

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
[Program Name]

RECR 161 (001): Basic SCUBA Diving
2 Credits, Fall 2024
1-4 PM Fridays AF Center-Pool
Hybrid (course material)

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

There are some medical conditions that contraindicate scuba diving. For safety, students will be asked to complete a medical form to ensure they are safe for scuba diving activities. There are also fees associated with equipment purchase and rental, and fees associated with the certification agency that you will be given prior to the start of the class. You should be a comfortable swimmer and have the ability be able to tread water, you will have to pass a basic swim and float evaluation at the start of the course to continue. **This course requires strong swimming skills, high comfort level under water and physical and mental conditioning compatible with SCUBA industry diving safety standards.**

University Catalog Course Description

Provides training toward certification as an open water SCUBA diver. Emphasizes snorkeling and SCUBA skills. Covers safe diving skills, the physics and physiology of diving, equipment care and maintenance, diving fitness, underwater navigation, record keeping, and other basic SCUBA knowledge. With successful completion of the course, students will qualify as a Referral Diver and be prepared for Open Water Certification by Scuba Schools International (SSI). Students will have options for completing their Open Water SCUBA Certification, but this training is outside the requirements of this class.

Course Overview

The SCUBA diving industry has established international standards for SCUBA diving. This course provides you the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to become a safe introductory level snorkeler and scuba diver. The longer course format over the semester provides you with extra time for skill development and is generally not available in other certification courses.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Mason's Learning Management System (LMS). You will log in to the course site using your Mason email name (everything before @gmU.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on 26 Aug 9 am.

- To access your course in Blackboard Learn: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

1. Explain physical gas laws associated with pressurized gases used in diving.
2. Describe the physiology of diving, emphasizing but not limited to nitrogen and oxygen under pressure.
3. Apply knowledge learned for safe recreational scuba dives.
4. Explain basic first aid and long-term treatment for recreational diving illness.
5. Demonstrate proficiency in SCUBA skills required for Scuba Schools International Open Water SCUBA certification.
6. Explain concepts about the aquatic environment including an introduction reef ecology.

Professional Standards

SCUBA Schools International (SSI)

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: Complete demonstration of skills required for SSI Open Water SCUBA Certification learned in the pool and in preparation for Open Water Certification dives conducted after the course. Completion of written requirements for Open Water SCUBA Certification through classroom and self-instruction with SSI study materials. In the course, students can complete a Certification of Referral Diver with successful completion of classroom material, a skills test in the pool and completion of a written exam with a minimum score of 80%.

Required Texts

SSI online training materials for Open Water Diver www.divessi.com. We will show you how to gain access in class, no preparation is required prior to the first week. You will also use the Divers Alert Network website periodically during the course.

www.diversalertnetwork.com

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed internet access with updated browsers.
 - Blackboard Learn supported browsers: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support
 - Canvas supported browsers: <https://guides.instructure.com/a/720329>
- Consistent and reliable access to GMU email and the course LMS, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Speakers and a microphone or a microphone-enabled headset for use with the synchronous web conferencing tools.
- Note that students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

Expectations

- Course Week:
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course LMS site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least [#] times per week. In addition, students must log in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings, if any.
- 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 demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. 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 or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.*

Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Course Performance Eva

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time on the SSI website or **Blackboard** as required. Water skill development and assessment will take place at the Aquatic Fitness Center. Attendance every Friday is extremely important, please do not take the course if you have any conflicts with scheduled Friday afternoons during the course.

Assignments and Examinations

Skill Assessment

SCUBA skills will be learned in the pool, and assessment of the skills will be done individually with the instructor. Students will practice skills throughout the semester and be tested on proficiency at the end of the term.

Multiple Choice Exams

Knowledge focused on the objectives of the course will be evaluated with the standard SSI Open Water Scuba exam (80% required for certification).

Attendance/Participation

Online work can be done on a students schedule each week during the semester, we will have occasional online zoom sessions as needed in a timeframe available to student's schedules (discussed during the first week of class). It is critically important to attend pool sessions as the skill development occurs in the pool and cannot be made up when missed.

Students who attend every session, are on time each day, complete SSI chapter and reviews on time and participate to their fullest extent each pool day will do well in the course. You will need to schedule some time outside of class each week (~3 hours) to complete online SSI chapters, prepare for learning in water skills, and to prepare questions for review with the instructor.

Students should come prepared for each class, with all personal snorkeling equipment and enthusiasm for class activities. Students will need to have all snorkeling equipment for the first pool session (as indicated in the schedule below).

Course Performance Evaluation Weighting

- Attendance/Participation SCUBA skill demonstration (50%)
- Timely completion of SSI chapters online during required weeks (20%)
- SSI Open Water Final Exam (30%)
- Total points: 100

Use of Generative AI

Use of Generative AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of Mason's Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

Professional Dispositions (CEHD Student Guide)

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide>.

Class Schedule

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

Friday Aug 30. 1:00 Online Zoom Session to introduce the course. No Pool. Opening an SSI account and accessing the course. Understanding course fees, potential medical contraindications and swimming requirements to start SCUBA training. SSI form completion online. See the Zoom link posted on the BlackBoard site or at the top of this syllabus.

Sat Aug 31. Meet in the afternoon at Coral Edge Adventures: 4657 Sudley Rd., Catharpin, VA 1:00 to review and potentially purchase snorkeling gear. (Alternative times may be arranged if necessary)

Friday Sept 6. *Please post on SSI site, or bring your signed medical release form with you prior to this water activity.* Swim evaluation. Swim 400 yards without stopping and tread/float for 10 minutes. Meet at the recreation pool in the Aquatic Fitness Center with a bathing suit and towel, be ready to get into the water by 1:10. Fittings for BCD sizes.

Fri Sept 13. No pool session. Work online to complete chapters and review questions.

Friday Sept 20. Introduction to snorkeling. Basic kicking skills and surface dives. You will need to have your own snorkeling gear by this date. Meet by the diving boards (Competition pool) at 1:10.

Fri Sept 27. No pool session, you may practice snorkeling skills during open pool time this week.

Friday Oct 4. Intro to SCUBA in shallow water. Meet at the Recreation pool (shallow pool). Please be poolside at 1:10. Build up SCUBA gear and learn mask flooding and regulator removal and replacement. Breathing safely on SCUBA.

Friday Oct 11. Meet by the diving boards each night from here on out. First session in deeper water. SCUBA skills development.

Friday Oct 18, Oct 25, Nov 1, Nov 8, Nov 15, Nov 22. Skills development and evaluation in the competition pool

Friday Sept 6	Recreation Pool (Comp Pool if available for swim evaluation)
Friday Sept 13	No Pool
Friday Sept 20	Competition Pool
Friday Sept 27	No Pool
Friday Oct 4	Recreation Pool
Friday October 11	Competition Pool
Friday October 18	Competition Pool
Friday October 25	Competition Pool
Friday Nov 1	Competition Pool
Friday November 8	Competition Pool
Friday November 15	Competition Pool
Friday November 22	No Pool Thanksgiving Break
Friday December 1	Competition Pool
Friday December 8	Competition Pool

We will discuss Open Water certification options, although this is not a required component of the course. The Final Exam is online, and may be taken anytime during the finals period (Dec 11-18)

Additional zoom sessions will be scheduled for reviewing SSI Open Water Diver online materials. We will schedule these as needed and consider everyone's schedules.

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason's Academic Standards (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 your LMS should be directed to:
 - Blackboard Learn: <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>
 - Canvas: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see:
 - TimelyCare: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
 - Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development's Student Success Resources, please visit: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

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.

[Additional Program or Division content, supplemental materials, instructions, and graphics may be placed here, as appropriate.]