

## **NRM4302/NRM5303 – Advanced Topics in Conservation Biology Course Syllabus - Fall 2018**

### **Instructor**

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Office Hours: - MWF 1-2 (RAS 116), TR 2-3 (ACR 107C), or By Appointment  
- I also have "Open Door Office Hours". Feel free to come in anytime you see me in my office.  
- You can reach me anytime from 8am - 4pm by text (preferred, fastest), phone, or e-mail (checked daily). We can even arrange Facetime/Skype calls.  
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### **Course Description**

Examines the major areas in conservation-oriented research including patterns of biodiversity, extinction, conservation genetics, conservation of populations, communities and landscapes, and natural resource sustainability.

### **Course Objectives**

Students will examine various advanced topics in Conservation Biology. On completion of the course, students will:

1. Understand how to research key topics and present the information to an audience.
2. Be better communicators having daily practice discussing issues amongst a group of peers, and
3. Have a broader understanding of the most current and pressing issues in the field of conservation biology.

**Additional Outcome Objectives** as Required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the B.S. in Natural Resource Management:

1. Students will be able to identify species of wildland plants and wildlife common to the western United States and describe their natural history.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the elements of an ecosystem.
3. Students will be able to communicate about natural resources and conservation both verbally and in writing.

### **Class Meeting Time/Place**

Tuesday, Thursday 11:00 am -12:15 pm, RAS 129

### **Text and Supplies**

None required. Readings will be provided to students.

### **Course Outline**

Topics to be decided on by students on the first class day. Instructor will provide a preliminary list of topics which will be ranked by students. The highest ranking topics will be presented and discussed in class.

### **NRM 4302 Course Grading**

Attendance & Participation	40%
Topic Lecture and Report	30%
Final Exam	30%

### **NRM 5303 Course Grading**

Attendance & Participation	20%
Topic Lecture and Report	30%
Final Exam	30%
Graduate Paper	20%

Grade Assignment: <60 = F, 60-69 = D, 70-79 = C, 80-89 =B, 90-100 = A.

*Attendance and Discussion Participation:* In-class discussions are critical to the learning process in this class. I expect a high level of engagement to enhance everyone's learning. This requires students to 1) be prepared for each class by reading all assigned papers and completing all related discussion questions before class, and 2) attend class and participate by asking questions, making comments, giving opinions, play devil's advocate, etc. Discussions are to be professional, courteous, and civilized at all times.

*Topic Lecture and Report:* Each student will be assigned a topic and a week for their topic. Topics and weeks will be assigned during the first two weeks of the course. Undergraduate students may be paired with another undergraduate, depending on enrollment. Each student must:

- Prior to Topic Week: Meet with instructor outside of class to choose topic video(s) and reading(s): 2 non-peer-reviewed articles (usually from Conservation/Anthropocene Magazine) and 2 peer-reviewed journal articles. Paired students will each choose their own 2 journal articles, but the remaining material will be common to the pair. Read and watch all material before Topic Week.
- Tuesday of Topic Week: Distribute hardcopies of selected non-peer-reviewed reading(s) (not the journal articles) to the class and show video(s).
- Thursday of Topic Week: Present a lecture-style overview of the topic, based on the 2 (or 4 for paired students) journal articles, to the class (via PowerPoint). Afterward, the student(s) will lead the class in a dynamic discussion based on the PowerPoint, video(s), and non-peer-reviewed article(s). Discussion topics should be pre-arranged if necessary to stimulate discussion.
- Sunday of Topic Week: Submit written topic report by 11:59 pm. The report must be based on the two peer-reviewed journal articles, but may cite other sources as well. If paired, each student submits their own report, based on their 2 assigned journal articles. The report must be a minimum of 5 pages in length (single spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font).

*Final Exam:* A comprehensive final exam will be given at the university-scheduled day and time (see schedule below). Questions will be short-answer and cover the major points from each week of the course.

*Graduate Paper:* Graduate students will read a book of their choice (subject to instructor approval) on a conservation biology topic, then submit a paper that objectively summarizes the book's information at the end of the semester. The report must be a minimum of 5 pages in length (single spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font). The report will conclude with at least 1 page discussing the student's opinions on the book's content, and whether they recommend the book for the topic being discussed.

### **Attendance**

Roll will be taken in each class meeting. The SRSU catalog states "The Instructor will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. An absence is defined as nonattendance to 50 minutes of class." Any time class is missed, for any reason, it will be recorded as an absence. College-related events that conflict with class will not be considered an absence ONLY WITH my prior approval. Missing class will reduce the discussion grade! All assigned readings will be posted in Blackboard. If you miss class, it is advised you obtain any hand-taken notes from a classmate.

**No make-up exams will be given for an unexcused absence.** You must notify me of an excused absence PRIOR to the class you will miss and arrangements for make-up exams must be made BEFORE the exam is given.

### **Late Assignments**

**Due to the nature of this course, late products expected on Tue and Thu of your topic week cannot and will not be accepted.** It is imperative that conflicts with your Topic Week are identified **before** it is scheduled. Once scheduled, changes will be made only if the student finds another student with whom to switch Topic Weeks, or if unable to find such a student, only in the case of emergency.

Late topic reports will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor, with a **10% penalty for each day late** (i.e. 10% for 0-24 hours late, 20% for 24-48 hours late, etc.) Late topic reports are not accepted after seven days. Extended due dates on topic reports may be allowed due to college-related conflicts ONLY WITH my approval PRIOR to the due date. In case of emergencies, arrangements for completing assignments should be made immediately upon return to SRSU.

### **Electronics Policy**

The use of personal laptops, cell phones, iPads, and other electronic devices can create distractions for learning, both for yourself and others. However, such devices can also be great tools to aid learning. Therefore, using electronic

devices for class purposes (e.g. taking notes, working out problems, searching the internet) is allowed in silent mode. If you choose to use electronic devices in class, do so in a professional manner that does not impede others' learning. **The use of internet-capable devices (e.g. smartphones) is not allowed for the final exam.**

### **Academic Integrity**

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is implied: **“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”**

Unauthorized aid includes copying, sharing, or obtaining information from an unauthorized source, attempting to take credit for the intellectual work of another person, falsifying information, and giving or receiving information about a test, quiz, or assignment to other students.

Any student involved in academic dishonesty will receive no credit (0) for work done and/or may be penalized in accordance with published University Rules.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203 8691. E-mail: [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu).

### **Key Dates – Fall 2018**

Mon	08/27	First day of classes
Thu	08/30	Last day for late registration and schedule changes
Mon	09/03	Labor Day holiday
Wed	09/12	Last day to drop course without creating an academic record
Fri	11/16	Last day to withdraw from course with a grade of 'W'.
Fri	11/16	Last day to apply for May graduation without a late fee
W-F	11/21-23	Thanksgiving holiday
Wed	12/05	Last day of classes
Thu	12/06	Dead Day
F, M-W	12/07,10-12	Final Exams
Fri	12/14	Fall Commencement, 7 p.m.

### **Tentative Course Schedule**

Week 1	8/28	Course Overview / Topic Selections	Mrozinski
	8/30	De-extinction & Rewilding	Mrozinski
Week 2	9/04, 06	Nature Deficit Disorder	Mrozinski
Week 3	9/11, 13	Conservation Ethics	Sam
Week 4	9/18, 20	Hunting and Conservation	Howell
Week 5	9/25, 27	Trophic Cascades	Liam
Week 6	10/02, 04	Endangered Species Management	Lucas
Week 7	10/09, 11	Ex-Situ Conservation	Jake
Week 8	10/16, 18	Entomophagy	Ben and Taylor
Week 9	10/23, 25	Landscape Conservation	Brandt
Week 10	10/30, 11/01	Conservation Communication	Shea
Week 11	11/06, 08	Human Demographics	Haley and Erica
Week 12	11/13, 15	Eco-Bigotry toward Invasive Species	Faith and Rachel
Week 13	11/20	Special Topic: Climate Change	Mrozinski
	11/22	Thanksgiving Holiday	N/A
Week 14	11/27-29	Marine Tourism	Cody and Luke
Week 15	12/04	Final Exam Review	Mrozinski
	12/08	Book Summaries Due at 11:59 pm	Grad students only
Week 16	12/10*	<b>Final Exam, 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.</b>	All