

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School of Sport, Recreation, and Tourism Management

PRLS 316 001 – Leadership and Outdoor Education
3 Credits, Spring 2022
10:30 am-1:10 pm Fridays
Katherine Johnson Hall 249 – Science & Technology Campus

Faculty

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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 a combination of experiential lecture and seminar 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 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 recommend backing up copies of assignments to avoid losing data.

Assignments

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

Description	Points
Journal Assignments	100
Class Participation (includes in-class discussions and instructional field trips)	100
Class Assignments (includes Outdoor Education History assignment, Field Trip presentation, and Activity Presentation to Small Groups)	100
Semester Project	100
Total	400

Other Requirements

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

Grading Scale*

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

*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.

Professional Disposition:

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

Date	Topic	Assignment
Friday January 28	Introduction to class objectives and goals. Review course materials. Introduce journal.	Read: 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.
Friday February 4	A close-up view of what's happening in this class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrelationships: experiential ed, outdoor rec, phys. ed. • Outdoor education: what and why • The value of outdoor education/recreation 	Read selected article (see Journal assignment on Bb for specifics). <i>Outdoor Education</i> , Preface (pp. vii–viii) & ch. 2–3 (pp. 2–25). Due: Journal entry 1 by 11:59 pm Thursday 2/10.
Friday February 11	Trends in outdoor education and recreation History of outdoor education assignment explained Introduce StrengthsFinder	Read: R. Carson, “The Sense of Wonder” and history assignment (see Bb) Due: Journal entry 2 by 11:59 pm 2/24. Three references for History assignment by 11:59 pm 2/24.
Friday February 18	Lesson model 1: environmental awareness and activities. *If it is above 50°F and not storming, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	Read: A. Leopold, “Good Oak,” J. Muir, “A Wind-storm in the Forests,” and instructions on how to take StrengthsFinder assessment (see Bb). Due: Complete and submit top 5 Strengths to Bb 11:59 pm 3/10.
Friday February 25	Meet in groups to plan for outdoor education history assignment.	Read: <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 27–40. Due: Presentation for history assignment by 11:59 pm 3/3.
Friday March 4	Outdoor education, historically—led by you Outdoor education history summary and activity	In class: History presentation. Read: J. L. Miner, “The Creation of Outward Bound,” (on Bb).

Class schedule, continued

Friday March 11	Intro to experiential education Strengths activities (may do some outside, weather permitting) Introduction to Field Trip and Lesson Plan assignments	Read: Field Trip and Lesson Plan Assignments on Bb.
Friday March 18	Spring Break—no class this week.	
Friday March 25	Lesson model 3: The EDGE challenge course *If it is above 50°F and not storming, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates	Read: <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 59–74. Due: Journal 4 by 11:59 pm 3/31. Field trip signup by 4/1.
Friday April 1	Lesson model 4: Leave No Trace *If it is above 50°F and not storming, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	Read: Article on Bb (TBA). Due: Field trip presentation on Bb by 11:59 pm 4/7.
Friday April 8	Field trip presentations	In class: Field trip presentation Read: <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 75-84
Friday April 15	Lesson model 5: Canoeing *If it is above 50°F and not storming, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	
Friday April 22	Lesson model 6: Rock climbing *If it is above 50°F and not storming, be prepared to go outside. Check Bb for updates.	Read: <i>Outdoor Ed.</i> , pp. 137–173 and N. Paumgarten, “The Wall Dancer.”. Due: Journal 5 by 11:59 pm 4/28.
Friday April 29	Creating Outdoor Lesson Plans Tips, techniques, teaching strategies sharing and discussion	Due: First draft of final presentation (see Bb) by 5/5.
Friday May 6	Final presentation practice run	Due: Additional (optional) journal by 11:59 pm 5/12. Final presentation writeup to Bb by 5/12. In class: presentation practice.
Friday May 13 (final exam date)	Final presentations	In class: Final presentations

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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments> . 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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

