

RTM 251- RECREATION AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Department of Recreation and Tourism Management
California State University Northridge

Regular or On Line Class Options

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Office Hours: posted at faculty web page

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisite: Lower division writing requirement. A study of recreational use of outdoor/natural areas and the trends, both past and present that create changing patterns of use. An overview of human, animal, and technological impacts on outdoor recreation resources. A study of outdoor program providers and outdoor recreation delivery systems for/in the outdoors. Assessment of environmental impacts and development of an environmental ethic for both urban and wilderness contexts. Regular written assignments and field learning experiences are required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this course the student will:

1. Develop an understanding of the historical roots of our cultural attitudes towards the natural environment and the results of these attitudes on the American wilderness and the American city.
2. Develop an understanding of the Conservation, the Environmental, and the Outdoor Pursuit's movements past and present.
3. Develop an understanding of and appreciation for the natural environment with its processes, resources, and ecosystems.
4. Develop an understanding of the use of the outdoor environment for human development and recreation.
5. Develop an understanding of humankind's use of outdoor recreation resources and the way to utilize these resources with minimum impact.
6. Develop an awareness of the origins, historical attitudes and current practices of agencies that control the use of outdoor recreation resources.
7. Develop an understanding of programs in outdoor education and nature interpretation.
8. Develop a personal and professional environmental ethic for 21st century life.

COURSE CONTENT:

COURSE SCHEDULE:

I. Outdoor Recreation and its Benefits A. Physical B. Psychological/Emotional C. Social D. Spiritual	Week 1
II. Environmental Impact A. Personal impact on the natural environment B. Minimal impact life-style C. Minimal impact outdoor recreation	Week 2 & 3
III. Natural Resource Management Agencies A. The Federal Government Agencies (NPS/ USFS/ BLM/ USFW) 1. Legislative empowerment 2. Current management policy B. State and Local Agencies	Week 4, 5, 6, & 7
IV. Environmental Processes and Ecosystems: an Overview	Week 8
V. Outdoor Program Providers and their Historical Development A. The early Conservation Movement B. The Nature Study Movement C. Interpretation D. Camping Movement E. Residential Outdoor Education F. Adventure Education	Week 9, 10, & 11
VI. Outdoor Discovery Field Trip	Week 12 & 13
VII. The Future of Outdoor Education/Recreation in Leisure & Rec. A. The Network of Providers B. The Urban and Wildland Interface 1. Barriers to Involvement 2. Model Programs	Week 14
VIII. The Future of the Environmental Crisis A. Population and Other Global Issues B. Responses - Hope or Despair	Week 15

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Lectures/Discussions/Readings/Projects/Exams/Field Experiences. The student is expected to accept their share of responsibility for the learning process. Participation in the methods is the responsibility of students and instructor. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a field experience that will expose them to outdoor based programs and awareness of the natural environment.

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Environmental Life-style Audit: The assignment will require you to keep a journal of your behavior as it relates to issues of energy consumption and cycles, and environmental impact. The project will be done by the third week of class. Click on the schedule and assignments link on the class website. (10% of grade)

Exam I & Exam II: Objective tests on class reading assignments will be given as a series of quizzes with the first check point of completion approximately midterm and a second check point during the final week of the semester (dates finalized and posted on class website). Total quizzes equal approximately 42% of total grade. (The face to face class format consolidates the first three on-line quizzes into a single exam format at midterm and the second three quizzes into the final exam).

Research Paper on Outdoor Recreation Issue:

Students will complete a research paper on an environmental issue that affects the recreational use of the outdoors. The paper topic must have a clear connection with some aspect of **outdoor recreation behavior and its relationship to the natural environment**. The outdoor recreation behavior connection could be explored from one of three traditional approaches: *conflict between recreational users, outdoor recreation participation study, or global environmental issue tied to outdoor recreation*. Details for the project are available at the course web site.

Selection of topic is due on the fifth week of class via email. Research papers will be submitted electronically for posting by the 10th week of class. Required student interactions with five selected reports will be completed by week 15. (Project valued at 22% of grade).

Field Education Experience: Outdoor Discovery

In addition to the on-line learning or in-class learning there is a required field learning experience that will be self-initiated. Several options are possible and are outlined at the assignments section of the class web page. Please consult the web page early as some of the opportunities require early action in the semester. These could range from overnight outdoor adventure experiences to participation in more passive environmental education programs. The experience will be fun and a great compliment to the issues discussed in the class. A brief journal of your observations and learning will be submitted electronically. Assignment is due by week 14. (Grade value of 20 %.)

Environmental Ethic: A brief summary of your individual life-style values and commitments while a sojourner on the planet. Limit of 1 to 2 pages. Consult the outline of this assignment. Due date is week 15. (Grade value 6%)

Class Dialogue and Participation: If an on-line discussion (either live & time certain or a threaded discussion done on your own time) is linked to part of an assignment (e.g. lifestyle audit) please note that your participation is an integral part of the assignment. Your dialogue and discussion is highly desirable and part of the grading rubric for that larger assignment.

TEXTBOOKS: Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv. In addition to the text there will be notes and reading material that are available on the class web page.

