

**Foundations in Natural Resource Conservation (FOR 3200C)  
Course Syllabus – Fall 2016**

**INSTRUCTOR**

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**OFFICE HOURS**

I have an open door policy- if I'm in, we can talk. Or, if you want to ensure that I will be available, contact me ahead of time (phone, email, or see me after class) to set up an appointment. The only time I am NOT available is the hour before class begins. Feel free to contact me via office phone or cellphone. If you are unable to reach me, please leave a message on my voice mail at the office and send an email message as well.

Please contact Ashlynn and Justin either by phone or email to determine their availability or to set up an appointment.

**MEETING TIMES**

Thursday 5-8 pm, Room 4814; 3 Saturday field trips

**CREDIT HOURS**

This is a 3 credit "C" course: 2 credits for lecture = 2 hrs of contact time per week and 1 credit for lab = 2 to 3 hours of additional lab time per week. Labs will be conducted in a 1 to 1.5 hr period as part of the regular 3 hour class period, and there will be 3 required Saturday all day field trips to complete the lab component. In addition, you should expect to put in ~ 6 hours of additional time outside of class (at a minimum) to complete assignments and prepare for class.

**PURPOSE OF THE COURSE**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the concepts and skills needed to enter the profession of natural resource conservation. We will first discuss the philosophical and historical contexts for development of natural resource agencies and professional fields, and then we will delve into current issues that many students will face as they begin their careers (eg. prescribed fire and public perception, managing multiple objectives, such as recreation and conservation, endangered species conservation). Specific current topics will be student-selected. The purpose of the labs is to practice using field equipment commonly used in forestry, wildlife, fisheries, and environmental sciences. You will also learn about the variety of opportunities that exist in the Natural Resources field by interacting with professionals in the field.

## **OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

By the end of the course, students should have a broad understanding of the following topics:

- Philosophical, historical, and political precedents for the management of natural resources and the environment in Florida and throughout the United States
- Current issues related to resource conservation, utilization, and policy
- Basic principles (eg. ecology, wildlife management, physical sciences) used in NRC courses and jobs

Upon successful completion of the course, students will also be proficient in the following skills:

- Using forestry, wildlife, and environmental equipment
- Basic computer skills for managing data
- Professional communications (spoken and written)
- Critical review of printed materials (both scientific journals and mass media)

## **FORMAT OF COURSE**

The class period will be split between lecture/discussions and lab activities. We will use the lecture/discussion period to discuss readings as a class, or for individual students, instructors, and guest lecturers to present new material. You will be required to submit a article summary **by Wednesday Noon CST** (submitted through the “**CANVAS**” e-learning site). This will give me time to assess your comprehension of the reading material and adjust the lecture/discussion accordingly. In addition, the reading response allows you to formulate your thoughts prior to the class discussion. If you have technical difficulties such as difficulties using CANVAS please contact the help desk (<http://heldesk.ufl.edu>) for assistance and leave an email message with me through CANVAS.

The in-class labs will be conducted primarily outdoors on the PSC Milton campus or in the computer lab. Outdoor labs will introduce students to specific pieces of forestry, wildlife, or environmental equipment and indoor ‘lab’ activities will be focused on other professional skills related to writing papers/lab reports, data management and analysis and communications.

### **Saturday labs**

Saturday labs will be used for more extensive field visits where you will practice field techniques and observations. A van will leave from campus in the a.m. to drive to these areas.

## **REQUIRED and RECOMMENDED MATERIALS**

There is no required textbook for this class. The instructor will provide reading materials to the class as handouts or as postings on the e-learning site. It is recommended that you bring the following items to facilitate lab activities: calculator, clip board, rain gear (if necessary), sturdy shoes (sneakers will be fine unless otherwise noted).

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND E-LEARNING**

We will be using the CANVAS e-learning site for this course. You can login to CANVAS at the e-learning main website at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. You will use the site to download/print readings and course materials, submit assignments, check for announcements, and occasionally post discussion threads. On occasion, I will also send email to the class list regarding critical updates to the syllabus or clarifications of assignments. If you aren't doing so already, you should be checking your ufl email daily.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

**Reading Responses:** In your reading response you will both summarize and critically assess the reading material. There are two parts to the reading response: First you will write a summary that succinctly highlights the most important topics of the readings. There is no page limit for this, but typically no more than a 1-page summary will suffice. Second, you will provide a critical assessment of the reading. The assessment of the reading could include comments regarding a new insight you gained from the reading, a position made by the author that you agree or disagree with, a question about part of the reading that you didn't understand, or an assessment of the strengths/weaknesses of the author's claims. You should present and describe two major comments/assessments about the reading. On occasion, the instructor will also provide specific questions as 'food for thought' in your assessment of the reading.

**Participation:** You will be evaluated on your participation in discussions both in-class and on-line. Each student is expected to be actively engaged in the discussion process during each class. Participation can include bringing up points of interest, answering questions as well as asking questions, and active listening while others are talking. Discussion sessions are based on the reading material, so it is imperative that you do your reading assignments prior to class. In some weeks, primarily during the second half of the course an online discussion thread will be used to discuss readings and course materials. **Online discussion requirements include: for full credit at least 3 posts to include at least one introduced topic. A journal citation must be provided for at least one of your posts. At least 2 post must be submitted before Wednesday 5 PM CST of each week a discussion post is required. Participation in the discussion thread is mandatory and part of your participation grade. Unless you have an excused absence from the instructor prior to the class start, you will receive a 0 for that week for participation. Alternately, you may post a discussion point related to the reading through the on-line discussion thread for credit.**

**In-class Assignments:** You will complete a short activity sheet during the in-class mini-lab, typically 5 to 10 questions relating to the equipment being used or professional skill we are working on. Some activities may require measurements, calculations or short answer responses. The purpose of the in-class assignments is to practice skills which you will be more rigorously graded on in larger assignments (e.g. lab reports, mid-terms, final presentations). You may turn in the assignment either at the end of class, or during the next class period if more time is needed to complete it.

**Article summary/presentation:** You will conduct a literature search to find an interesting research or review article pertaining to a current natural resource issue of your choice and summarize and assess the reading (similar to the reading responses) in 2-3 pages. You will also present the findings from the article to the class (informally during our regular discussion sessions) and provide 1-2 discussion points/questions related to your article or topic for the class to consider and discuss.

**Mid-term Essay Exam:** You will have one week to complete a take home exam comprising of 3 short essay questions (typically 1-2 page responses) relating to historical material from the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the class. You will be evaluated on both the content and the clarity of your writing. You will have an opportunity to revise your essays based on instructor feedback to improve your grade.

**Lab Reports:** The purpose of the lab exercises and reports is to develop skills for observing and analyzing the environment, interpreting results, and presenting your findings. Some reports, where data is collected, will follow a traditional scientific format including *Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion*. The Introduction should relate to the main objectives and topic of the lab. The Methods and Results sections will explain what you did and what you found. In the discussion section, you should interpret your results. The Abstract (usually written last) will contain a brief summary of the entire lab report. Other reports will provide a summary of observations made and/or guest lecturer presentations heard during the field lab.

### **Final Presentation**

During the last half of the semester we will be discussing a variety of current issues that you will likely need to deal with during your career. For your final oral presentation, you will work in small groups (3-4 students) and will select: 1) a specific ecosystem or geographic region and 2) a natural resource profession or agency and, and identify and describe the specific policies, values, and management relating to one or two environmental issues that would be faced by the profession/agency on that area. You can expand on a topic discussed in class or pick entirely new issues of interest. Source material may come from interviews with a professional at your selected agency, position statements, research articles, and news articles (you must include at least 5 sources). Your group will present this information in a short paper (5 or so pages) and in a ~ 15 to 20-minute oral presentation.

## EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>% of final grade</u>
Reading responses (5)	10
In-class assignments (6)	6
Participation	10
Mid-term essays	20
Article summary/presentation	10
Lab reports (3)	24
Final paper / presentation	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numeric Value</u>
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
E	<60

**Grading Assessment sheets-** Prior to the due date of an assignment, I will hand out a grading assessment sheet that details the specific criteria I will use to assess your assignment. It is in your best interest to read and follow these carefully.

**Excuses for late work and absences**—Assignments are due and should be submitted electronically by 9am Monday (for reading responses and article summaries) or by 5 pm Tuesday either in-class (in-class activities and final presentation) or on-line (mid-term exam, lab reports). After those specified times, late assignments will lose value at a rate of 10% for each subsequent day that it is late (**weekend days count too!**). In cases of extended illness, family emergencies or other special circumstances, arrangements to turn in late assignments must be made with the professor at least one day prior to the due date. Saturday labs are mandatory and can't be made up. In the event that a student does not attend a Saturday lab, a 10 page 'paper' researching the lab topic will be submitted in place of the Lab 'Report'. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

## UF GRADING POLICIES

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## CODE OF CONDUCT

All students are expected to abide by the Student Honor Code as described in the Student Handbook ( <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studenthonorcode.php> ) . Students are expected to behave in a professional and courteous manner towards instructor, other classmates, and guest speakers. Professional behavior includes: arriving to class at, or preferably before, the start of the class period, providing your **full** attention to the instructor and classmates, being respectful of a diversity of opinions, avoiding disruptions that prohibits your classmates from learning. Inappropriate behavior will lead to immediate dismissal from the class period and possible expulsion from the course.

In addition, plagiarism is taken very seriously at this institution, and can result in a reduced grade, failure of the course, and possible dismissal from the college. Plagiarism includes: 1) the direct use of any written material (**including internet sites!!**) without proper quotations and citation or 2) the submission of a document, in part or wholly authored by someone other than the student. Please note that we have specific software to determine if your work is plagiarized. **All assignments should be turned in through the software "Turnitin" found within CANVAS.** It is up to the professor to evaluate the severity of any infraction and to determine the disciplinary action to be taken. The student should also be aware of his/her legal rights as defined in the Student Honor Code.

## UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

You have full access to all the student services available through the University of Florida, including:

### Accommodations for Disability

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which

must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Online Course Evaluation Process**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### *Health and Wellness :*

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575;

### *Academic Resources*

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu).  
<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaint Campus [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf).

## SCHEDULE

Week/ Date	Activities		Readings due	Assignment Due
	Discussion	Lab		
Wk 1: 8/25	What is NRC? Definitions and overview	PJC Path Tour- Observing the Landscape		
Wk 2: 9/1	Historical views of environment (18 <sup>th</sup> and early 19 <sup>th</sup> century)Video: GGI	Excel refresher- data mngt, formulas and figures	Thoreau- “Spring” chapter from <i>Walden</i>	Reading Summary1 In-class assignment 1: Obs Land
Wk 3: 9/8	Historical views (late 19 <sup>th</sup> cent) Video: The Greatest Good- Part II	Lab: weather stations, Excel: weather data calcs	Pinchot- <i>The Fight for Conservation</i> Ch IV and VII, Muir- <i>Steep Trails</i> Ch XIV	Reading Summary2 In-class assignment 2: excel sheet
Sat lab (9/ 10)	Water-land connection: water chemistry, stream and riparian ecology, watershed management			
Wk 4: 9/15	Historical views (Early 20 <sup>th</sup> cent.) Video: Greatest Good- Part III	Writing a GOOD lab report!	Leopold- “The Land Ethic” “Conservation Esthetic”	Reading Summary3 In-class assignment 3: excel sht 2
Wk 5: 9/22	Historical views (Mid-late 20 <sup>th</sup> ) Video: Greatest Good- Part IV	Intro to gps/gis/mapping; compass/ pacing activity	Leopold- “Wildlife in Amer Culture” ;	Reading Summary4 In-class assignment 4: compass Lab Report 1 (water)
Wk 6: 9/29	Current views (1970 to now) ; Review of historical highlights	Writing lab reports,“English lab”- grammar, topic sentences, writhing essays	Rachel Carson “ <i>Silent Spring</i> ”	Reading Summary5
Wk 7: 10/6	How to critically review scientific literature, public press, web, etc	Scientific literature searches and proper citations	In-class climate change readings;	In-class assignment 6: writing; sign-up for article presentation day
Wk 8: 10/14	<b>Take-home exam only (no class)</b>			Mid-term due Oct 17, 11:59pm Article for student presentation
Wk 9: 10/20	Intro to For Equip and calcs: prism, dbh tape, clinometer	Land/vegetation and habitat classification systems activity		
Sat Lab 10/ 22	Forests- ecology and timber production (observing and measuring the landscape and trees) (Blackwater River State Forest and/or Escambia Experimental Forest)			
Wk 10: 10/27	Job searching issues: navigating USAjobs, resume + cover letter tips	Guest Speaker (professionals) Student- selected articles		In-class assignment 6: for calcs On-line discussion post 1;
Wk 11: 11/3	Student select articles - discussion	Guest Speaker (professionals) Student-selected articles		Lab Report 2
Sat lab 11/5	Wildlife and/or restoration			
11/11	<b>Veteran’s Day- No class</b>			
Wk 12: 11/17	Student-selected articles on current issues	Guest speaker (professionals); Lab: using pwrpt, public spk.	Articles tbd	On-line discussion post 2 Lab Report 3
Wk 13: 11/25	Thanksgiving Break (no class)			
Wk 14: 12/1	<b>Student Presentations</b>	Guest Speaker (professionals)	Articles tbd	On-line discussion post 3
Wk15: 12/6	<b>Student Presentations</b>			(papers due 12/12 8 pm)

