

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School of Sport, Recreation, and Tourism Management
RMGT 316, section 001 – Leadership and Outdoor Education
3 Credits, Spring 2024

Fridays 10:30 am–1:10 pm Colgan Hall 204, Science & Technology Campus

Faculty

Name: David Heath
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Krug Hall 213 (School of Sport, Recreation, and Tourism Management)
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Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on promotion of lifelong health and fitness via noncompetitive and informal outdoor activities. Introduces safety, skills, and leadership techniques. Covers sustainable use, conservation, and stewardship of natural resources. Offered by School of Sport/Rec/Tour Mgmt. Limited to three attempts.

Course Overview

This course introduces and immerses students in two essential branches of outdoor education, environmental and adventure education, exploring leadership and instruction in different aspects of both. We will go outside as much as weather permits. We will engage directly in several outdoor activities, with a goal of students experiencing a variety of teaching models so that students may develop knowledge and skills to teach their own outdoor education lessons. These activities do not lend themselves to makeup work, and as such, attendance each day is crucial.

Course Policies

- **Attendance:** Because student contributions are so crucial to this course, all are expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises and fulfill all assignments.
- **Late Work:** Assignments are due on the specified date due and time. Assignments received after due dates will be considered late and receive an 11% deduction in points per 24-hour period. In cases of an emergency or participation in a pre-approved university-sponsored function, there may be some exceptions. However, please discuss these with me prior to the due date to be considered for exception. I recommend backing up copies of assignments to avoid losing data.
- **Syllabus:** You should consider this syllabus as your contract for the course. You must follow the directions for each assignment and ensure that you submit your work on time. This class can be successfully completed if you manage your time effectively, come to class prepared, and turn in high quality work on time.

- **Electronic Devices:** While in class, turn off all electronic devices and store them away unless instructed to do otherwise. Misuse of electronic devices or using electronic devices without permission of the instructor will result in a deduction from your participation grade.
- **Open door policy:** The instructor is open to your comments, questions, suggestions, and feedback on the course at any time. Feel free to email the instructor or see them before or after class, to discuss your ideas and concerns.

Mason Honor Code

According to George Mason University’s 2023–2024 Full Honor Code Document (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/full-honor-code-document/>), “Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” One category of cheating, according to the document, includes “unauthorized use of AI software.” Please review the honor code above. If you have questions about whether your practices might violate the honor code, please discuss your situation with me.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a combination of experiential lecture and seminar format.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Discuss the need for outdoor education/recreation in American society today by
 - a. Understanding the history of leisure in American culture.
 - b. Identifying the psychological benefits of outdoor recreation and education.
 - c. Collecting and documenting current articles relating to leisure, health, and outdoor recreation trends.
 - d. Identifying the differences among national, regional, and local conservation agencies and their roles in outdoor recreation/education.
 - e. Identifying ways outdoor recreation activities benefit youth in schools to become self-motivated learners.
2. Learn the essentials of group building and team building by
 - a. Participating as a class in Group Initiative activities.
 - b. Identifying and defining the theories that support the educational benefits of experiential education.
 - c. Being involved in and learning a variety of team building activities to incorporate into classroom learning or classroom activities to promote mutual respect, support for others, and cooperative participation.
3. Develop and plan an outdoor recreation lesson for school aged youth by
 - a. Converting course material and field experience into an Outdoor Recreation lesson plan which incorporates Fairfax County Program of Studies for Physical Education (<https://www.fcps.edu/node/44308>).
 - b. Teaching an activity from your lesson plan to fellow students through an in-class presentation.

4. Learn a variety of outdoor skills and develop an appreciation for the outdoors by
 - a. Developing a Leave No Trace land ethic through direct involvement in outdoor recreation activities.
 - b. Practicing and participating in hands-on outdoor recreation and outdoor education activities.

Professional Standards

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

7.02 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.

Required Texts

Gilbertson, K., Ewert, A., Siklander, P., & Bates, T. (2022). Outdoor education: Methods and Strategies (2nd ed.). Human Kinetics

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time on Blackboard, hard copy, or in-class presentation as outlined per assignment. Please follow APA guidelines.

Assignments

This is a performance-based course. Rubrics are available for each assignment.

| Description | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Journal Assignments | 20 |
| Class Participation (includes in-class discussions and field trips) | 20 |
| Class Assignments (includes History Presentation, Field Trip Presentation, StrengthsFinder, and Mini-Lessons) | 40 |
| Final Lesson Plan and Presentation | 20 |
| Total | 100 |

Other Requirements

Communication is an important part of this course; therefore, please check Blackboard each week for course communications. Be particularly aware of weather announcements.

Grading

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|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| 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 | |

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See

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

Class Schedule

| Date | Topic | Assignment |
|-------------|--|---|
| January 19 | Introduction to course | Read syllabus, course materials on Bb, and one article. *Unless otherwise noted, readings assigned here are to be done before the following class meeting. Assignment due dates are also noted here. |
| January 26 | Why outdoors? | Outdoor Education, Preface (pp. vii–viii) & ch. 2– 3 (pp. 2– 25). |
| February 2 | Art in nature: World Wetlands Day Sketch Hike, Huntley Meadows Park | Read “A Sense of Wonder,” by R. Carson. Journal entry 1 due by 11:59 pm 2/8. |
| February 9 | Research tips, environmental education activities | Mini-lesson summary due 2/15 11:59 pm. |
| February 16 | Mini-lessons: environmental education | Journal entry 2 due 2/22 11:59 pm. History references due 2/22 11:59 pm. |
| February 23 | Virginia Adventure Education Conference at Shenandoah University | History presentation due 2/29 11:59 pm. |
| March 1 | History of Outdoor Education | Spring break next week—no assignments. |
| March 8 | Spring Break! | |
| March 15 | Introduction to experiential education and team development activities | Read: J. L. Miner, “The Creation of Outward Bound,” (on Bb). Journal 3 due 3/21 11:59 pm. Start on StrengthsFinder: results due 11:59 pm 4/26. |
| March 22 | Team challenge course training at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park | Read Outdoor Ed., pp. 59– 74. Mini-lesson due 3/28 11:59 pm. |
| March 29 | Mini-lessons: teambuilding, Leave No Trace | Field trip presentation due 4/4 11:59 pm. |
| April 5 | Field Trip Presentation, teaching tips. | Mini-lesson due 4/11 11:59 pm. |

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| April 12 | Hike at Hemlock Overlook, mini-lessons: adventure education | Read Outdoor Ed., pp. 75-84. Journal 4 due 4/18 11:59 pm. |
| April 19 | Standup Paddleboarding on Bull Run | Read Outdoor Ed., pp. 137–173. Journal 5 due 4/25 11:59 pm. StrengthsFinder results due 11:59 pm 4/26. |
| April 26 | StrengthsFinder games, leadership style, and final lesson practice run | Final lesson due 5/2 11:59 pm. |
| May 3 | Final lessons | |

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

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 <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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



