

Natural Resource Conservation
NRM 5325: W01
Web Delivered Course
Spring 2025

Instructor:

Dr. Rob Kinucan

RAS 109

Phone 432-837-8204

Email: kinucan@sulross.edu

Office Hours: MW 9:00-11:00. I am also available by appointment.

Course Description:

Welcome to Natural Resource Conservation! I am Dr. Rob Kinucan, and I will work with you this semester to gain insight into natural resource conservation, and hopefully view conservation issues from a fresh perspective. This class provides an overview of the science of natural resource management and integrates topics such as plant ecology, soil science, climatology, economics, and policy within the context of range, wildlife and forest management, plant ecology, energy conservation and urban planning.

Required Textbook:

Natural Resources: Ecology, Economics, and Policy. 2003, second edition. By Jerry Holechek, Richard Cole, James Fisher, and Raul Valdez. Prentice Hall. Available at the SRSU Bookstore and via online retailers.

Additional reading:

Leopold, Aldo, 1949. *A Sand County Almanac – The Land Ethic* (Available in course documents in Blackboard)

MacCleery, Doug, 1999. *Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic: Is it Only Half a Loaf Unless a Consumption Ethic Accompanies It? or Is the Shift to "Ecological Sustainability" on U.S. Public Lands Merely a Sophisticated "NIMBYism" Masquerading as a "Paradigm Shift?"* (Available in course documents in Blackboard)

Exam Schedule:

Exam 1 – Monday, March 10

Exam 2 – Wednesday, April 30

Assignments:

Assignments are due weekly, as noted under Course Content Modules. Due dates are also visible under Gradebook.

Term Paper Schedule:

Submit topic for approval – February 17 (submit via email to instructor)

Title & outline due – March 5 (submit via email to instructor)

Paper due – April 7 (submit through Blackboard)

Grades:

2 one-hour exams @ 100 points ea. – 200 points

Weekly assignments – 100 points

Term paper – 100 points

Total – 400 points possible

Final grade assignment: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; < 60 =F.

Your assignment and term project grades will reward two things: the quality and timeliness of your responses. You should utilize good writing practices (use spell-check, concise writing, proper grammar, and syntax) and directly address questions posed. Effective communication is probably one of the most important tools you will take into the workforce, and I place a premium on your ability to communicate clearly and effectively on your assignments. Regular class participation is an essential part of this online course, and I expect that you will log on to the course weekly. You must read all the assignments and assigned material. Late assignments will only be accepted under extenuating circumstances, and at my discretion. If an assignment is accepted late, a point penalty will be assessed, again at my discretion. All grades will be posted in Blackboard Gradebook.

Course Student Learning Outcomes:

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the science of natural resource management. At the end of this course, you will be able to: 1) explain the history, science, and policy approaches to natural resource management, and 2) apply that knowledge to analyze situations addressing alternate uses of rangeland, wildlife, soil, and water resources within social and economic contexts. By the completion of the course, you should be able to identify and understand key natural resource management issues and integrate ecological, economic, and policy management criteria in an applied framework.

Marketable Skills:

Students are expected to develop the following general marketable skills throughout this course.

Critical thinking and communication: Students will practice problem solving and critical thinking to analyze, interpret and discuss natural resource issues in persuasive essays, short responses, and presentations.

Program Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate they are able to: 1) apply statistical concepts and procedures to natural resource data, 2) evaluate literature and references to substantiate an applied research project, 3) demonstrate their knowledge of and mastery of the fundamentals and advanced concepts of range and wildlife management.

Course Material:

This is an asynchronous web-delivered course with no formal meeting times. You should plan on spending two hours per credit hour per week on the class to successfully learn the material. Your grade will be based upon three components: 1) two one-hour essay/short answer exams, 2) one term paper, and 3) weekly reading assignments with concise responses to questions. Exams will be timed. For each exam a study guide of review questions is posted in Blackboard under Course Content. Each exam will consist of questions derived from the study guide. Assignments will be posted on a weekly basis with most of the material based on readings from the textbook. Additional readings will also be assigned and available through online links in Blackboard. On occasion, some terms or questions in the exam study guide will not be covered in the assigned reading. In those cases, it is up to you to independently research the term or question. The weekly assignments and term paper are due by the stipulated dates. Please note all assignments are accessible from the beginning of the course, and you can turn them in at any time up to the due date. The term paper criteria and assessment procedure are posted in Blackboard under the Term Paper Module. All test and other due dates can be found in Gradebook. All dates and times will be based on local time in Alpine, Texas. Cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable and will be handled accordingly. I utilize the online plagiarism software SafeAssign within Blackboard.

Communication Expectation and Office Hours:

If you have questions or concerns, I am available through email, Blackboard Collaborate, and phone. My general office hours are noted above, and in Blackboard, but I am happy to meet at other times by arrangement. Formal email communication is through our university assigned email addresses. Because of spam filters and the volume of email I receive it is possible that if you send email from another address (e.g., yahoo.com, gmail.com, etc.) it might be filtered as junk mail, and I will not receive it. I will respond within 24 hours during

the work week and am available during normal university working hours. If you reach out on a weekend or holiday, I will respond as soon as possible, but please expect a delay.

All email should include the following in the subject line: First initial + last name + brief description of subject (for example: R Kinucan – question for assignment 2). **“Sign” your name in emails.** It is difficult to identify you by the email address alone. Common courtesy dictates that you conduct your academic correspondence like you would business correspondence. Assignments and attached files should similarly be titled: First initial + last name + assignment name (for example: R_Kinucan_termpaper_1.docx). I will accept Word document files, or Excel, and PowerPoint as the exercise dictates. Please contact me in advance if you desire to submit other file formats so we can insure compatibility. If you fail to include an appropriate subject line, your email may be accidentally purged with junk mail.

Please use **Blackboard Help Desk** for issues related to technical problems with Blackboard.

ADA Statement:

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 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 mschwartz@sulross.edu. The 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.

Academic Integrity:

Students 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, including meaningful and pertinent participation. 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.

Miscellaneous:

This syllabus is your roadmap and contract for the course. I adhere to the syllabus; however, on occasion events occur in which it is advantageous to you to adjust. As an example, it may become apparent that there is a reason to adjust the date that an exam is scheduled. If something like this occurs, I will give you advanced notification of such a change. If you find that despite your best efforts you are unable to submit an assignment, or have some other challenges with the course, notify me as soon as you can. I may be able to help you resolve the problem, and I know you are conscientious to keep me informed. I will respond to your questions as quickly as I can.

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 in the student handbook.

Course Topical Outline:

- I. Course Introduction – Meet the instructor, review syllabus, and student introductions.
- II. Overview – Basic natural resource concepts and terms (Chapter 1).
- III. Management Foundations
 - A. Historical Perspective (Chapter 2).
 - B. The Land Ethic (Assigned reading).
 - C. Basic Ecology (Chapter 3).
 - D. Conservation Economics (Chapter 4) and Planning, Policy, & Administration (Chapter 5).
- IV. Air, Water, and Land Resources
 - A. Atmospheric Resources and Climate (Chapter 6).
 - B. Water Resources (Chapter 7).
 - C. Soil Resources (Chapter 8).
 - D. United States Ecosystems (Chapter 9).
- V. The Land-Based and Renewable Wild Living Resources
 - A. Rangeland and Range Management (Chapter 11).
 - B. Wildlife Conservation and Management (Chapter 15).
 - C. Biodiversity and Endangered Species Management (Chapter 17).