

## *Course Syllabus*

# **Conservation Techniques**

*Course number: 11:216:315*

Online

*Professor: Dr. Marci Meixler ([meixler@sebs.rutgers.edu](mailto:meixler@sebs.rutgers.edu))*

## **Description**

Many of you want to know how the knowledge you learn in Ecology or Environmental Science classes can be used in the application of conservation and management. This course is an introduction to the diverse ways information is used for regulations, decisions, and conservation actions. Online lecture material will present the principles and review the methods used for each approach. Case studies will illustrate how conservation actions were developed and applied.

## **Learning goals:**

- To understand the ways that information is used for decision-making and conservation actions
- To gain knowledge of tools used in the practice of conservation
- To practice critical thinking regarding the proper use of conservation techniques

## **Course Format**

This course will use web-based education consisting of readings, critical scientific papers, on-line quizzes, a conservation paper and a final exam.

You will begin each topic area by reading an overview which, in addition to providing an introduction to the content, will also contain example applications, benefits and drawbacks of each technique and in most cases, a case-study detailing application. The overviews have references to other optional readings many of which are posted in the doc sharing section of the website. I posted most images in the file sharing section (in images.zip) so you can better view an image that might appear blurry or hard to read in the readings.

## **Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic Integrity. You are responsible for understanding the [RU Academic Integrity Policy](#). I will strongly enforce this Policy and pursue all violations. For all examinations and assignments, you will be required to uphold the RU Honor Pledge, which states, “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination or assignment.” For all written assignments, we will screen your work through an automated plagiarism detection service that compares your work against a large database of past work.

## Grading System

This course utilizes *student-directed* learning as the primary means of instruction and evaluation.

Online quizzes (14 – 5% each)	70%
Field visit conservation paper	10%
Final exam	20%

1. Online quizzes-You are required to take an online quiz for each topic. You should take notes during your readings of the topic so you can better answer the questions. You will have 5 mins for each quiz. Quizzes will be open until midnight EST on the due date.
2. Field visit conservation paper-1 page, 12 pt font, 1 inch margin, double-spaced paper on the types of conservation currently underway and your thoughts on future management of a conservation site near your home. You will be required to turn in your final paper online by midnight the day before class ends. Late papers will be docked 10 pts per day.
3. Final exam-The final exam comprises 20% of the overall grade. The exam is open notes, open internet but is limited to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

**There is going to come a time when you run out of time to do an assignment. You'll have two choices: 1) hand in a mediocre assignment or 2) cheat. Pick the first.**

## Readings

There is no required textbook for this class. All information is provided in the online readings and associated papers. References are provided at the end of each reading for optional additional material on each subject.

## Policy for excuses

To qualify for special consideration, all excuses must be submitted by email with supporting documentation (i.e. medical note, army drill notice, etc). Excuses submitted 'before' the event are given more weight. Whether or not special consideration is given is entirely at the discretion of the instructor. *Excuses without supporting documentation will not be granted. Do not email asking for special consideration without including supporting documentation.*

Things that do not qualify: vacation, work travel, long hours at work, etc.

## How to do well in this class

Each weekday over the next three and a half weeks a new topic (unit) will be introduced. You will be expected to review the reading (and any associated papers) and take a quiz for each topic.

One note: this is a 16 week class shrunk down into just three and a half weeks. It will be intense. On average you would normally spend 3 hours/week in class plus additional time outside class for assignments. Since each unit here is the equivalent of a single week of normal class, be prepared to spend several hours reading about each unit's topic.

To do well in this class you should:

- Review all readings on the day they are assigned
- Take the quiz before the deadline
- Meet all deadlines
- Turn in your paper on time; make sure it is convincing and well researched
- Review the readings once more before the final exam and make sure you understand the basic concept of each unit

SAMPLE

## Class schedule

*Note: all due dates are at midnight unless otherwise noted*

Unit	Date	Topic	Due dates
1	Jul 24	<b><i>Science and Conservation</i></b> Online reading Quiz Respond to icebreaker	Jul 25 Jul 30
2	Jul 25	<b><i>Standards and Criteria</i></b> Online reading Quiz	Jul 26
3	Jul 26	<b><i>Rewilding</i></b> Online reading Donlan paper and rebuttal to Donlan paper Quiz Submit final project idea	Jul 27 Jul 27
4	Jul 27	<b><i>Endangered Species Part 1</i></b> Online reading Quiz	Jul 28
5	Jul 28	<b><i>Endangered Species Part 2</i></b> Online reading Endangered species paper Quiz	Jul 30
6	Jul 31	<b><i>Sustainability</i></b> Online reading Quiz	Aug 1
7	Aug 1	<b><i>Ecosystem-Based Management</i></b> Online reading Quiz	Aug 2
8	Aug 2	<b><i>Biological Criteria and Indexing</i></b> Online reading Quiz	Aug 3
9	Aug 3	<b><i>Ecosystem Services</i></b> Online reading McCauley paper Quiz	Aug 4

- 10 Aug 4 **Restoration**  
Online reading  
Quiz Aug 6
- 11 Aug 7 **Renaturing**  
Online reading  
Kareiva paper  
Quiz Aug 8
- 12 Aug 8 **National Environmental Policy Act**  
Online reading  
Quiz Aug 9
- 13 Aug 9 **Adaptive Management**  
Online reading  
Quiz Aug 10
- 14 Aug 10 **Habitat Assessment**  
Online reading  
Quiz Aug 11
- 15 Aug 11 **Day off to research and write paper and study for exam**
- 16 Aug 14 **FINAL EXAM and optional survey** Aug 14  
You have until midnight Aug 14 to take this exam  
Optional survey – will help with future offerings of this class
- 17 Aug 15 **FIELD VISIT PAPER SUBMITTED** Aug 15