

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

**RMGT 402 (Section 1) – Human Behavior in Natural Environments  
3 Credits – Spring 2023  
Thursdays 4:30pm to 7:10pm, Peterson Hall, 2408, Fairfax Campus**

**FACULTY:**

**Name:** Sammie Powers, Ph.D.

**Office Location:** 213A Krug Hall (School of Sport, Recreation, and Tourism Management)

**Office Hours:** By Appointment on Calendly: [calendly.com/sammie\\_powers](https://calendly.com/sammie_powers)

**Office Phone:** 703-993-6840

**Email:** [spower5@gmu.edu](mailto:spower5@gmu.edu)

**PREREQUISITES:**

RMGT 300

**UNIVERSITY CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Applies social and behavioral theories to management for recreational users of land and water resources. Examines deterioration and pollution of land and water, noise, crowding, and conflicts among users. Discusses strategies for mitigation of deleterious impacts and depreciative behaviors, and attitudes toward resource conservation, preservation, and use. Designated a Green Leaf Course.

**COURSE DELIVERY METHOD:**

This is an in-person course.

**LEARNER OUTCOMES/COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the state of the natural environment enjoyed by recreation users.
2. Discuss social and behavioral influences that affect the use and management of the natural environment.
3. Discuss management theories and strategies for mitigating adverse effects on land and water resources used by recreationists.
4. Discuss strategies for facilitating development of constructive attitudes, uses and behaviors for resource protection and recreation use.
5. Articulate and apply impact management principles and knowledge of human behavior to the sustainable management of recreation-related natural resources.

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION STANDARDS:**

Upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards as set forth by the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Related Professions:

7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in these industries; and c) the foundation of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.

**REQUIRED READING:**

Required Text (available as ebook from Mason library): Clayton, S. & Myers, G. (2015). *Conservation Psychology: Understanding and promoting human care for nature (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, John Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 9781118874608

Additional readings will be assigned throughout the course and will be placed on Blackboard.

**COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:** Students are expected to submit all assignments on time on Blackboard. This course will be graded on a percentage point system, with a total of 100 possible percentage points.

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Percentage of Overall Grade</b>
In-Class Activities & Participation	25 pts each x 10 = 250 total points	25%
Readings/Class Preparation Assessments	5 to 10 points each x 12, totaling 100 points	10%
Online Ceritfications	50 pts each x 3 = 150 total	15%
Park Observation Assignment	75 points	7.5%
Management Issue Report	Part 1 = 50 points Part 2 = 100 points Presentation = 75 points	22.5%
Exams: 2 Exams	100 pts each x 2 = 200 total points	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

**REQUIREMENTS:**

**In-Class Activities & Participation**

We will have in-class activities throughout the semester in every class. Activities will vary, but may include things such as group discussions, debates, applied management scenarios, brief presentations, etc.). Activities give you an opportunity to apply what you have learned that week and practice implement specific management solutions for human behavior challenges in parks and public lands. They will also help us to build a community within our class and provide an opportunity for us to get to know one another.

**Reading/Class Preparation Assessments**

To facilitate a dynamic and discussion-based class environment, students are expected to have completed assigned readings and videos prior to coming to class. Classes will be facilitated

based on that expectation. Be prepared to speak in class and discuss and apply what you learned in the class preparation materials for each week. Class preparation will be assessed either with a brief assignment due at the start of class (e.g., a reflection, movie review worksheet, submission of discussion questions) or a short reading/class preparation quiz at the beginning of class.

## **Online Certifications**

### **1. Eppley Institute Courses**

You will be responsible for two Eppley Institute Certificate courses during this semester. Eppley Institute online courses may be found at <http://provalenslearning.com/courses>. There is a long list of courses available on this site. The courses listed below are required for this course. However, if you find another course that is more meaningful to you professionally, just let me know and we can discuss a substitution. You must register as a participant to place a course into the shopping cart even though you are taking a course for free.

- Deciding to Keep Wilderness Wild: <http://provalenslearning.com/courses/deciding-to-keep-wilderness-wild-four-cornerstones-for-wilderness-managers>
- Wilderness Act: <http://provalenslearning.com/courses/carhart-interagency-wilderness-training-the-wilderness-act-of-1964>

### **2. Leave No Trace Awareness Certificate Course**

You will be completing the Leave No Trace (LNT) course online at: <https://lnt.org/get-involved/training-courses/online-awareness-course/>. If you have already completed this course on your own or in a previous course, you will be required to take a third Eppley course or another certification that may be of interest to you and equally as valuable to your career. Review the Authority of the Resource (LNT) technique to persuade and inform people: <https://www.interpnet.com/docs/CIT/Authority-of-the-Resource.pdf>

## **Park Observation Assignment**

You will select a spot in any park where you will spend a minimum of one hour observing people recreating at that site, while taking detailed notes about their recreation behavior. You'll want to make sure you pay attention to the activities people are doing, any depreciative behavior that you observe (e.g., littering), crowding, conflict, etc. You will then code and summarize those notes and write up the results, connecting them back to the content that we have covered in the course. Additionally, while at the site, please try to pick up any trash that you see to help keep the park beautiful – more on this when we have our guest speaker from Keep Nature Wild!

## **Management Issue Report**

Management Issue Report. Part 1 due April 5th, Part 2 due 5/3, Presentations 5/4. Management area and issue must be selected by 3/1. Detailed instructions will be posted on Blackboard, but some of its components include:

Part 1:

- Selection of an outdoor recreation management area and issue.
- Description of the area.
- Description of a recreation related management issue.
- Compelling explanation of why this issue is critical to address, supported by literature on social or ecological impacts.

Part 2:

- Description of how that issue could be/has been assessed.

- Identification and explanation of a minimum of three solutions for the issue, supported by literature.

Presentation: Summarizing your project to the class, with particular emphasis on your plan of solutions for addressing your chosen issue.

### **Exams**

This course has two exams, a midterm and a final. The final exam is cumulative, as the concepts that we will be learning throughout the semester build on one another.

### **GRADING POLICIES:**

#### *Attendance Policy:*

Students are expected to be in class barring exceptional circumstances. Though some course material will be covered in the textbook and other assigned readings, most key information will be covered in class. Although I will not take attendance, you must be present in class to participate in in-class activities and discussions, which comprise a significant portion of your grade.

#### *Late Assignments:*

Each student will get one “life happens” pass for submitting an assignment late. Sometimes things happen and we encounter unforeseen circumstances. The single “life happens” pass will allow you to submit one assignment past the due date. You will have one extra week from the initial deadline to submit the assignment. Although you can use your “life happens” pass for any reason of your choosing, it is your responsibility to save your “life happens” pass for when you really need it. Once you’ve used it, you won’t get another pass.

Other than your “life happens” pass, all assignments are due on their assigned dates, and late work will not be accepted. No in-class activity make-ups will be available. I encourage you to begin work early on all assignments so in the event of unforeseen circumstances you can get them in on time.

#### *Grading Scale*

A	=	940-1,000 pts	(94%-100%)	C+	=	780-799 pts	(78%-79%)
A-	=	900-939 pts	(90%-93%)	C	=	740-779 pts	(74%-77%)
B+	=	880-899 pts	(88%-89%)	C-	=	700-739 pts	(70%-73%)
B	=	840-879 pts	(84%-87%)	D	=	600-699 pts	(60%-69%)
B-	=	800-839 pts	(80%-83%)	F	=	0-590 pts	(0%-59%)

**PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

*\*\* Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students. Additional guest speakers may result in alterations to the schedule.*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
Week 1: 1/26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Course Introduction</li> <li>- Outdoor recreation and outdoor recreation participation</li> <li>- Quality of recreation experiences</li> <li>- How to read different source types</li> </ul>	
Week 2: 2/2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attitudes, values, and perceptions of the outdoors</li> <li>- Motivation and satisfaction</li> </ul>	<i>Readings:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CP CH 1: Introducing the Field of Conservation Psychology</li> <li>- CP CH 5: Attitudes, Values, and Perceptions</li> </ul>
Week 3: 2/9	<b>Eppely Institute Wilderness Certificate Courses (Due 2/12)</b>	<b>ASYNCHRONOUS CLASS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wilderness</li> </ul>	<i>Readings:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CP CH4: Wild Nature: Encounters with Wilderness</li> </ul>
Week 4: 2/16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carrying capacity</li> <li>- Visitor Experience and Resource Protection Framework (VERP)</li> <li>- Visitor use monitoring</li> </ul>	<i>Readings:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wagar, J. A. (1964). The carrying capacity of wild lands for recreation. <i>Forest Science</i>, 10.</li> <li>- Pettebone, D., Meldrum, B., Leslie, C., Lawson, S. R., Newman, P., Reigner, N., &amp; Gibson, A. (2013). A visitor use monitoring approach on the Half Dome cables to reduce crowding and inform park planning decisions in Yosemite National Park. <i>Landscape and Urban Planning</i>, 118, 1-9.</li> </ul>

Week 5: 2/23		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crowding &amp; managing crowding</li> <li>- Displacement</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yoon, J. I., Kyle, G., Hsu, Y. C., &amp; Absher, J. (2021). Coping with crowded recreation settings: A cross-cultural investigation. <i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>, 52(1), 1-21.</li> <li>- Bullock, S. D., &amp; Lawson, S. R. (2008). Managing the “commons” on Cadillac Mountain: a stated choice analysis of Acadia National Park visitors' preferences. <i>Leisure Sciences</i>, 30(1), 71-86.</li> </ul>
Week 6: 3/2	<b>Select Management Area and Issue (Due 3/1)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Normative approach</li> <li>- Conflict</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graefe, A. R. &amp; Thapa, B. (2004). Conflict in natural resources. In Manfredi, M. J., Vaske, J. J., Brown, P. &amp; Bruyere, B. (eds.), <i>Society and Natural Resources: A Summary of Knowledge</i>. Jefferson City, MO: Modern Litho, pp. 209-224.</li> <li>- Watson, A. E., Niccolucci, M. J., &amp; Williams, D. R. (1994). The nature of conflict between hikers and recreational stock users in the John Muir Wilderness. <i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>, 26(4), 372-385.</li> </ul>
Week 7: 3/9		<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
Week 8: 3/16		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Week 9: 3/23	<b>LNT Certificate Course (Due 3/22)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Depreciative behaviors and LNT</li> <li>- Theory of Planned Behavior</li> <li>- Communication and education</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CP Chapter 9: Promoting Sustainable Behavior</li> <li>- Taff, B. D., Miller, Z., Lawhon, B., Freeman, S., &amp; Newman, P. (2022). Effective Communication and Campground Recycling: Lessons Learned from Yosemite, Grand Teton, and Denali National Parks. <i>Land</i>, 11(10), 1872.</li> <li>- Freeman, S., Lawhon, B., Newman, P., &amp; Derrick Taff, B. (2021). Food Storage on the Appalachian Trail: A</li> </ul>

			Theory of Planned Behavior Approach to Understanding Backpacker Bear Canister Use. <i>Journal of Interpretation Research</i> , 26(2), 73-95.
Week 10: 3/30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zoom Guest Speaker: Bri Sullivan, Keep Nature Wild (4:30 to 6pm)</li> <li>- Tragedy of the commons or the “not so commons”</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CP Chapter 10: Community Psychology and Intenrational Biodiversity Conservation</li> <li>- De, K., Nanajkar, M., Mote, S., &amp; Ingole, B. (2020). Coral damage by recreational diving activities in a Marine Protected Area of India: Unaccountability leading to ‘tragedy of the not so commons’. <i>Marine Pollution Bulletin</i>, 155, 111190.</li> </ul>
Week 11: 4/6	<b>Management Issue Report, Part 1 (Due 4/5)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Equity in outdoor recreation access and experiences</li> <li>- Racism and discrimination</li> <li>- Interracial contact</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mowatt, R. A. (2020). A people’s history of leisure studies: The great race and the national parks and US forests. <i>Journal of Park and Recreation Administration</i>, 38(3), 152-172.</li> <li>- Stanfield, R., Manning, R., Budruk, M., &amp; Floyd, M. (2006). Racial Discrimination in Parks and Outdoor Recreation: an Empirical Study. In In: Peden, John G.; Schuster, Rudy M., comps., eds. Proceedings of the 2005 northeastern recreation research symposium; 2005 April 10-12; Bolton Landing, NY. Gen. Tech. Rep. NE-341. Newtown Square, PA: US Forest Service, Northeastern Research Station: 247-253.</li> </ul> <p><i>Videos:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lecture video on belonging and interracial contact in parks</li> </ul>
Week 12: 4/13	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manning, Chapter 8: The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (A Range of Recreation Opportunities) (PDF on Blackboard)</li> <li>- Wynveen, C. J., Schneider, I. E., Arnberger, A., Cottrell, S., &amp; von Ruschkowski, E. (2020). Integrating</li> </ul>

			place attachment into management frameworks: Exploring place attachment across the recreation opportunity spectrum. <i>Environmental Management</i> , 66(2), 248-262.
Week 13: 4/20	<b>Park Observation Assignment (Due 4/19)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate change and other environmental impacts on recreation</li> <li>- Recreation coping and substitution behavior</li> </ul>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ferguson, M. D., Mueller, J. T., Graefe, A. R., &amp; Mowen, A. J. (2018). Coping with climate change: A study of Great Lakes water-based recreationists. <i>Journal of Park &amp; Recreation Administration</i>, 36(2).</li> <li>- Dawson, J., Scott, D., &amp; Havitz, M. (2013). Skier demand and behavioural adaptation to climate change in the US Northeast. <i>Leisure/Loisir</i>, 37(2), 127-143.</li> </ul> <p><i>Videos:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watch “Purple Mountains”</li> </ul>
Week 14: 4/27		- Place attachment and stewardship	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manning, Chapter 12: Outdoor Recreation Places (Emotional and Symbolic Meanings)</li> </ul>
Week 15: 5/4	<b>Management Issue Report Part 2 (Due 5/3) and Presentations (Due 5/4)</b>	<b>Management Issue Report Presentations</b>	
Finals Week: 5/10		<b>Final Exam</b>	

**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 <http://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](mailto: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, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible 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 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/>**

