RECR 310
Natural Resources and the Informed Citizen  (Course #3082)
Spring Semester, 2011 TR 2:00 – 3:15 Yolo 171

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Catalog Description

Prerequisites: Junior standing. The role of citizens in influencing natural resources policy. Integrative study of factors influencing wildlife, timber, range, water, air, mineral, and recreation resources, including resource scarcity, societal structure, economic influences, and institutional policies. Focus on public involvement in natural resources planning and decision-making. Survey of basic principles of multiple-use natural resource management. This is an approved General Education course. (Fulfills Area D of Upper Division Theme D: Environmental Issues)

Course Purpose

Graduates of the course will be able to better evaluate issues involving the management of public natural resources and more completely exercise the civic responsibility and right to influence natural resource policy through public participation and bureaucratic and political channels. Graduates will be motivated to take an active interest in the management of public natural resources and to participate as citizens in policy formation. Additionally, students will be provoked to pursue further studies in natural resources to expand their knowledge of applied ecology and natural resources management.

Course Objectives

1. To understand the personal, social, and economic importance of natural resources for all citizens, and to describe how individuals and groups establish and express their environmental values.

2. To provide an understanding of the availability and scarcity of specific natural resources in the United States, and globally.

3. To investigate practices and critical issues in managing natural resources to meet current and future user demands.

4. To gain familiarity with the “missions” of natural resource agencies, the resources they manage, their historical evolution, current issues, and their importance in the environmental policy arena.
5. To understand the channels through which enlightened citizens can provide effective public input into natural resource management decisions.

6. To examine historical and current principles and practices of natural resources management, identifying why certain practices cause controversy, and how these issues are approached in the citizen participatory political arena.

7. To understand basic principles of “multiple use” natural resource management and the various social impacts of alternative management strategies.

8. To meet the relevant goals and objectives of GE breadth requirements for Area C and Area D courses, and the goals and objectives of the Upper Division Thematic program.


Summary Description

Recreation 310 is organized in three main segments: 1) an overview of natural resource scarcity and global implications to supply of and demand for natural resources in the U.S.; an explanation of the principal philosophies guiding public resource conservation and management and their historical roots, 2) instruction in the use of channels by which citizens can influence public resource management policies and practices, and 3) an introduction to physical, biological, ecological, economic and social principles at the foundation of natural resource management. Current issues will be evaluated.

Required & Recommended Books

Books Recommended to Complete Writing Assignment A:
1) National Parks: The American Experience by Alfred Runte
2) Mountains Without Handrails by Joseph Sax  (recommend Amazon for these)

Books Recommended to Complete Writing Assignment E:
See “Supplemental Reading List” in this syllabus, or
1) Losing Ground by Mark Dowie
2) In a Dark Wood by Alston Chase
3) Saviors of the Earth? by M.S. Coffman  (recommend Amazon for these)

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Grading

Course requirements include three examinations, one written assignment (Paper A,B,C, D, E, or F), class attendance and participation, and attendance at a minimum of four public meetings during the semester. These items will be weighted as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper (A,B,C,D,E,F)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Estimated curve:
- 90 - 100 = A
- 80 - 89 = B
- 70 - 79 = C
- Attending four public meetings during the semester is mandatory. Meeting journals will be graded CR/NC. If you do not attend four meetings and complete four meeting journals, you will not receive credit for the course. See the “Course Schedule” file for due dates, and the “Syllabus Extras” file for the assignment sheet and journal form.

- Theme D students are well served by the Campus Sustainability Programs [http://www.csuchico.edu/sustainability/index.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/sustainability/index.shtml) including the Environmental Action Resource Center (EARC) [http://www.aschico.com/earc](http://www.aschico.com/earc) Get Involved!!

- As a General Studies (Upper Division Thematic) course, RECR 310 has a substantial writing component of 1500 words. Writing assignments are assessed on both content and form. Written assignments (in “Syllabus Extras” file) are to be typed and turned in on time. If circumstances preclude your ability to complete an assignment on time, you must discuss this with the instructor **before** the due date so that other arrangements can be made. Otherwise, your late work **will not** be accepted.

- Exams will be multi-dimensional, including true-false, multiple-choice, fill-in, short answer and essay. A list of possible essay exam questions (Key Questions) is included near the end of the “Syllabus Extras” file. A random selection of these questions will be used on each exam. You should use this list as a study guide. Additionally, there are three exam study guides in the “Syllabus Extras” file. Exams will cover lectures, readings, class activities and films. Exam #1 covers approximately the first third of the course, Exam #2 the middle third. Exam #3 is cumulative.

- Course Syllabus, Course Schedule, and Syllabus Extras materials, are on Vista/WebCT
- Reading assignments for Natural Resources and the Informed Citizen are listed in the Course Schedule on Vista/WebCT
- Participation includes attendance and active involvement in class activities such as preparation of discussion questions and in-class simulations.

- Electronic Devices - - It's all about respect...The classroom environment is one of mutual respect and consideration for all in attendance. This includes fellow peers, guest speakers, and the instructor. Please make sure cell phones, pagers, iPods, laptops and other personal media devices are turned completely off prior to the beginning of class time. Anyone acting in a disrespectful manner to others will be asked to leave and will receive a 10 point reduction to their grade.

**Note:** The first two weeks of the semester are an open add/drop period. During weeks three and four, an add or drop requires the Instructor’s signature. After week four students will need a “serious and compelling” reason for adds, drops, and change of grading option, requiring permission of the Instructor, Department Chair, and College Dean.
Welcome to Upper Division Theme D: Environmental Issues

The Environmental Issues Theme aims to achieve these central goals and objectives:

to impart an understanding of and an appreciation for the place of the human species in the
global ecosystem,
to examine the ways that the environment has influenced human behavior,
to provide skills and information necessary to assess human environmental impacts and
to pursue ways to maintain Earth’s life-support systems.

In order to provide unity and coherence, each course in the Environmental Issues Upper Division Theme has been designed by theme instructors in consultation with one another to employ a core set of concepts, theories, issues, pedagogical approaches and activities.

**Concepts/Theories common to all theme courses:**

- **Interconnectivity** – the ecological principle: highlighting the interrelationships that characterize the natural order and the place of humans in that order
- **Unintended Consequences** – the precautionary principle: caution is the best policy when altering the environment, due to the difficulty of foreseeing all the consequences of human activity
- **Plurality of Worldviews** – value pluralism: diverse interpretations of the relationships between humans and nature
- **Disciplinary Perspectives** – problems of evidence: what counts as knowledge and what counts as evidence depend on criteria that are often discipline specific

**Issues common to all theme courses:**

- **Resource Use** (Food, Water, Energy, Shelter)
- **Human Population / Consumption**
- **Biodiversity Loss**
- **Global Warming / Climate Change**

**Approaches common to all theme courses:**

- **Common vocabulary** – employing and explaining key terms across theme courses, for example, “ecological consciousness, biocentrism and anthropocentrism."
- **Spirit of Hope** – A solution orientation so students emerge from theme courses with ideas and direction to address humanity’s current environmental crises
- **California** – Reference to the special environmental problems and opportunities presented by California’s unique social, political, economic and ecological identity
- **Sustainability** – Attention to the broader environmental questions raised by human development as concerns the economy, social equity, and the environmental consequences of human development

**Activities common to all theme courses:**

- **Ecological Footprint** – activities dealing with the impacts of various human production and consumption patterns
- **Civic Engagement** – projects designed to take students outside the classroom to make an impact on the community with what they have discovered in class