



# Course Approval Form

For instructions:  
<http://registrar.gmu.edu/facultystaff/catalog-revisions/course/>

**Action Requested:** (definitions available at website above)

Create NEW       Inactivate  
 Modify (check all that apply below)

**Course Level:**

Undergraduate     Graduate

Title (must be 75% similar to original)     Repeat Status     Prereq/coreq     Grade Mode  
 Credits     Schedule Type     Restrictions     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**College/School:**     **Department:**   
**Submitted by:**     **Ext:**     **Email:**

**Subject Code:**     **Number:**     **Effective Term:**  Fall     Spring     Summer  
(Do not list multiple codes or numbers. Each course proposal must have a separate form.)    Year

**Title:** Current   
Banner (30 characters max w/ spaces)   
New     **Fulfills Mason Core Req?** (undergrad only)  
 Currently fulfills requirement  
 Submission in progress

**Credits:** (check one)  Fixed →   Variable →  to   
 Lec + Lab/Rct →  or     **Repeat Status:** (check one)  Not Repeatable (NR)  
 Repeatable within degree (RD) →    **Max credits allowed:**   
 Repeatable within term (RT) →    (required for RT/RD status only)

**Grade Mode:** (check one)  Regular (A, B, C, etc.)  
 Satisfactory/No Credit    **Schedule Type:** (check one)  Lecture (LEC)     Independent Study (IND)  
 Special (A, B C, etc. +IP)     Lab (LAB)     Seminar (SEM)  
LEC can include LAB or RCT if linked sections will be offered     Recitation (RCT)     Studio (STU)  
 Internship (INT)

**Prerequisite(s)** (NOTE: hard-coding requires separate Prereq Checking form; see above website):

**Corequisite(s):**

  

**Restrictions Enforced by System:** Major, College, Degree, Program, etc. Include Code(s).

**Equivalencies** (check only as applicable):

YES, course is 100% equivalent to \_\_\_\_\_  
 YES, course renumbered to or replaces \_\_\_\_\_

**Catalog Copy** (Consult University Catalog for models)

<b>Description</b> (No more than 60 words, use verb phrases and present tense) Students will work one-on-one with a conservation practitioner for an extensive period of time (~36 hours per week) over 5 weeks on a project associated with that practitioner's program. Students will learn research skills they can apply to their professional careers.	<b>Notes</b> (List additional information for the course)
<b>Indicate number of contact hours:</b> Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: <input type="text"/> Hours of Lab or Studio: <input type="text" value="5"/> <b>When Offered:</b> (check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fall <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring	

## Approval Signatures

Department Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_      College/School Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If this course includes subject matter currently dealt with by any other units, the originating department must circulate this proposal for review by those units and obtain the necessary signatures prior to submission. Failure to do so will delay action on this proposal.

Unit Name	Unit Approval Name	Unit Approver's Signature	Date

## Undergraduate or Graduate Council Approval

UGC or GC Council Member \_\_\_\_\_      Provost's Office \_\_\_\_\_      UGC or GC Approval Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Course Proposal Submitted to the College of Science Curriculum Committee (COSCC)**

The form above is processed by the Office of the University Registrar. This second page is for the COSCC's reference. Please complete the applicable portions of this page to clearly communicate what the form above is requesting.

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### **FOR ALL COURSES** (required)

Course Number and Title: CONS 499 Research in Conservation

Date of Departmental Approval: October 19, 2016

### **FOR INACTIVATED/REINSTATED COURSES** (required if inactivating/reinstating a course)

- Reason for Inactivating/Reinstating:

### **FOR MODIFIED COURSES** (required if modifying a course)

- Summary of the Modification:
- Text before Modification (title, repeat status, catalog description, etc.):
- Text after Modification (title, repeat status, catalog description, etc.):
- Reason for the Modification:

### **FOR NEW COURSES** (required if creating a new course)

- Reason for the New Course: CONS 499 will provide a unique opportunity to develop a research project under the guidance of a Smithsonian professional scientist focused on conservation biology. It will be intensive and immersive and students will spend more than 36 hours per week being mentored in scientific advances in the field of conservation biology.
  - Relationship to Existing Programs: The course will be part of the Smithsonian Mason School of Conservation and could help fulfil credits for concentrations in the Biology-environmental and conservation biology concentration, Environmental and Science and Policy-conservation concentration, the School of Integrative Studies- applied global conservation concentration, and the Environmental Studies and Sustainability – conservation and sustainability concentration.
  - Relationship to Existing Courses: At a superficial level the proposed course appears similar to the biology research semester. Unlike the biology research semester it is supported by unique core courses and a seminar course available only at SMSC. CONS 499 provides a similar type of research experience to the university-wide OSCAR program, however CONS 499 is focused on opportunities with predominantly non-GMU scientists who work on conservation-related problems.
  - Semester of Initial Offering: Fall 2017
  - Proposed Instructors: James McNeil, Stephanie Lessard-Pilon, Anneke Deluycker
  - Insert Tentative Syllabus Below
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## **CONS 499 - Research in Conservation**

### **5 credits**

### **Course Meeting Times**

This course will meet during weeks 11-15 of the semester, Monday afternoons from 1-5, and Tuesday through Friday, between 9:00 am-12:00 pm and 1:00-5:00 pm.

### **Description**

Students will work one-on-one with a conservation practitioner for an extensive period of time (~36 hours per week) over 5 weeks on a project associated with that practitioner's program. Students will learn skills they can apply to their professional careers and will present their work as a poster at the end of the semester in a poster session modeled after a professional conference.

### **Learning Objectives**

*Students will:*

- Work under the guidance of a research professional to develop a deep understanding of the research methodologies employed in their work
- Contribute to data collection and/or analysis related to their research mentor's projects
- Develop an original scholarly product in the context of the mentor's research and conservation work
- Practice networking and professional development skills related to conducting research (posters)

### **Prerequisites**

This semester is being offered to undergraduate juniors, seniors and post-baccalaureate students. Prerequisites include coursework to demonstrate a commitment to and understanding of conservation-related disciplines, with at least one upper level ecology course (BIOL 308 or equivalent). Students should have completed 60 credit hours of undergraduate classes. Students must sign up for all Smithsonian-Mason Semester courses in a given semester.

### **Course Materials**

#### **Required:**

Readings for this course will be from the primary literature provided to students by their individual research mentors and will be accessible on BlackBoard 9.1, via MyMason portal (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>)

#### **BlackBoard:**

Many resources for the course will be accessible on BlackBoard 9.1, via the MyMason portal (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>) using the browser of your choice. Enter the username and password from your GMU email account and then click on the "Courses" tab at the top, right side of the page. Select the combined course option.

### **Assignments**

#### *Research proposal (10%)*

Students will submit a formal proposal for the work they will do with their mentor with a focus on specific skills to be learned and specific expectations for work completed during the student's tenure in their lab. This document will be produced with input from the research mentor.

#### *Brown-bag presentation (10%)*

Students will present a 15-minute, brown-bag style presentation about their work during the third week of the research experience to their peers and faculty mentors. They will respond to questions about their project. Presentations will be scheduled for a series of mid-day sessions based on availability of mentors.

#### *Final poster (30%)*

Students will prepare a research-style poster about the work they completed with their mentor and present it at a special poster session at the end of the semester. Faculty from SCBI and Mason will be invited. Posters will also be eligible to be presented at the Celebration of Student Scholarship hosted by the OSCAR program in the spring semester.

*Participation (40%)*

Students are expected to be prompt and engaged with their research mentors. Participation will be assessed by the research mentor twice during the work period; the first time at two weeks and again at the end of the semester.

**Grading**

Grades for individual assignments and overall in the course will be assigned on the following scale:

A+	97-100%
A	93-96.9%
A-	90-92.9%
B+	87-89.9%
B	83-86.9%
B-	80-82.9%
C+	77-79.9%
C	73-76.9%
C-	70-72.9%
D	60-69.9%
F	<60%

**Weekly Topics, Readings, and Assignments:**

Date	
Pre-Research Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students submit statements of their research interests and qualifications as part of their application to the semester; select 3 possible mentors they wish to work with based on their experience</li> <li>● Research mentors review student applications and conduct interviews of potential candidates</li> <li>● Final assignments of students are based on outcomes of interviews and a panel discussion with research mentors</li> </ul>
Week 1	<p><b>Student work with mentors</b>  Monday in the afternoon  Tuesday-Friday all day for a total of 36 hours of work each week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research proposal due at end of week</li> </ul>
Week 2	<p><b>Student work with mentors</b>  Monday in the afternoon  Tuesday-Friday all day for a total of 36 hours of work each week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1st evaluation of student participation due at end of week</li> </ul>

Week 3	<b>Student work with mentors</b> Monday in the afternoon Tuesday-Friday all day for a total of 36 hours of work each week <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Brown-bag seminars scheduled throughout week</li></ul>
Week 4	<b>Student work with mentors</b> Monday in the afternoon Tuesday-Friday all day for a total of 36 hours of work each week
Week 5	<b>Final Presentations of Posters on Thursday</b> Monday in the afternoon Tuesday-Friday all day for a total of 36 hours of work each week <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Final evaluation of student participation due at end of week</li></ul>