

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
PRLS 316 001 – Leadership and Outdoor Education  
3 Credits, Spring 2021  
10:30 am-1:10 pm Fridays  
Katherine Johnson Hall 258 – Science & Technology Campus

**Faculty**

Name: David Heath, M.A.

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: 120 A Administration, Freedom Aquatic & Fitness Center

Office Phone: (703) 993-9826

Email Address: [dheath@gmu.edu](mailto:dheath@gmu.edu)

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None.

**University Catalog Course Description**

Focuses on promotion of lifelong health and fitness via noncompetitive and informal outdoor activities. Introduces safety, skills, and leadership techniques. Covers sustainable use, conservation, and stewardship of natural resources. Offered by Recreation, Health & Tourism. Limited to three attempts.

**Course Overview**

This course introduces and immerses students in three essential strands of leadership in outdoor education: environmental, experiential, and adventure-based education. We will go outside as much as weather permits, and we will engage directly in several outdoor activities, with a goal of students experiencing several different teaching models so that they may lead an outdoor lesson themselves by the end of the course. These activities do not lend themselves to makeup work, and as such, attendance each day is crucial.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered using an interactive lecture format.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Discuss the need for outdoor education/recreation in American society today by
  - a. Understanding the history of leisure in American culture.
  - b. Identifying the psychological benefits of outdoor recreation and education.
  - c. Collecting and documenting current articles relating to leisure, health, and outdoor recreation trends.
  - d. Identifying the differences among national, regional, and local conservation agencies and their roles in outdoor recreation/education.
  - e. Identifying ways outdoor recreation activities benefit youth in schools to become self-motivated learners.
- 2.. Learn the essentials of group building and team building by
  - a. Participating as a class in Group Initiative activities
  - b. Identifying and defining the theories that support the educational benefits of experiential education.

- c. Being involved in and learning a variety of team building activities to incorporate into classroom learning or classroom activities to promote mutual respect, support for others, and cooperative participation.
3. Develop and plan an outdoor recreation lesson for school aged youth by
    - a. Converting course material and field experience into an Outdoor Recreation lesson plan which incorporates Fairfax County Program of Studies for Physical Education.
    - b. Teaching an activity from your lesson plan to fellow students through an in-class presentation.
  4. Learn a variety of outdoor skills and develop an appreciation for the outdoors by
    - a. Developing a Leave No Trace land ethic through direct involvement in outdoor recreation activities.
    - b. Practicing and participating in hands-on outdoor recreation and outdoor education activities.

### Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional standard from the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT):

*7.02 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.*

### Required Texts

Gilbertson, K., Bates, T., McLaughlin, T. & Ewert, A. (2006). *Outdoor Education: Methods and Strategies*.  
Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

### Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time on Blackboard, hard copy, or in-class presentation as outlined per assignment. Because student contributions are so crucial to this course, all are expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises and fulfill all assignments. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified date due. Papers received after due dates will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24-hour period. In cases of an extreme emergency or participation in a pre-approved university-sponsored function, there may be some exceptions. However, please discuss these with me prior to the due date to be considered for exception. I also recommend back-up copies of assignments, as computers have been known to crash.

### Assignments

This is a performance-based course. Rubrics are available for each assignment.

### Description Points

Journal	100
Assignments	

Class	100
Participation (includes in- class discussions and	

instructional  
field trips)

Class 100

Assignments  
(includes  
Outdoor  
Education  
History  
assignment,  
Field Trip  
presentation,  
and Activity  
Presentation  
to Small  
Groups)

Semester 100  
Project

Total 400

### **Other Requirements**

Communication is an important part of this course; therefore, please check Blackboard each morning for course communications. Be particularly aware of weather announcements.

### **Grading Scale\***

A+ B+ C+ D  
= = = =  
98- 88-78-60-  
100 89 79 69  
A = B =C =F =  
94- 84-74-0-  
97 87 77 59  
A- B- C-  
= = =  
90- 80-70-  
93 83 73

\*Percentage determined by point total divided by 400 total points.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times, including field trips.

### **Expectations**

- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to be familiar and able to navigate Blackboard. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:** Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet specific deadlines and due dates listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:** Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Page Break

### **Class Schedule**

#### **PRLS 316 Course Schedule: Spring 2021 Revised January 29, 2021**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<b>Friday January 29</b>	Introduction to class objectives and goals. Review course materials. Introduce journal. Introduce StrengthsFinder.	<b>Read:</b> Course materials, including Journal assignment (on Blackboard).  *Unless otherwise noted, readings assigned here are to be done before the following class meeting. Assignment due dates are also noted here.
<b>Friday February 5</b>	Outdoor education: what and why The value of outdoor education/recreation  Interrelationships: experiential ed, outdoor rec, phys. ed.  Types of outdoor recreation activities  History assignment explained	<b>Read</b> selected article (see Journal assignment on Bb for specifics).

<b>Friday February 12</b>	Trends in outdoor education	<b>Read:</b> <i>Outdoor Education</i> , Preface (pp. vii–viii) & ch. 2–3 (pp. 2–25). <b>Due:</b> Journal entry 1 by 11:59 pm 2/11
<b>Friday February 19</b>	History of outdoor education Introduction to Field Trip and Lesson Plan assignments	<b>Read:</b> R. Carson, “The Sense of Wonder” and A. Leopold, “Good Oak” (see Bb). <b>Due:</b> Journal entry 2 by 11:59 pm 2/18. Three references for History assignment by 11:59 pm 2/25.
<b>Friday February 26</b>	Lesson model 1: environmental awareness *If it is above 25°F and not raining, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	<b>Read:</b> Instructions on how to take StrengthsFinder assessment and J. Muir, “A Wind-storm in the Forests” (see Bb for both). <b>Due:</b> Complete and submit top 5 Strengths to Bb 11:59 pm 3/18.

<b>Friday March 5</b>	Outdoor education, historically—led by you	<b>Due:</b> Notes for history assignment by 11:59 pm 3/4. <b>In class:</b> History presentation. <b>Read:</b> <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 27–40.
<b>Friday March 12</b>	Lesson model 2: Leave No Trace	<b>Read:</b> J. L. Miner, “The Creation of Outward Bound,” (on Bb).
<b>Friday March 19</b>	Intro to experiential education Strengths activities	<b>Read:</b> Field Trip assignment (on Bb). <b>Due:</b> StrengthsFinder results 11:59 pm 3/18.
<b>Friday March 26</b>	EDGE low ropes experience: lesson model 3 *If it is above 25°F and not raining, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	<b>Read:</b> <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 59–74. <b>Due:</b> Group field trip signup.
<b>Friday April 2</b>	Experiential education models and practice Creating Outdoor Lesson Plans	<b>Read:</b> Article on Bb <b>Due:</b> Journal entry 3 by 11:59 pm 4/8.

	Tips, techniques, teaching strategies sharing and discussion	
<b>Friday April 9</b>	Follow up on EDGE experience  Field trip presentations	<b>Read:</b> <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 75-84 and N. Paumgarten, “The Wall Dancer.” <b>In class:</b> Field trip presentation
<b>Friday April 16</b>	Lesson model 4: outdoor recreation TBD	<b>Read:</b> <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 137–173. <b>Due:</b> Field trip impressions journal (4) by 11:59 pm 4/22.
<b>Friday April 23</b>	Lesson model 4: outdoor recreation TBD	<b>Due:</b> Journal 5 by 11:59 pm 4/29.
<b>Friday April 30</b>	Final presentation practice run	
<b>Friday May 7 (final exam date)</b>	Final presentations	<b>Due:</b> Additional (optional) journal by 11:59 pm 5/13.

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.**

