

GGG 303-001: Conservation of Resources and Environment

Instructor information:	:	Maction Komwa, Ph.D. Exploratory Hall – Room 2210 Tel: 703-993-9225 email: mkomwa@gmu.edu
Office hours	:	Wednesday – 1:15 pm – 2:30 pm or by appointment (through email)
Class time	:	3:00 pm – 4:15 pm
Location	:	Nguyen Engineering Building I 103

Contract: This syllabus is a contract between the instructor and the students. Students should read the syllabus carefully at the beginning of the semester to know what is expected. Failure to follow the instructions in the syllabus will lead to reduced grades.

Course Overview

Conservation of Resources and Environment addresses the physical, environmental, economic and human aspects of the availability and use of resources. The conservation and use of natural resources involves all aspects of problems resulting from their unequal distribution or unwise use. Humans exist in an interdependent world where technology and the natural resources must work in a supportive and balanced manner or both the environment and the human population will suffer. Humankind must find ways to make technology and the natural environment work synergistically in order to guarantee long-term sustainable development that does no permanent harm to our living space.

In order to address this major topic in a sophisticated and holistic manner a number of subjects must be included in the discussion. The way in which resources are used has a major impact on the quality of life (including health and safety); the economic well-being of all peoples of the world; the level and type of conflicts that occur among peoples and nations; and the long-term protection of the total ecosystem. The subject matter of the course will cover the following.

1. A global understanding of the distribution of the earth's resources
2. A discussion of the global environment
3. The environmental impact of resource exploitation.
4. The balance between technology, ecology and economy.
5. The economic disparities created by these conditions.
6. The sustainability of human utilization of natural resources

Prerequisites: 30 hours, completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, all university general education courses, or permission of instructor.

Required Textbooks:

Susan L. Cutter and William H. Renwick. Exploitation Conservation Preservation. A Geographic Perspective on Natural Resource Use. 4th Edition

Grading and Assignments

The following grading criteria will be used to determine your final grade:

Assignment	%
Short Writing Assignment	10
Annual Editions Discussion Summary Quiz	5
Proposal	5
Mid – term Exam	15
Draft I	10
Draft II	5
Term Paper	25
Poster Presentation	20
Class Discussion / Participation	5
Total:	100

Letter grades of **A, B, C, D,** and **F** will be assigned for completion of this course based on the cumulative score of all evaluated work. Rather than assign individual letter grades for each project listed above, they will be evaluated on a percent basis from which the final, total, score will be determined.

A+ 98 - 100

A = 97-93

A- =92-90

B+= 89-86

B = 85-83

B - =82-80

C+=79-76

C=75-71

C-= 70-69

D=68-60

F < 60

Exams

There will be ONE Mid-Term Exam. The exam will be consist of MCQ and short answers based on the readings and lecturers. The Exam is NOT open book or any other open notes.

Missed exam --- Make-up exam, quizzes or any assignment will normally NOT be permitted. However, in extreme circumstances making up an exam will only be allowed with a valid medical excuse or official written documentation that you were seen by a doctor within 2 days of the missed assignment. If you don't have a valid excuse (or fail to provide it within the specified time frame then your will automatically receive a ZERO for that assignment, exam or quiz.

Note:

Late work will lose 10% for each day it is late [for the first 5 days] thereafter your assignments will not be accepted. Time extension will not be accepted unless otherwise stated. All students are requested to keep up with the work and meet deadlines for assignments.

Posting of Grades:

All grades will be posted through the Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check the blackboard for any class announcements or grades. In the event of grade mistakes posted through the Blackboard please don't hesitate to contact your Instructor.

Critical thinking and writing assistance

This is synthesis course that will provide you the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills, both oral and written forms, and above all the application of critical thinking [CT]. The application of CT will enable you to:

1. Evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources, OR,
2. Judge the quality or value of an idea, work, or principle based on appropriate analytics and standards through the articles that will be read throughout the semester.

I will spend time in class discussing the specific expectations of the weekly writing assignment as well as your final paper. I expect your final paper to be thesis driven. This means it should be grammatically correct and edited. Feel free to ask me questions in class or during my office hours. Additionally students are encouraged to make appointment with the Writing Center where they can get a one –on one assistance.

Short writing assignments [Reaction papers]

- One page double-spaced short writing assignment will be submitted according to the due dates [see tentative schedule]. The assignment is designed to ensure that students have done the readings and are well prepared - ready for class discussion.
 - Format of the paper will include a one-paragraph summary of a current conservation article and a one-paragraph individual reaction commentary. [Choose relevant journals between 2005 -2013]
 - Include reference in APA format for your summary.
- Unannounced short quizzes will be given to examine student's understanding of specific text material. There will be no makeup for these quizzes. *Any excuses should be communicated in advance!*

Student Requirements:

To successfully complete this course, students must complete all assigned readings as well as attend class; neither the text book nor lecture notes alone will suffice. Please take note that this course will challenge you intellectually and that missing 60% or more of the classes will result in a grade of S/A.

Student responsibilities:

For this class I will provide direction and an environment that is conducive to learning. However, as required by the University and the department students are expected at least to spend nearly 2 hours in preparation for each class. Additionally, as a Lecturer for this class I will expect all students to:

- Attend lectures as required by the syllabus
- Read material as may be assigned by the Lecturer
- Ask questions, answer questions and take part in group discussions and other class activities
- Complete and submit any assigned work on time through the Blackboard

Class Participation:

A sign-in sheet will be circulated at every class. It is your responsibility to sign it. Any absence unless it is a major emergency must have prior approval by the faculty. Note, missing 60% or more of the classes will result in a grade of S/A. At the end of the semester, to meet the presentation requirement of Synthesis, students will present concisely their paper or projects in the form of a poster. The presentation should be highly organized and up to the point. It should include description of the issue or problem, previous work on the topic, description of the student's analysis, and the findings. The posters will be independently assessed by the instructor and two other faculty members when possible.

Academic Honesty: George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (<http://www.gmu.edu/org/honorcouncil/guidelines.htm>).

If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

Note: Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

Students with Disabilities: If you require accommodations for a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. Disability Services is available to assist you, and more details can be accessed through the Office of Disability Services (ODS) website: <http://ods.gmu.edu/> / Student Union Building I (SUB), Room 2500. Telephone: (703) 993-2474.

Blackboard

If you are enrolled in this course you will have access to the Blackboard site - available at: courses.gmu.edu. You will need to log on using your GMU user name and password. Blackboard will be used to post assignments, key concepts, and supplemental materials. It is the responsibility of the student to take notes in class; lecture notes will also be posted to Blackboard.

Most of the case studies and readings will be posted through the blackboard. [<https://courses.gmu.edu/>]

Communication:

- You should only use GMU email to communicate with your instructor. Any email besides the one given by GMU will not be acknowledged.
- We will use the blackboard to discuss topics related to this course.

Links to the University Catalog and the University Policies

University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>

University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>

Student Support Resources

George Mason University has a number of academic support and other resources to facilitate your success. Some of these resources are presented below:

Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, the Writing Center, etc.).

Classroom Expectations:

Students are expected to be on time for class. Regular attendance is strongly recommended.

1. Should circumstances arise that make you late, do not disrupt the class as you enter, take the first available seat and do not walk across the room.
2. Do not eat or drink in the class, unless you bring enough for everyone,
3. Clean up after yourself. If you pack it in, pack it out; leave your seat better than you found it. Remember, take only notes, and leave only a warm seat.
4. In the event of any class cancellation, including inclement weather (e.g. snow), the class will resume where we left off, Adjustments, if necessary, will be made later.
5. For each hour of in-class time you should anticipate three hours to complete out-of-class work and preparation.
6. Cell Phones and pagers must be turned off during class. Zero tolerance!

Note that students are responsible for text material. We will have approximately 1 hour 15 mins for each session. It is unlikely that all materials will be covered in class. In that case it is expected that students should read the assigned chapters in

advance prior to our class meeting.

Check the text website: Student Companion Site

Cutter, Renwick: Exploitation Conservation Preservation: A Geographic Perspective on Natural Resource Use, 4th Edition

<http://bcs.wiley.com/he-bcs/Books?action=index&itemId=0471152250&bcsId=1708>

Term project [Important dates to remember]

Topic	Sept 9
Paper Proposal	Sep. 16
Paper Draft I	Oct. 16
Paper Draft II (Peer-Review)	Nov. 11
Final Version of Paper	Nov 25 [Details of the term paper will be discussed in class]

Tentative Outline of Topics and Readings/Assignments

Date	Topic	Reading Assignments
8/26	Course overview & Discussion on Natural Resources & Environment	Nothing is due
8/28	Natural Resources: Thoughts, Words, and Deeds <i>Topic Choice Discussion</i>	Chapter 1
9/2	<i>Labor Day - Holiday</i>	
9/4	Natural Resources: Thoughts, Words, and Deeds <i>Introduction to Library Research</i>	Chapter 1 <i>Annual Editions Reading & summary Questions</i>
9/9	Resource Economics <i>Proposal Discussion</i>	Chapter 2 <i>Short Writing Assignment 1</i> Topic choice is due [Through Blackboard]
9/11	Resource Economics	Chapter 2
9/16	Resource Economics	Chapter 2 <i>Short Writing Assignment 2</i> Proposal Due [Through Blackboard]
9/18	Environmental Ideologies, Politics and Decision	<i>Chapter 4-5</i>
9/23	Ecological Perspectives on Human Population Guest Lecturer	Chapter 4-5 <i>Annual Editions Reading & summary Questions</i>
9/25	Ecological Perspectives on Human Population	Chapter 4-5 <i>Short Writing Assignment 3</i>
9/30	Ecological Perspectives on Human Population	Chapter 4-5
10/2	Agriculture and Food Production	Chapter 6 <i>Short Writing Assignment 4</i>
10/7	Agriculture and Food Production	Chapter 6

10/9	Forest	Chapter 7 <i>Annual Editions Reading & summary Questions</i>
10/10	MID TERM EXAM	
10/14	Columbus Day	No classes
10/15	Forest	Chapter 7 <i>Short Writing Assignment 5</i>
10/16	Biodiversity and Habitat	Chapter 8 Paper Draft I due
10/21	Biodiversity and Habitat	Chapter 8
10/23	<i>Guest Lecturer – class video</i>	<i>Short Writing Assignment 6</i>
10/28	Marine Resource and Water Quality	Chapter 9 & 10 <i>Annual Editions Reading & summary Questions</i>
10/30	Marine Resource and Water Quality	Chapter 9 & 10
11/4	<i>Class Video & General Group Discussion</i>	<i>Short Writing Assignment 7</i>
11/6	Energy Resources and Sustainability	Chapter 13 & 14 Paper Draft II due
11/11	Energy Resources and Sustainability	Chapter 13 & 14 <i>Annual Editions Article 24</i>
11/13	Energy Resources and Sustainability	Chapter 13 & 14 <i>Short Writing Assignment 8</i>
11/18	Air Resources and Atmospheric Change	Chapter 11 & 12
11/20	Guest Lecturer & Video	<i>Annual Editions Reading & summary Questions</i>
11/25	Poster Presentation	Group 1 Final Paper due
11/27	Thanksgiving recess	
12/2	Poster Presentation	Group 2
12/4	Poster Presentation	Group 3
	FINALS	

Syllabus Changes

The course instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to this syllabus. If these changes are made they will be immediately notified to students through individual emails or the blackboard explaining the nature of the change(s).