

INTS 211 - Fall 2016

Introduction to Conservation Studies, 4 credits (1 EL)
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9am – 10:15am
Thompson Hall, 2022

Lisa Des Jardins
Enterprise Hall, 412
ldesjard@gmu.edu

Office Hours by appointment only. Visit ess.gmu.edu and click on "Find an Advisor" tab.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This learning community provides a foundation for the integrative study of environmental conservation. Through readings, mini-lectures, discussions, and inquiry-based activities students track the history of environmental conservation in the United States, focusing specifically on the evolution of conservation ethics over time. Students supplement classroom activities by working with organizations and professionals engaged in conservation research, education, and/or outreach. Formal and informal writing assignments and oral presentations strengthen critical thinking and communication skills that will be particularly vital to students who go on to pursue conservation-related professions. Small group projects and a course field trip cultivate competency in collaboration and team building and provide real-world context for conservation issues.

Students will use course assignments and off-campus work to identify suitable educational and career paths within the conservation world. One goal of the course instructor is to help each student see how his/her particular strengths and interests can best serve the conservation community. To that end, each student will use reflective writing and other learning strategies to deepen and clarify his/her sense of ecological identity.

Blackboard: Required Readings

This course will use the Blackboard online course management system to minimize paper use. There are no texts for this course; rather all readings will be posted on blackboard as PDF's or links to the appropriate URL. You are expected to have read assigned articles before class and to be prepared to discuss the readings in class. Students may also be called upon to lead classroom discussions.

Experiential Learning

This course offers 1 credit of experiential learning. You will earn one credit by completing 25 hours of service learning with a local conservation or professional. These 25 hours should be distributed more or less evenly throughout the semester. Additionally there will be several writing reflection essays and a final presentation regarding your service learning. Students must complete all Experiential Learning requirements to earn a passing grade for this course.

Assignments (Total 1,000 Points)

- Participation (100 points) – You are expected to be involved in class discussions – to voluntarily respond to questions and to voice your ideas. This means no texting, FB'ing, Tweeting, Etc., while in class, unless it is part of our coursework.
We all depend on each other not just to show up, but also to be fully engaged in each and every class activity. This means coming to class on time and prepared, speaking and listening well during discussions. Doing everything you can to represent yourself, our learning community, School of Integrative Studies, and GMU when you are engaged in service learning.

- Open-Journal Midterm (150 points) - The in-class midterm will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your learning over the first half of the semester. You may consult your classroom notes and course readings while writing the midterm essays.
- Peer Teaching I: Group Research Project (150 points) - Throughout the semester, groups of approximately 4 - 5 students will teach other learning community members about a contemporary issue or movement affecting conservation in the US. You will be able to pick from a list of topics and be given detailed instructions for this assignment in class.
- Peer Teaching II: Reports from the Field (80 points) - Towards the end of our course you will work individually to teach other learning community members about your service learning organization. You will receive detailed instructions for this assignment in class.
- Final Portfolio Assignment (80 points overall portfolio + individual assignment scores) - You will create a website using the website creator program of your choice (Weebly, Wix or Wordpress are but a few to choose between). Creativity, personalization and course readings and topic integration is a must! If you choose to keep your website private, you will need to provide me with the password in order to access your content, but I would love it if you would keep it public and have it evolve over time into a personal portfolio to help with future career goals.

Components of the website will be due at various points during the semester, and the overall completed website will be due on Tuesday, December 15th by noon, in lieu of a final exam. The website will consist of the following parts:

- Found objection reflection (30 points)
- Conservation photography assignment (60 points)
- Solutions article essay (30 points)
- Reading reflection blog entries (10 entries - 200 points total)
- Service learning reflections (2 entries - 60 points total)
- Ecological Identity writing (60 points)

You will receive detailed instructions for these assignments in class.

Grading Scale:

A+	100-97%	C+	79-77%
A	96-93%	C	76-73%
A-	92-90%	C-	72-70%
B+	89-87%	D	69-60%
B	86-83%	F	59-0%
B-	82-80%		

Late Work

Papers and other assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the day due. Late work will be reduced one grade per day. No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family.

Attendance

You are expected to be present (both body and mind) at all classes and actively participate in discussion and other activities. This includes not only speaking, but also listening carefully to others' opinions and experiences with an open mind. You do not need to adopt another's viewpoint, but you do need to extend to them the courtesy of trying to hear what they have to say. More than one absence is considered excessive and will noticeably affect your ability to synthesize class material and readings for your writing assignments.

E-mail Policy

In compliance with a University-wide initiative, GMU faculty and staff can correspond electronically with students only through their official university assigned email accounts. Student emails sent from other types of email accounts will not be answered. Please send emails in a timely manner and compose your emails in a professional manner.

Academic Integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the 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. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

Mason Resources and Policies

- Office of Disability Services
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>
- Writing Center
A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>, on-line writing guide; <http://classweb.gmu.edu/nccwg>
- University Libraries
"Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>
- Counseling And Psychological Services (CAPS)
(703) 993-2380 <http://caps.gmu.edu>. In addition to individual and group sessions for personal development and assistance with emotional or relationship issues, the Learning Services Program (703) 993-2999 offers academic skill-building workshops and a tutor referral service.
- Technology Support
Mason Online Student Technology Guide <http://itusupport.gmu.edu/STGfrontpage.asp> has instructional resources and phone numbers/campus locations for technology support. For assistance with Blackboard, send an email to courses@gmu.edu with your GMU email address in all correspondence.
- University Policies
The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies
- Cell phones:

As a courtesy to your classmates, professor and guest speakers, please turn your cell phone off during class. If you are experiencing a medical or family situation where you need to receive an incoming call, please let me know, mute the ring on your phone, and feel free to exit the class to receive your call.

- Campus closure due to inclement weather or other issue:

Occasionally Mason will close due to inclement weather or issues with buildings. GMU posts closings on its website or you can sign up to receive notifications from Mason Alerts via email or text. When this occurs, look for an email announcement from me with updates on assignments or other requirements.

You may be expected to participate in online discussions or other equivalent classroom activities so as not to lose moment.

The professor reserves the right to modify the course content, syllabus or course schedule.

Class Date	In-Class	Assignments Due
Week 1		
Aug. 30	Course Introduction and Overview	
Sept. 1	Introduction to Ecological Identity/Place memories	
Week 2	Early US Environmental Thought	
Sept. 6	<u>Required Readings:</u> Genesis 1 Ojibway Creation Story Captain John Smith, "Description of Virginia" Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown"	Reading Reflection Essay #1 due before class.
Class 3		
Sept. 8	<u>Required Readings:</u> Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 1 and 2	
Class 4		
Week 3	Conservation Beginnings	
Sept. 13	<u>Required Readings:</u> Lee Dugatkin, "Jefferson's Moose" Cara Giaimo, "Thomas Jefferson Built This Country on Mastodons" Leo Hickman, "How a giant tree's death sparked the conservation movement 160 years ago".	DUE: Website homepage. Must have a main page, picture and a paragraph statement about yourself.
Class 5		
Sept. 15	<u>Required Readings:</u> Ralph Waldo Emerson, "From Nature" David Thoreau, "Walking" Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 3 and 4	Reading Reflection Essay #2 due before class.
Class 6		
Week 4	Preservation vs. Conservation	
Sept. 20	<u>Required Readings:</u> Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 8 Gifford Pinchot, "The Birth of Conservation"	

Class 7	TR Roosevelt, "Publicizing Conservation at the White House"	
Sept. 22	<u>Required Readings:</u> John Muir, "A Wind-storm in the Forests" John Muir, "Hetch Hetchy Valley" Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 9	DUE: Service Learning locations and paperwork Reading Reflection Essay #3 due before class.
Class 8		
Week 5	From Conservation to Environmentalism	
Sept. 27	<u>Required Readings:</u> Aldo Leopold, selections from A Sand County Almanac	DUE: Found Objection reflection - posted to your website
Class 9		
Sept. 29	<u>Required Readings:</u> Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 13 Rachel Carson, "Pesticides" David Brower, "Should we also flood the Sistine Chapel so Tourists can get nearer the Ceiling?"	Reading Reflection Essay #4 due before class.
Class 10		
Oct. 1 & 2	Autumn Conservation Festival at Smithsonian-Conservation Biology Institute	Extra Credit - Interview a Scientist or Researcher at an SCBI exhibit
Week 6	Environmentalism and Conservation Laws	
Oct. 4	<u>Required Readings:</u> US Dept. of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management - The Wilderness Idea - FAQ sheet The National Wildlife Refuge System USFWS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A History of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 • ESA Basics • National Environmental Policy Act - General Information 	DUE: Extra Credit assignment
Class 11		
Oct. 6	ESA Case Study: Grey Wolves in Yellowstone National Park	Reading Reflection Essay #5 due before class.
Class 12		
Week 7		
Oct. 11	NO CLASS - (Monday classes meet today)	
Class 13		

Oct. 13 Class 14	OPEN NOTES MIDTERM	
Week 8		
Oct. 18 Class 15	<u>Required Readings:</u> Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History, Ch. 15	Reading Reflection Essay #6 due before class.
Oct. 20 Class 16	Class visit to Campus greenhouse	Service Learning Reflection Essay #1, posted to website
Week 9	Conservation Photography/Wilderness	
Oct. 25 Class 17	<u>Required Readings:</u> Christina Mittermeier, "Conservation Photography: Art, Ethics and Actions" Arun Kanagavel, "Wildlife Photography - Ethics and Conservation Issues?" Jon Hurdle, "In Costa Rica, Photographing Jaguars to Help Save Them" Marc Bekoff, "Confessions of a Wildlife Filmmaker: Misinformation, Abuse, and a Need for Change" Jaymi Heimbuch, "How Conservation Photography is a Political Act"	PEER TEACHING I: Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity
Oct. 27 Class 18	Wilderness/Wildness/Radical Solutions **Readings to be added later	Reading Reflection Essay #7 due before class.
Week 10	National Parks and Conservation	
Nov. 1 Class 19	<u>Required Readings:</u> **Readings to be added later	PEER TEACHING I: Conservation and Social Justice in Contemporary US
Nov. 3 Class 20	<u>Required Readings:</u> **Readings to be added later	Reading Reflection Essay #8 due before class.
Week 11	Bioregionalism/ Environmental Justice	
Nov. 8	<u>Required Readings:</u> Gary Snyder, "Coming into the Watershed" Robert Thayer, "Bioregional Thinking"	DUE: Conservation Photography Assignment - posted to your personal website

Class 21	Rachael Stoeye, "From Watersheds to Mountains: What If We Based Our Borders on Nature?"	
Nov. 10	<u>Required Readings:</u>	PEER TEACHING I: Ecological Restoration
Class 22	Terry Tempest Williams, "The Clan of One-Breasted Women"	Reading Reflection Essay #9 due before class.
Week 12	Biodiversity	
Nov. 15	<u>Required Readings:</u>	DUE: Solutions article reflection, posted to your website
Class 23	Dan Nosowitz, "How to argue with someone who says 'Pandas deserve to die'"	
	Michael Marshall, "What is the point of saving endangered species?"	
Nov. 17	<u>Required Readings:</u>	PEER TEACHING I: Ocean Conservation Issues
Class 24	**Readings to be added later	Service Learning Reflection Essay #2, posted to your website.
Week 13	Modern Zoos and Conservation	
Nov. 22	<u>Required Readings:</u>	Reading Reflection Essay #10 due before class.
Class 25	D.A. Conde, et al., "An Emerging Role of Zoos to Conserve Biodiversity"	
	Chris Turner-Neal, "The Role of Zoos in Red Panda Conservation"	
	Chelsea Leu, "Why Frozen Sperm Can't Save Earth's Imperiled Species - Yet"	
	Helen Russell, "The public dissection of a zoo's lion is essential viewing for meat-eaters"	
Nov. 24	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK - ENJOY!!	
Class 26		
Week 14		
Nov. 29	PEER TEACHING II: REPORTS FROM THE FIELD	PEER TEACHING I: Religion, Spirituality and Environment in Contemporary US
Class 27		
Dec. 1	PEER TEACHING II: REPORTS FROM THE FIELD	
Class 28		
Week 15		

Dec. 6 Class 29	PEER TEACHING II: REPORTS FROM THE FIELD	
Dec. 8 Class 30	PEER TEACHING II: REPORTS FROM THE FIELD Revisit Ecological Identity trees	
Week 16		
Dec. 15 Class 31	LAST CLASS - NO CLASS.	Website assignment uploaded to Blackboard by NOON. DUE: Ecological Identity writing