

# NRM 5324: Syllabus

**Sul Ross State University**  
NRM 5324 Conservation Biology  
Dept of Natural Resource Management  
Fall 2022 – Course Syllabus

**Instructor:** Betsy Evans

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**Office hours:** Tuesday 1 – 3 PM and Thursday 8 – 11 AM, and by appointment. If you would like to meet virtually or by phone please email me to schedule an appointment.

**Class meeting time and space:**

Asynchronous Blackboard (Web)

**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 for this course. However, you will be required to read one (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.

**Weekly Course Activities:**

Under the **COURSE CONTENT** menu in Blackboard, find required activities for each week of the course, including Topic Reports and Discussion Board submissions. Each week a new topic will be explored with required readings and/or videos for your review.



The class is structured into weekly time periods that begin on Monday and end on Sunday. All assignments are due by Sunday. In case of a technical issue with Blackboard on the weekend, you will be given a grace period until Monday at noon to submit assignments. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

### **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.

### **Discussion Boards:**

Each week one or more Discussion Board topics will be posted in that week's page under **COURSE CONTENT**. All Discussion Board topics can be found in the **Discussion Board** page under **QUICK LINKS**.

Each activity will be graded based upon the relevance, depth of knowledge, and unique contribution that it made to the discussion and/or course. Each Course Activity is worth 25 points. You are graded on rubrics which are accessible in **My Grades** on Blackboard under **COURSE INFORMATION**. For example, in order to achieve maximum points for **Timely and Complete** Participation (20% of each 25 points possible), for each Discussion Board activity, make your first original post (by midnight Thursday), and **minimally** comment on at least two (2) posts by other students (by midnight Sunday).

### **Additional Course Activities:**

- **Book Report:**

You will select one book to read related to a topic in the class on which you will write a detailed report. I will provide a list of books, but you are welcome to make additional suggestions. You will have the entire semester to read the book and create your report, which will be due at the end of **Week 13**. Book selections should be made by the end of **Week 3**. Specific instructions will be provided in Blackboard under **COURSE INFORMATION > Activity Info – Book Report** and under **COURSE CONTENT** for **Week 3** and **Week 13**. The grading rubric will be made available on Blackboard.

- **Discussion Board Facilitation:**

An additional course activity requires a student to facilitate the discussion on the Discussion Board each week, omitting Week 1. During Week 1's Activities, each student will select two weeks to act as facilitator. More instructions and information about grading are on Blackboard under **COURSE INFORMATION > Activity Info – Discussion Board Facilitation** and under **COURSE CONTENT > Week 1**. The grading rubric will be made available on Blackboard.

- **Reflection Journals:**

You will create and post two video reflections on the course in a Blackboard journal with beginning thoughts due **Week 2**, and end of course reflections due **Week 15**. Questions for you to address in your video are included on Blackboard under **COURSE INFORMATION > Activity Info – Reflection Journals** and under **COURSE CONTENT** for Weeks 1 and 2 and Week 15. The grading rubric will be made available on Blackboard.

### **Syllabus Quiz:**

Before the **COURSE CONTENT** can be accessed (including content for Week 1), students must review the **Start Here module content** and complete the **Syllabus Quiz**. The Start Here module content is available under **COURSE CONTENT** on Blackboard.

**Grading:**

You will receive feedback on each graded assignment in the **My Grades** area of Blackboard. Grading percentage breakdowns are below. Rubrics for assignments are available in **My Grades** as well.

	<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 Facilitation of Discussion Board	200	20%
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

### Course Schedule

#### NRM 5324 - Conservation Biology: Tentative Fall 2022 Course Schedule

*Weekly Activities open on Mondays and close on Sundays*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Beginning date</b>	<b>Ending date</b>	<b>Topic Covered [Other]</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1	22-Aug	28-Aug	Intro to Conservation Biology	1 Journal due, 1 discussion, 1 wiki, 1 topic report
2	29-Aug	4-Sep	The Sixth Extinction	1 discussion, 1 topic report
3	5-Sep	11-Sep	Rewilding	1 discussion, 1 topic report
4	12-Sep	18-Sep	Predators and Trophic Cascades	1 discussion, 1 topic report
5	19-Sep	25-Sep	US/MX Border Wall	1 discussion, 1 topic report
6	26-Sep	2-Oct	Nature Deficit Disorder	1 discussion, 1 topic report
7	3-Oct	9-Oct	Human Population Growth	1 discussion, 1 topic report
8	10-Oct	11-Oct	Climate Change	1 discussion, 1 topic report
9	12-Oct	23-Oct	Energy Development	1 discussion, 1 topic report
10	24-Oct	30-Oct	Bats and White-Nose Syndrome	1 discussion, 1 topic report
11	31-Oct	6-Nov	Feeding the World	1 discussion, 1 topic report
12	7-Nov	13-Nov	Hope and Conservation	1 discussion, 1 topic report
13	14-Nov	20-Nov	Book Report	Book Report Due
14	21-Nov	27-Nov	Thanksgiving - no class	0
15	28-Nov	4-Dec	Wrap-up (last class day is November 30)	1 Journal due

**Distance Education Statement:**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. 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. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

**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 Integrity:**

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

**SRSU Library Services:**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine 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 logging in with your LoboID and password. 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 (432-8378123).

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website, [library.swtjc.edu](http://library.swtjc.edu). The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.

**SRSU Disability Services:**

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.

### **Classroom Climate of Respect:**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

### **Diversity Statement:**

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

### **Marketable Skills (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board):**

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of key NRM topics
2. Students will apply learning to projects including bio statistics, research methods, and scientific writing.
3. Students will demonstrate skills in scientific writing and analysis.

### **Additional Outcome Objectives (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools):**

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

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

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

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