

**Sul Ross State University**  
NRM 5324 Conservation Biology  
Dept of Natural Resource Management  
Fall 2020—Course Syllabus

**Instructor:**

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Office hours: Since this is an online class, communication will be through email or phone. If you would like to meet in person, please call or email me to schedule an office appointment.

**Class meeting time and space:** Blackboard

**Course Catalog Description:**

An advanced course exploring conservation-based research, including threats to biodiversity, biogeography, extinction, conservation genetics, landscape connectivity, endangered species conservation, ecological restoration, and conservation education.

**Course Objectives:**

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

- a. have a broader understanding of the most current and pressing issues in the field of conservation biology,
- b. have enhanced ability to research key topics in conservation biology, and
- c. have increased ability to communicate about conservation biology topics.

**Textbook/Videos:**

A textbook is not required. However, you will be required to read 1 book during the semester which you will need to either purchase or check out from a library. You will also be required to watch several documentaries that you will need to rent but the total cost for rentals will not exceed \$30.

**Grading:**

	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>% of Course Grade</b>
Weekly Topic Discussions (25 pts each)	300	30%
Weekly Topic Reports (25 pts each)	300	30%
Peer Assessment of Discussion Board	100	10%
Peer Assessment of Book Reports	100	10%
Book Report	100	10%
Reflection Journal	100	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Scale:** 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; <60% = F

### **Weekly Assignments:**

Assignments will be posted on Blackboard and will be due that class week. The class is structured into weekly time periods that begin on Monday and end on Sunday. All assignments are due by Sunday. In case there is a technical issue with Blackboard on the weekend, you will be given a “grace period” until Monday at noon to submit assignments. After this grace period, **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED**. See the class schedule (posted in Blackboard) for the dates and assignments for each week.

### **Topic Materials:**

Each week we will explore a different topic. Your readings and videos will be posted to Blackboard. It is expected that you will read/watch all material provided for each topic. You should review all material PRIOR to posting to the discussion board and writing your report.

### **Topic Reports:**

Each week you will submit a report on the topic covered. Each report should be a synthesis of materials covered in class. Specific instructions on topic report requirements will be provided in Blackboard. Each report is due by midnight Sunday.

### **Discussion Boards:**

Each week one or more Discussion Boards (also called forums) will be posted to Blackboard for student participation. Each student should participate in the forum and each posting will be graded based upon the relevance, depth of knowledge, and unique contribution that it made to the discussion. For each discussion board, you will need to make your own original post (by Thursday), as well as comment on posts by other students or instructors (by Sunday). You must make these postings during the week in which it was scheduled. Please make your first initial post (original post) by Thursday of the week it is scheduled. You then have until Sunday to respond to other posts. I suggest you reply to at least 2 other student posts to facilitate discussion and receive maximum credit. You will not receive credit for late postings.

### **Book Report:**

You will select one book to read related to a topic in the class. I will provide a list of books that you can choose from. You will have the entire semester to read the book and create your report. Specific instructions will be provided in Blackboard.

### **Peer Assessment - Discussion Board:**

You will choose one topic that we are covering in class for which you will act as the facilitator for that week’s discussion forum. In addition to your usual discussion board postings, you will also facilitate and grade the discussion forum for that week. Specific instructions will be provided in Blackboard.

### **Peer Assessment - Book Report:**

You will review and assess (using a peer assessment tool) book reports submitted by other students in the class. Specific instructions will be provided in Blackboard.

### **Reflection Journal:**

You will post three video reflections on the course in a Blackboard journal with 1) beginning thoughts, 2) midterm reflections, and 3) end of course reflections. Questions for you to address in your video are included on Blackboard.

## Course Schedule

### NRM 5324 - Conservation Biology: Fall 2020 Tentative Course Schedule (see Blackboard for a more detailed schedule):

Week	Beginning date	Due date	Topic Covered [Other]
1	24-Aug	30-Aug	Intro to Conservation Biology [Journal]
2	31-Aug	6-Sep	Sixth Extinction
3	7-Sep	13-Sep	Rewilding
4	14-Sep	20-Sep	Predators and Trophic Cascades
5	21-Sep	27-Sep	US/MX Border Wall
6	28-Sep	4-Oct	Nature Deficient Disorder
7	5-Oct	11-Oct	Human Population Growth
8	12-Oct	18-Oct	Climate Change [Journal]
9	19-Oct	25-Oct	Energy Development
10	26-Oct	1-Nov	Bats and White-nose Syndrome
11	2-Nov	8-Nov	Feeding the World
12	9-Nov	15-Nov	Hope and Conservation
13	16-Nov	22-Nov	[Book Report Due]
14	23-Nov	29-Nov	[Thanksgiving Break]
15	30-Nov	6-Dec	[Review Book Reports; Journal]

## Academic Policies, Resources, and Other Information

### Distance Education Non-Participation Statement:

Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based and ITV courses. The University allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences. In Web courses, this policy is interpreted as not participating for more than 3 weeks in a long semester, 1 week in a summer session, or 3 days in the midwinter session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an "F" in the course dropped. Inactivity may include the following:

- Not logging on to the course
- Not submitting assignments
- Not participating in scheduled activities
- Not communicating with the instructor by phone or email, and/or
- Not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus.

### Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty 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 another student. Copying information verbatim from a book, another paper, or the internet is also plagiarism, instead you must paraphrase or state the information in your own words. 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 (see student handbook). Multiple offenses will result in the expulsion from the class with the grade of F.

**SRSU Disability Services:**

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Rebecca Greathouse Wren, LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email [rebecca.wren@sulross.edu](mailto:rebecca.wren@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

**Distance Education Statement:**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

**SRSU Library Services:**

The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

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

1. Students will be able to apply statistical concepts and procedures to research.
2. Students will be able to evaluate literature and references to substantiate the applied research project.
3. Students will be able to justify and defend research questions and design.

*Student Learning Outcomes for the M.Ag. in Natural Resource Management.*

1. Students will be able to apply statistical concepts and procedures to natural resource data.
2. Students will be able to evaluate literature and references as they apply to the natural resource field
3. Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the fundamentals and advanced concepts of range and wildlife management.