

GGG 303 - A01: Conservation of Resources and Environment

Summer 2016

Department of Geography & GeoInformation Science

Instructor Contact Details

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Once in a while I will be on campus so you can send me email in advance if you are nearby and would like to see me in person.

Course Requirements and Recommendations:

Required Textbook: Natural Resources Conservation; Management for a Sustainable Future (10th Edition).

Daniel D. Chiras, John P. Reganold

ISBN-13: 978-0132251389 ISBN-10: 0132251388 Edition: 10th

Available at the George Mason University (GMU) Bookstore or on Amazon

(All other course materials will be available on the course Blackboard pages.)

Prerequisites: At least 30 total credit hours, completion or concurrent enrollment in all university general education courses or permission of instructor.

Course description

This course will provides analysis of world resources distribution, conservation, and preservation; and problems resulting from their natural occurrence and utilization. Uses knowledge from physical and social sciences to develop complex and sophisticated understanding of issues surrounding natural resource exploitation and management, conservation, and preservation.

Course Overview

Conservation of Resources and Environment addresses the physical, environmental, economic and human aspects of the availability and use of resources. The conservation and use of natural resources involves all aspects of problems resulting from their unequal distribution or unwise use. Humans exist in an interdependent world where technology and the natural resources must work in a supportive and balanced manner or both the environment and the human population will suffer. Humankind must find ways to make technology and the natural environment work synergistically in order to guarantee long-term sustainable development that does no permanent harm to our living space.

In order to address this major topic in a sophisticated and holistic manner a number of subjects must be included in the discussion. The way in which resources are used has a major impact on the quality of life (including health and safety); the economic well-being of all peoples of the world; the level and type of conflicts that occur among peoples and nations; and the long-term protection of the total ecosystem.

Course Goals and Outcomes

As a GMU Synthesis course, the course will require students to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the Mason Core curriculum and expand each student's ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across other disciplines.

With the successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the importance of various natural resources and how they are managed at a local or global scale.
- To develop an understanding of the scientific concepts, evidence that underlie major issues in natural resources and conservation.
- Understand a global distribution of the earth's resources.
- Evaluate and analyze the impact of resource exploitation in various geographical locations.
- Understand the concepts of conservation planning and sustainability of human utilization of natural resources.
- To increase student understanding of the context of natural resource issues.
- Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources.
- Communicate effectively in all your writing assignment(s) and discussion forum using appropriate terminologies, supporting evidence and excellent organization

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of activities such as: online discussion forums, complete assignments on time, exams, etc. Detailed activities will be outlined in subsequent sections.

What I Expect of You

The course will require your full participation if you want to learn and earn a passing grade. In order to achieve this, I expect the following:

- Critical thinking and timely reading of assigned materials.
- Demonstration of critical thinking and ability to synthesize concepts and facts learned and apply them in your short writing assignment(s), discussion forum and your written exam.
- Active participation in all discussions that will be posted from time to time.
- Completion of assignments on time

What you should expect from me

- I will provide conducive environment for your online class learning.
- I will give you feedback on your written work in a timely way.
- Going beyond just academic conversation, bringing person elements onto our discussion forum.
- Listen and respond to your concerns accordingly
- Will provide inspiration to students so that you can view our natural resources and conservation with a different mind.

Course Requirements

- Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)
- The course will be delivered via GMU Blackboard
 - You will interact with your classmates and the Instructor through the BlackboardWithin the course Blackboard site you will access the syllabus, learning modules, discuss issues; submit assignments; take quizzes; ask questions, email other students and the instructor.

Course Format/Organization

- This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system, GMU Blackboard. You will need your GMU-D Unique to login to the course from the Blackboard home page: [: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>
- Lectures, readings, quizzes, assignments/questions/discussion posts, additional resources, and exams will be posted there for each week.
- It is your responsibility to check the Blackboard daily for updates and announcement
- It is also critical for everyone taking this course to stay up with the weekly schedule and assignments.

Technical Assistance

- If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can visit the George Mason IT Services website for guidance: <http://itservices.gmu.edu> or Email: support@gmu.edu; Phone: 703-993-8870.

Assignments and Grading

This course will rely upon a variety of methods to assess and evaluate student learning:

Assessment description	Points	% (of final grade)
Discussion Board Activities (5) including introductory discussion	60	10
Quizzes (4) including orientation quiz	60	10
Lesson Activities		
Short Writing Assignment (SWA) #1	30	20
Short Writing Assignment (SWA) #2	30	
Short Writing Assignment (SWA) #3	30	
Lecture Exam 1 [End of Week 2]	100	25
Final Exam [End of Week 5]	100	35
Expected Total Points	410	100

Lessons open on **Mondays** and assignments are due the following **Sundays at 11:59 pm**, Eastern Time. You have an entire week to complete the readings and other course activities.

Discussion Activity

- Online course are different from the traditional [Face to face course) therefore your course participation including lesson content itself will be essential component of this class.
- Each of us come from different background and I am of the opinion that we have much to offer to other classmates in terms of our perspective experience. Each one of us will lead a discussion or reply to the comments and questions. Details will be posted through the Blackboard accordingly.
- For a fruitful discussion and for students to get credit for this activity, you are expected to respond to discussion prompts or if you are lead discussant you should create a discussion post during the week and before the next set of lectures are posted.
- I will monitor this accordingly so that our discussions should correspond with the lessons of such a particular week.

Short Writing Assignments:

- Short Writing Assignments will provide an opportunity for students to apply the concepts presented in lesson modules and to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
- **20%** of your final total grade or **(90 points)** of your total **410 points** will be based on these three SWAs (30 points each).
- All assignments should follow correct format of academic writing with credible sources of citation in APA format [Unknown References such as Mongabay, No date (n.d.) will not be accepted. APA format document will be uploaded through the Blackboard.

Note: SafeAssign (Blackboard Plagiarism Prevention Tool) will be used to check your written submissions for plagiarism

Exam:

- There will be 2 Lecture Exams that will be given during our course of learning in Session A-Summer Semester.
- Test 1 will be made available to students on the second week of Friday at 11:59am and will close the following **Monday** no later than **11:59 pm** and if submitted at midnight it will be marked late. [100 points = 25% of you final total grade].
Test 1 will be based on Chapters 1, 2, 4 & 5 plus assigned readings
- Test 2 will be given during Week 5 [Final Week of our Session A].- [100 points = 35% of your final total grade] [Topics from this exam will come from Chapter 14 & 23; Chapter 10, 11 & 19].
- All tests will be taken through the Blackboard and will comprise of MCQs and at least one or two short answer questions.

Quizzes:

10% of your grade or 60 points will be based upon your quiz scores. All quizzes will be administered through the Blackboard with the due date.

Note the following Helpful Hints:

- >> All quizzes, short writing assignments will become unavailable on Blackboard after the due date and time.
- >> Make sure you check the Blackboard after completing each quiz to make sure that it has been completed and submitted each quiz (Be responsible student ---checking your work before and after submission is essential component in whatever you do.... I will not be able to give you a make-up quiz if you don't contact me within 24 hours of a quiz/test closing time in case of unforeseen problem.
- >> Please do not wait until the last minute (**11:59pm**) in order for you to complete your quiz/test - computers are machines and sometimes they cannot be reliable (e.g. power outage, wireless connection problem etc.) and cannot be held accountable for your excuse not to submit your assignment on time..

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A+	98 -100%	B+	88 – 89%	C+	78 – 79%	F	below 60%
A	93 -97%	B	83 – 87%	C	70 – 77%		
A-	90 -92%	B-	80 – 82%	D	60 – 69%		

Complete Assignments, Dates, and Extensions

- All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through the GMU Blackboard.
- I will not accept assignments submitted through emails unless you get my permission to do so.

- You will need to adhere to assignment deadline given according to the outline schedule or communication that will be given from time to time.
- All extensions must be arranged at least three days in advance and students must be prepared to document their reasons for requesting an extension.
- Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.
- Assignments that are received after the due date will incur a late penalty of minus 5 points each day.
 - Assignments that are received on the due date but after the due time will receive the same penalty as assignments that are received a day late.
- **Again Helpful Hint:** It is also critical for everyone taking this course to stay up with the weekly schedule and assignments.

Commit to Integrity

Academic Honesty

George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. You are therefore expected to take this course in adherence to GMU and Department standards for Academic Integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (<http://www.gmu.edu/org/honorcouncil/guidelines.htm>). I will respond to acts of academic misconduct according to university policy concerning plagiarism. In such cases Plagiarism will result in a failing grade of the assignment in question and/or for the course.

University Services

George Mason University has a number of academic support and other resources to facilitate your success. Some of these resources are presented below:

- i. Counseling and Psychological Services [<http://caps.gmu.edu/>]
- ii. Learning Services, University Career Services [<http://careers.gmu.edu/>]
- iii. Writing Center [<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>] and other Learning Services within GMU.
- iv. University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/> | University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented and qualifying learning, physical and psychological disabilities should contact the Disability Services (ODC), which arranges for reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and University policies. In order to arrange accommodations in each course, the student must present his/her professors with a letter from the ODC outlining the recommended accommodations at the beginning of the semester. Disability Services (ODC) website: <http://ods.gmu.edu/> / Student Union Building I (SUB), Room 2500. Telephone: (703) 993-2474.

Course Outline/Schedule

- You should be referring to the course schedule and blackboard for specific readings, activities, and assignments.
- All due dates for assignments, quizzes and discussion will be detailed within each week's corresponding learning module(s) through the Blackboard [BB].
- You will be notified on upcoming assignments and additional reading materials a week ahead for your effective planning purpose.

Lesson# Date	Topic Description	Readings
Lesson 1: Week 1	Critical thinking & Introduction to Natural Resource Conservation	Chapter 1 & 2 Additional material [BB]
	Conservation tools: Environmental Economics	
Lesson 2: Week 2	Human Population Challenge	Chapter 4 & 5 Additional material [BB]
	Food and Agriculture: World hunger issues	
End of Week 2	Exam 1	
Lesson 3: Week 3	Forests, grasslands, and parks: Issues and conservation	Chapter 14 & 23 Additional material [BB]
	Energy issues and conservation	
Lesson 4: Week 4	Global Warming & Climate Change	Chapter 19 & 10 Additional material [BB]
	Managing Water Resources Sustainably	
Lesson 5: Week 5	Water Pollution	Chapter 11 Additional material [BB]
Week 5	Final Exam	

Syllabus Changes

The course instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to the course content and office hours during the course of the term. If these changes are made they will be immediately notified to students through individual emails or the blackboard explaining the nature of the change(s).