putting principles to action	Manning (2011) – Chapters 13-14 Hammitt, Cole, & Monz (2015) – Chapter 12 & 13	No assignments thi
		<b>Final Exam Due – May 13 at 11:59pm</b>		

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

### 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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- 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/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

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

