



**Contact Details for Your Instructor**

**Course Details**

Name : Maction Komwa, PhD	Meeting Times :	W   3:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Office : Exploratory Hall, Room 2414	Location :	Virtual Class Meetings [Zoom]
Email : <a href="mailto:mkomwa@gmu.edu">mkomwa@gmu.edu</a>	Credit hours :	3.00
Phone : 703-993-5646	Virtual Office Hours:	T   F (1:30 pm – 2:30 pm)

**Contact Details for GTA**

Name : Sherry Young   Email: <a href="mailto:syoung20@masonlive.gmu.edu">syoung20@masonlive.gmu.edu</a>   Virtual Office Hours: TBA
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**Instructor’s Virtual Office hours:** All appointments for this semester are currently being conducted virtually either by phone or through Zoom. A Zoom link for my office hours will be available through the Blackboard. Office hours are first come first served.

If you want to meet outside my virtual office hours, you can check my availability and make an appointment through Mason Navigate link: <https://gmucampus.cab.com/>. Follow the instructions and choose “Faculty office hours” for the meeting type.

**Course Description:**

The course 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.

**Required Textbooks:**



Natural Resource Conservation: Management for a Sustainable Future. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Daniel D Chiras Daniel Chiras John P Reganold John Reganold  
ISBN: 0132251388  
ISBN-13: 9780132251389

**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 involve 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 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.

Finally, throughout the semester, we will use and reflect the traditional use of geography, which integrates studies of physical and human phenomena to understand human use of the earth resources.

## Learning Outcomes

As a GMU Synthesis course, this 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 the physical and social sciences. Upon completing this synthesis course, students will achieve learning outcomes enabling them to:

1. Understand the importance of various natural resources and how they are managed at a local or global scale.
2. Outline the scientific method and distinguish fact versus opinion regarding conservation and environmental issues.
3. Evaluate and analyze the impact of resource exploitation, conservation and preservation.
4. Evaluate the science behind global warming and atmospheric carbon dioxide levels.
5. Discuss and apply geospatial technology tools for conservation management and planning.
6. Apply critical thinking skills and quantitative reasoning to evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources.
7. Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)

## Instructional Methodology

This is a blended and intensive course with a mixture of pre-loaded direct instructions of lectures and actual virtual class time for the application of that content through active learning exercises.

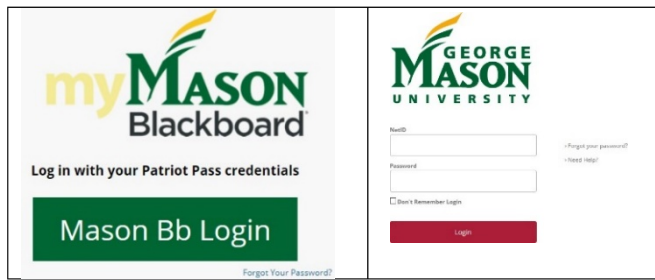
- **Synchronous, Real-time instruction: Wednesday** 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm, Virtual classroom meetings through Zoom Videoconference [Zoom link will be available through the Blackboard]. We will use our Synchronous Breakout discussions for small-group interaction to discuss a virtual classroom course activity.
- **Asynchronous instruction - Self-paced:** You will learn pre-loaded course content and additional concepts via video lectures, readings, announcements, assignments, guided group discussions, and other media. Transcripts and other learning aids will be available through the Blackboard.

## Technology Requirements

- As a student participating in this traditional-hybrid course, or considering taking this type of course, it is expected that you have the following:
  - Internet Connection
    - Access to high speed connection such as Cable, DSL, or Satellite is recommended
      - Internet Browser Support include:
        - Internet Explorer latest version | Safari version latest version
        - Google Chrome latest version | Firefox latest version
    - Access to software
      - You will need to have access to the most up to date:
        - Adobe Acrobat Reader. <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>;
        - Windows Media Player:  
<https://windows.microsoft.com/enus/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
        - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)
        - MS Word, Excel, etc.
- Required equipment necessary for this course thus including hardware and software (e.g. MS word, etc.), speakers, microphones, or webcams, etc. are the responsibility of the student.

## Learning Management Systems

- Blackboard is our course management system which provides access to course materials, assignments, and class discussions. You will log in to Blackboard using your George Mason username and password through this link: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>.



- If you have computer problems, please contact ITS Support Center\_ <http://itservices.gmu.edu>; Email: [support@gmu.edu](mailto:support@gmu.edu); | Phone: 703-993-8870.

### Course Assignments and Grading Breakdown

Students are expected to submit high quality assignments during this course via the Blackboard. All assignments are to be completed according to the dates outlined in the syllabus.

Course Assignment(s)	Percentage (%)
Discussion Forum (3)	5%
Short Writing Assignments (2) – Debate summary and Research Outline	10%
GIS Application Labs (2)	10%
Practice Quizzes (2) – Each quiz will be taken a week before the exam	5%
Exam 1 [End of Week 2]	15%
Exam 2 [End of Week 4]	20%
Term Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	5%
Rough Draft	5%
Final Paper	25%

Grades will be assigned based on the distribution scheme below.

Range	Letter Grade	Grade description	Range	Letter Grade	Grade description
93 - 100	A	Excellent	77 - 79	C+	Satisfactory
90 - 92	A-	Very Good	70 - 76	C	Satisfactory
87 - 89	B+	Good with merit	60 - 69	D	Just OK
83 - 86	B	Good	<60	F	Failure
80 - 82	B-	Above satisfactory			

### Late/Make-up Assignments Policy

- Due dates for all assignments are provided in the course schedule as well as the Blackboard. Unless otherwise specified all assignments are due on those dates. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the assignments are submitted by the established due date.
- Assignments turned in **within seven (5) days will result in a 25% deduction** for the assignment. Assignments **later that seven (5) days will result in a 50% deduction** for the assignment.
- Technical excuses ("computer system error", "didn't submit correctly on Blackboard", etc.) will not be accepted as reasons for late work.
- In some subjects/assignments no late assignments will be accepted for credit. Such assignments include discussion forum and end of chapter quiz.
- No make-up Exams or extensions on assignments will be given without a valid reason that is supported by documented evidence.
- Work is NOT accepted via e-mail, unless the instructions specifically say otherwise. Submit your work through the Blackboard accordingly.
- Please do not wait until the last minute (11:59 pm – Eastern Time) for you to complete your assignment - 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.

## **A “Life Happens Pass”**

You will be given a “Life Happens Pass” for only 1 written assignment with no penalty. This kind of arrangement is due to the unprecedented period that everyone is going through. Therefore, an automatic 72-hour extension will be given as long as you inform your instructor in writing.

## **Incompletes (IN) Grades**

Incomplete (IN) grades will be assigned only in cases of compelling and documented need, in accordance with policies set forth in the University Catalog. For details regarding incomplete grades, please visit Undergraduate Academic Affairs through this website: <https://chssundergrad.gmu.edu/other-forms/incompletes>

## **Exams**

There will be 2 Exams [Exam 1 & Exam 2]. The exam will be mostly objective in nature with questions that will allow students to analyze, apply, and synthesize lecture, videos and homework concepts and reading material. Exam may include multiple-choice, matching, fill-in the blank, and short answer questions. You will be given a window of 2 days to take the exam [Friday – Sunday]

## **Discussion Forums (4)**

Class discussion is an important part of any college experience. You will have a structured opportunity to interact with each other through guided questions related to class topics. Post your initial topic-related and thought-provoking comments that foster interaction and discussion. This will demonstrate your class participation as a whole including each week's assigned readings. Your postings will be evaluated according to the scientific content, critical thinking and concept application based on the following criteria:

- *Unacceptable (0 points); poor (1 point); good (3 points) and excellent (5 points). For a full rubric, check the Blackboard.*
- *Each Discussion topic will have instructions on how to write and submit the posting and your response. Absolutely, no make-up will be given for Discussion Forum.*

## **Group Term Project**

Our virtual class lectures/discussion will cover so many topics on geography of resource conservation. These lectures cannot go into depth on any of these topics. Therefore, you will have an opportunity to examine and synthesize an issue in resource conservation and management more thoroughly. Evaluation of this paper will depend heavily on the depth of your research and ability to link class concepts to real-world of conservation and environment operations. More details regarding final research paper including grade rubric will be posted through the Blackboard.

The term project will be completed in in teams of two.

- *Team projects* should be 12 or so pages long (***excluding title page and references***). Each member should put equal amount effort and writing.
- *Note* the page guidelines are approximate (APA format and 12pt format and double spacing).
- Previous sample term research paper topics and issues will be posted through the blackboard.

## **Short Writing Assignments (2)**

The homework short writing assignments (SWA) are designed for students to practice writing and critical thinking in the language and interpretation of conservation of natural resources. The first assignment will be a debate on the State of Nature (Carl Pope and Bjorn Lomborg debate) then each student will write a summary regarding the article that will be discussed in Week 1. Second short writing assignment will be aligned to your Final Research Paper (Research Outline). Each group will submit a detailed outline of their research paper.

## **GIS Lab Assignments (2)**

Solutions to environmental problems and conservation of natural resources are many. In this course you will have the opportunity to learn some technological solutions that are of increasing value and used in many areas of resource management such as geographic information systems (GIS) and basic remote sensing. You will complete projects that are representative of geospatial applications. You will then apply these geospatial tools to better manage and plan the natural resources and environment. Each of these assignments will be discussed in our virtual class meetings and you will be given instructions on how to complete the assignment. You will learn how to use GIS Software!

## Student Responsibilities:

- Review the course material and follow the course calendar.
- Work at full pace to avoid missing class activities.
- Be active participants in discussion forum throughout the course period.
- Respect the privacy of other classmates and the instructor in this virtual classroom.
- Re-read your responses in the discussion forum carefully before postings them.
- Express differences of opinion in a polite and sensible way.
- Keep an open mind to the constructive criticism from classmates and use it to improve your work.
  - We are in this class to share information and learning from each other.
  - By sharing and discussing each other's ideas, you will be able to examine your own thoughts and feelings hence, making the course interesting and enjoyable!
- Use good grammar and spelling in all your assignments and discussions.
- Write your messages in formal language.

## Course Communication & Privacy

- Students are required to regularly check their MasonLive email account /Blackboard for announcements or updates related to the course.
- Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.
- You should feel free to send me email if you have any questions regarding something that you do not understand. Although I will not instantly answer your e-mail, I will reply to your e-mail within 24-48 hours and if you don't get my response please feel free to remind me or ask to confirm if I have received your email.
- Please do not wait until the day of the work is due to ask questions.

**Academic integrity:** *The following statement is adapted from the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning.* No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code, which you can read fully at the Office for Academic Integrity (<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>). The Honor Code Pledge reads as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

The Mason Honor Code defines cheating, plagiarism, stealing, and lying. It is expected that you understand these definitions. If you have any doubts about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, stealing, or lying in the academic context, please see your professor. **Acts of academic dishonesty in this course may be penalized with failure of either the work in question or the entire course.**

## Disability Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

## Diversity and Inclusion

George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability, marital status, pregnancy status, or genetic information. George Mason University shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.

## Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing [cde@gmu.edu](mailto:cde@gmu.edu).

## Student Privacy

George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University’s student privacy policy <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy>.

## Recording and/or sharing class materials

Some kinds of participation in online study sites violate the Mason Honor code: these include accessing exam or quiz questions for this class; accessing exam, quiz, or assignment answers for this class; uploading of any of the instructor’s materials or exams; and uploading any of your own answers or finished work. Always consult your syllabus and your professor before using these sites. As a faculty member who will spend a lot of time creating course material for classroom use, unauthorized sharing of any of my course materials outside the class would violate important ethical standards.

## Undergraduate Course Repetition

Beginning fall 2018, there is a limit of three graded attempts for this course. A “W” does not count as a graded attempt. Please see AP. 1.3.4 in the University Catalog and consult with your academic advisor if you have any questions.

## Student Support Services

George Mason University has several 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. The Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- iv. University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>
- v. University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>

## Absences & Accommodations

- **Religious Holidays:** Please refer to George Mason University’s calendar of religious holidays and observations (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.
- **Absence for documented illness:** Students who miss multiple virtual classes due to prolonged illness should seek medical care and provide documentation of such to the Dean’s Office, which will communicate with the student's professor(s). A prolonged absence may necessitate the student’s withdrawal from the course or from the University for the semester.
- **At the discretion of the professor:** There may be cases where an absence is undocumented but is, nevertheless, excused by the professor (e.g., absence due to a death in the family). Students should initiate a conversation with their professors about the nature and duration of the absence, in advance of the absence whenever possible.

When absences are excused, students remain responsible for all assigned work, and shall be provided with the opportunity to make up, without penalty, any work that they have missed.

## Class Change Policy:

In the event that the University wants us to go fully online/Distance Learning, you will be notified about the changes through email and/or Blackboard as soon as possible. On the same note, there will be no face to face class meeting after Thanksgiving. All remaining classes will be through Zoom or guided recorded lectures.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Week   Date	Topic Description	Textbook Chapters & Supplemental Readings	Homework   Activity Due date & Time (Time is consistent - 11:59 pm)
<b>0</b>	Course Overview and Introduction	Syllabus	Self-introduction due Sunday, <b>11:59 pm – May 16</b> <b>Read the Syllabus</b>
<b>1</b> May 17 – May 23 <i>Class meets on May 19</i>	<b>Introduction to Natural Resource Conservation</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A crisis on Planet Earth</li> <li>2. Differing Viewpoints on the State of Nature</li> <li>3. Historical and Current Conservation</li> <li>4. The Tragedy of the Commons</li> <li>5. Geospatial Technology Tools for Resource Management</li> </ol>	<b>Chapter 1</b> Case Study: 1.1 The Earth Summit and Beyond The State of Nature: <a href="https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/22/debate-the-state-of-nature/">https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/22/debate-the-state-of-nature/</a> The Tragedy of the Commons <a href="https://science.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243">https://science.sciencemag.org/content/162/3859/1243</a>	<b>Discussion 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Post due Thursday</li> <li>- Comments due Saturday 11:59 pm</li> </ul> <b>Virtual Class debate followed by a brief write-up</b> (Position on the state of nature – Carl Pope and Bjorn Lomborg) – due Sunday -11:59 pm – due May 23. <b>Research Topic Signing Sheet– 5/22 11:59 pm. You will be assigned to a group accordingly.</b> <b>Short Quiz #1 - due 5/21- 11:59 pm (This will help you know the structure of the Exam)</b>
<b>2</b> May 24 – May 30 <i>Class meets on May 26</i>	<b>Introduction to Resource Economics &amp; Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Economics of Natural Resource Systems</li> <li>• Environmental Justice &amp; natural resource extraction</li> <li>• Externalities, Market Failure, and Policy Interventions</li> <li>• Cost-Benefit Analysis</li> </ul> <b>Human Population Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Populations and Population Growth</li> <li>• Population data, distribution, and Composition</li> <li>• Population Measures, &amp; Tool: GIS &amp; Mapping</li> </ul>	<b>Chapter 2</b>  <b>Chapter 4</b>  Additional articles will be posted through the Blackboard.  Watch Video – World Population	<b>Discussion 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Post due Thursday</li> <li>- Comments due Saturday 11:59 pm</li> </ul> <b>Research Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliograph – due May 28</b>  <b>Population Mapping and GIS Assignment #1 – due May 29</b>  <b>Exam 1 - [Exam opens on May 28 – May 30, 11:59 pm]</b>
<b>3</b> May 31 – June 6 <i>Class meets on June 2</i>	<b>Forest Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Ownership &amp; The US Forest Service</li> <li>• Deforestation and Reforestation</li> <li>• Land-cover data for conservation planning</li> </ul> <b>Global Warming &amp; Climate Change</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Factors that Influence Global Warming</li> <li>• Projected Impacts of Global Warming</li> <li>• Mitigation of Global Warming</li> <li>• Climate Change Virtual Simulation Activity [Paris Agreement on Climate Change</li> </ul>	<b>Chapter 14</b>  <b>Chapter 19</b> Pre-Reading for Climate Change Simulation Activity scheduled on June 2 will be posted through the Blackboard	<b>Discussion 3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Post due Thursday</li> <li>- Comments due Saturday 11:59 pm</li> </ul> <b>Short Writing Assignment #2</b> Full outline of Research Project [With Supporting ideas on each heading and sub-section] due June 5 <b>Short Quiz #2 – due Friday June 4</b>

Week   Date	Topic Description	Textbook Chapters & Supplemental Readings	Homework   Activity Due date & Time (Time is consistent - 11:59 pm)
<p align="center"><b>4</b></p> <p><b>June 7 – June 13</b> <i>Class meets on June 9</i></p>	<p>Water Pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of Water Pollution</li> <li>• Major Pollutants, Prevention, and Control</li> <li>• Legislating Water Pollution</li> <li>• Pollution of the Oceans</li> </ul> <p>Plant and Animal Extinction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extinction: Eroding the Earth’s Biological Extinction</li> <li>• Causes of Extinction &amp; Methods of Preventing Extinction</li> <li>• Endangered Species Act</li> <li>• Mapping Invasive Species with GIS</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chapter 11</b></p> <p>Case Study of the Chesapeake Bay – Poisoned Water Video</p> <p><b>Chapter 15</b></p> <p>Additional articles will be posted through the Blackboard</p>	<p><i>Mapping Invasive Species with GIS Assignment #2 – due June 12</i></p> <p><b>Rough Draft – due June 11</b></p> <p><b>Exam 1 – Exam opens on June 11 – June 13 [Sunday 11:59 pm]</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>5</b></p> <p><b>June 14 – June 19</b> <i>Class meets on June 16</i></p>	<p>World Hunger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Hunger: Dimensions of the Problem</li> <li>• Food Systems</li> <li>• Ecological Threats to and from Food Systems</li> <li>• Realizing Justice in Local Food Systems</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chapter 4</b></p> <p>Additional articles will be posted through the Blackboard</p>	<p><b>Discussion 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Post due Thursday</li> <li>- Comments due Saturday 11:59 pm</li> </ul> <p><b>Final Research Paper due June 19 [Noon]</b></p> <p><b>No Final Exam</b></p>

*The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time and any changes made will be communicated to the students through the Blackboard.*