

Syllabus - FNR 4950L – Natural Resource Conservation Capstone

Fall 2025

Format: online submission of deliverables resulting from an independent project or internship/work experience; 3 Credits

Instructors

First Contact for Gainesville Students	First contact for Milton students
Dr. Timothy Martin	Dr. Debbie Miller
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Communication regarding your Capstone

- Communicate with your NRC Faculty Mentor for overall questions regarding your curriculum, and how the Capstone fits into the big picture. Your Faculty Mentor can help you plan your Capstone experience and may be able to help you locate opportunities for internship/work experience or independent study.
 - **FOR MILTON NRC STUDENTS**, your NRC Faculty Mentor is: Dr. Debbie Miller
Milton Room 4917
West Florida Research and Education Center
5988 Hwy. 90, Bldg. 4900
dlmi@ufl.edu
850-983-7128
- Communicate with **instructors** regarding course requirements, and to discuss whether the activities you are planning to undertake meet Capstone requirements.
- Communicate with your **work experience supervisor** or the **faculty supervising your independent study** regarding specifics of that particular activity.

Course Description

Provides students in the Natural Resource Conservation (NRC) major with an opportunity to plan and carry out a Capstone experience which integrates the knowledge and expertise that they have gained through their undergraduate curriculum.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, each student will be able to:

- Identify and define a natural resource-related problem or issue
- Summarize and interpret existing literature/state of our knowledge
- Create a timeline and approach to solving the problem
- Collect relevant data or design a program to support developing a solution
- Analyze and summarize the data, or assess the program
- Discuss analysis of and recommendations for tradeoffs associated with various solutions or programs
- Present results using an appropriate communication medium

Course Logistics and Description of Assignments and Activities

Students carry out an independent project guided by a UF faculty member, or engage with a work experience outside of UF. The student is responsible for identifying the project or work experience, and for ensuring that the activities will support the completion of the Capstone requirements. It is IMPORTANT to note that to meet the capstone requirements, students arranging a work experience (internship) will usually have to plan and carry out a research or monitoring project or other activities in addition to normal work requirements. Course instructors will assess each student's Capstone plan and the final Capstone deliverable(s) to assess completion of course learning outcomes. While the independent study or work experience are generally done in coordination with others, Capstone deliverables are submitted to course instructors through Canvas.

Scope: The Capstone experience should be a substantial project with work and deliverables of similar effort and scope to other 3-credit project-based courses.

Example: To give an idea of the nature and level of effort expected from a Capstone, here are the types of activities that a Capstone focused on forest management might involve:

- reviewing maps and visiting the property to do an initial assessment of the parcel relative to the landowner's objectives;
- designing a forest inventory sampling plan;
- carrying out the sampling plan in the forest using standard forest mensuration instruments and techniques;
- analyzing and summarizing the forest inventory data in standardized figures, tables, and text;
- using the collected data to assess current conditions of the property;
- prescribing silvicultural prescriptions for the property designed to achieve landowner objectives;
- analyzing the economic impacts of the prescribed activities; and
- summarizing all of this work in a comprehensive management document.

While most NRC students will not carry out a Capstone strictly focused on forest management planning, this example should give a feel for the level of effort and degree of curriculum integration expected for the Capstone project.

The course has three formal assignments, all of which must be turned in on time and completed satisfactorily to pass the class.

Assignment 1: 20% of grade. On or before 11:59 pm on September 12, 2025, submit a 3-5 page, double-spaced outline which summarizes:

- Description of the natural resource-related problem or issue addressed during the Capstone
- A brief literature review and reference to course content from the student's curriculum which is pertinent to the problem or question
- A timeline of the work to be done to address the problem or question
- Summary of planned data collection and analysis
- Summary of how the Capstone work integrates the student's curriculum
- A description of what type of deliverable will be done at the end of the Capstone

These requirements are similar to what was asked in the pre-registration application, but this document should contain more detail and be more specific about what will be done and how it links to the student's coursework.

Course instructors will provide feedback on the summary outline to ensure the plan meets the Capstone objectives. This feedback must be incorporated into the Capstone activities and final Capstone deliverable.

Assignment 2: 15% of grade. On or before 11:59 pm on October 24, 2025:

- Turn in a short (2-3 page) summary of your progress to date on your final deliverable. Include descriptions of data collected, what type of data analysis performed, and update on any writing that has been done.
- BEFORE THE DUE DATE, send your NRC faculty mentor AND the person supervising your project (if they are different people) a copy of the progress report, and request an email from them giving feedback on your progress. Keep in mind that most faculty and natural resource professionals are busy, so allow a week or more for responses before the due date
- INCLUDE A COPY OF THE RETURN EMAILS along with your summary to confirm that your faculty mentor and project supervisor have reviewed your progress and find it satisfactory

Assignment 3: 65% of grade. By 11:59 pm on December 3, 2025, submit a final project deliverable which includes these elements in some way:

- Description of the natural resource-related problem or issue addressed during the Capstone
- A brief literature review and reference to course content from the student's curriculum which is pertinent to the problem or question
- A timeline of the work that was done to address the problem or question
- Summary of data analysis results done as part of the Capstone
- Discussion of the research or work done in the Capstone relative to both the students' curriculum, as well as broader associated natural resource issues or problem

The deliverable can be a 10-15 page double-spaced paper, a public seminar which covers the information described, a curriculum, a management plan, or other appropriate integrative deliverable. Instructors MUST approve the format of the deliverable as a part of Assignment 1 described above.

Course Prerequisites

Senior Natural Resource Conservation major

Textbooks, Learning Materials, and Supply Fees

None

Technical Support

UF Computing Help Desk & Ticket Number: All technical issues require a UF Helpdesk Ticket Number. The UF Helpdesk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> | 352-392-4357

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Assessment	Due Dates
1-3	Work on planning and project		
4		Assignment 1	Sept. 12, 11:59 p.m.
5-9	Work on project		
10		Assignment 2	Oct. 24, 11:59 p.m.
11-15	Work on project		
16		Assignment 3	Dec. 3, 11:59 p.m.

Grading Policy

Course grading is consistent with [UF grading policies](#).

Course Grading Structure

Assignment Type	Point Value	Percent of Final Grade
Assignment 1, Planning document	20	20
Assignment 2, Progress report and feedback from NRC Faculty Mentor	15	15
Assignment 3, Final deliverables	65	65

Grading Scale

Students will be assigned a grade of Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory based on instructor assessment of deliverables and in consultation with work experience or independent study advisors. Total course score of 70.0% or greater will be assigned a “satisfactory” grade, providing all assignments have been turned in on time, are completed satisfactorily, and that feedback on the first assignment has been incorporated into the activity. Total course scores of 69.9% or less will be assigned an “unsatisfactory” grade.

Grade	Points	Percentage
S		70.0-100.0
U		0-69.9

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Campus Health and Wellness Resources

Visit <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/topics> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

Please contact [UMatterWeCare](#) for additional and immediate support.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

- Instructure (Canvas)

- [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)