

REN489: OUTDOOR RECREATION CONSORTIUM

Spring 2011

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Gerard Kyle
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Office hours: By appointment

Class Meets:
Tuesdays 5:00-6:30pm
Room 252 Francis

Consortium Dates: Sunday, March 20 through Saturday, March 26 (Note. This is the week immediately after TAMU spring break).

Course Fee: The full consortium fee (program, lodging, meals and transportation) is \$435. Class fundraising efforts typically reduce the final cost paid by students considerably. Transportation to and from the consortium location in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, accommodations and meals while there are provided and these costs are included in the above estimate.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a 3-credit course culminating in a week-long field experience held in conjunction with four other universities in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The purpose of the Outdoor Recreation Consortium is to provide students with hands-on exposure to outdoor recreation resources management in a major National Park facing complex challenges. It is designed to increase students' understanding and appreciation of outdoor recreation resources, the agencies managing those resources, the management strategies used, and the factors affecting management, including issues related to the nearby "gateway communities" and the park's broader environment. The course format is one which focuses on problem solving, encourages a high level of interaction among participating students, faculty, and managers, and gives participants an opportunity to connect with nature.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Park Resources and Experiences

- To expose participants to and improve their knowledge and appreciation of the resources and experiences available in Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GRSM)

Management of Natural Resources and Recreation Opportunities

- To improve knowledge and appreciation of the recreational use, programs, facilities, management and operations of GRSM as well as those in its "Gateway Communities."
- To increase understanding of natural resource management, ecosystem management, outdoor recreation, tourism, visitor management, and the relationships among them.
- To identify ways and means of effective governmental agency, private sector, and nonprofit organization cooperation in park management.

- To improve understanding of the challenges and opportunities that can emerge in relationships between parks and their "gateway communities."

Problem Solving

- To provide opportunities to work on practical solutions to park-related challenges and to share those solutions with other participants.
- To identify areas of research and professional practice that could assist the National Park Service in GRSM.

Career Development

- To enable participants to identify and explore job opportunities with park and natural resource-related agencies.
- To provide an atmosphere that encourages interaction among students from the five participating universities, between students and faculty, and between students and managers.
- To provide opportunities to develop relationships with professionals, other students, and faculty that can be called upon later in the participants' careers.

COURSE READINGS

The course text is:

National Park Service (1981). *Great Smoky Mountains (National Park Service Handbook 112)*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior.

It is available at the campus bookstore for around \$10. The course will also utilize a series of current articles that will be provided as well as a group of related web sites.

The website for our hosts (Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont) can be accessed at: <http://gsmit.org>. A list of other relevant web sites will be distributed during the course.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

1/18 – Course overview and objectives and review of course syllabus

1/25 – No class

2/1 – Overview of National Park Service and other selected resource management agencies. Basic principles of visitor management and natural resource planning and management. (Supplemental Reading)

2/8 – History, resources, programs, facilities, operations and management philosophy of GRSM. (Part 1 of *Great Smoky Mountains*)

2/15 – National Park "gateway communities" (Part 2 of *Great Smoky Mountains* and Supplemental Readings)

2/22 – Governmental agency, private sector, and nonprofit sector cooperation in park management. (Part 2 of *Great Smoky Mountains* and Supplemental Readings)

2/29 – Current issues, research and professional practice related to GRSM in its programs. (Supplemental Readings)

3/1 – Current issues, research and professional practice related to GRSM in its programs. (Supplemental Readings)

3/8 – Committee updates and preliminary presentations by student Track Teams. Final Trip Logistics and Preparations

3/15 – TAMU Spring Break

3/20 thru 3/26 - Outdoor Recreation Consortium Trip to Great Smoky Mountains National Park

4/5 – Course wrap-up, conclusions and evaluation. (All written assignments due at beginning of this class)

EVALUATION

1. Students will submit a journal including a summary of events during the Consortium trip itself. The journal must be kept up daily while on the trip and must include notes on activities and presentations attended. Include names and titles of presenters; summaries of key points; and your observations, reactions, and reflections. (25%)
2. Students will actively and constructively participate in committees preparing for various aspects of the Consortium trip and will submit a summary of their committee involvement including comments on what was accomplished, challenges faced and how they were addressed. The committee report should also contain specific suggestions on how future Consortium committees can more effectively accomplish their responsibilities. (20%)
3. Class preparation (including completion of readings and attendance at all Consortium sessions during the trip itself) is required. Punctuality at all sessions (including meals while on the trip) is expected. (20%)
4. Peer evaluation of the extent and quality of the student's contribution to the Consortium and their representation of TAMU at GSMIT. (10%)
5. In place of a final examination, students will prepare and submit a final paper offering their insights related to the Consortium (including the "Interest Track" they participate in during the Wednesday of the Consortium). In particular, the paper will focus on the most pressing challenges facing Great Smoky Mountain National Park and its nearby "Gateway Communities." The paper should draw heavily on material gathered during the Consortium and course readings and offer specific suggestions on how to meet the challenges identified. (25%)

The Consortium journal, committee reports, and final paper are due at the beginning of the final class meeting.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Course participants are required to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$50 by the first class meeting in February.

Course participants are required to pay all remaining consortium fees prior to departure for the Great Smokies.

In addition to poor performance on the evaluation criteria noted above, the following would constitute why a consortium participant would not successfully pass this course:

Failure to comply with the rules and regulations established by the consortium faculty. (Outlined in detail in the "*Commitment to Expedition Behavior*" and during the pre-consortium class meetings.)

Negligence which could lead to injury of any consortium participant.

GRADING AND RELATED POLICIES

The following grading policy will be in effect:

A=90-100 points

B=80-89.9 points

C=70-79.9 points

D=60-69.9 points

F<60 points

Attendance/Participation Policy:

You are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and participate while there. Unexcused absences are not permitted. Each unexcused class absence will result in a 5 percentage point reduction in the student's final grade. When I take roll it is recorded at the beginning of class. Those not present at that time are considered absent for that class. Participation is expected in class discussions and any assigned field experiences. Quality of participation is more important than quantity.

Assignment Policy:

All assignments must be turned in at the start of class on the day due. Permission must be obtained in advance to turn in any assignment late. Grades for late assignments will be marked down 10% for each day late. I check my voice mail and e-mail regularly when I am not in the office.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:

The following ADA Policy Statement (part of the Policy on Individual Disabling Conditions) was submitted to the University Curriculum Committee by the Department of Student Life. The policy statement was forwarded to the Faculty Senate for information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a

disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall or call 845-1637.

Academic Integrity :Aggie Honor Code:

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the Texas A&M University community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. For additional information please visit: www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/

On all course work, assignments, and examinations at Texas A&M University, the following Honor Pledge shall be preprinted and signed by the student:

“On my honor, as an Aggie, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.”

Cheating encompasses the following:

1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; duress; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.
3. Attempted cheating.

Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

Depending on the severity of the indiscretion, cheating and plagiarism may result in automatic course failure.

OUTDOOR RECREATION CONSORTIUM
March 20 – 26, 2011 (DRAFT)

Sunday, March 21

4:00 pm Arrive at GSMIT
5:00 pm Faculty Meeting in GSMIT Office (faculty only)
6:00 pm Dinner [Tremont staff introductions]
7:00 pm Icebreakers (Western Illinois University)
7:30 pm School Introductions

Monday, March 22

8:00 Breakfast [Tremont staff introductions]
8:30 Daily Orientation and Objectives (Gerard Kyle, TAMU)

8:45 State of the Park: Bob Miller, Chief Information Officer (GSMNP) @ GSMIT

10:00 Metcalf Bottoms: Mike Maslona, Resource Education Division (GSMNP)

11:00 Travel to Sugarlands Visitor Center (GSMNP)

12:00 Sack Lunch at Sugarlands & Explore Sugarlands (movie, exhibits, bookstore)

1:00 Leave for Newfound Gap: Appalachian Trail issues: Morgan Somerville, Appalachian Trail Conservancy & Roger Moore, NCSU

6:00 Dinner [Tremont staff introductions]

7:30 Evening Program: Black Bear Ecology in the Great Smoky Mountains with Carrie Lowe, University of Tennessee (Cove Room)

Tuesday, March 23

8:00 Breakfast [Tremont staff introductions]
8:30 Daily Orientation and Objectives (Katharine Pawelko, Western IL U)
8:40 Group Initiatives
9:20 Track Introductions and Group Initiatives (Track leaders)

9:45 Break

10:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

- 1. White Man's Footprints: The Impact of Exotic Species – Jeremy Lloyd, GSMIT**
- 2. Stream Ecology – Brian Ballenger, GSMIT**
- 3. Biodiversity Blitz – Jen Martin, GSMIT**

- 4. Geology Hike to the Falls – Tyson Wepprich, GSMIT
- 5. Salamander Project – Christina McCoy, GSMIT
- 6. Winter Tree & Spring Wildflower Identification – Mary Silver, GSMIT

- 12:30 Lunch [Tremont staff introductions]
- 1:00 Leave for Gatlinburg
- 1:45 Gatlinburg Issues@ Mynatt Park Shelter: [Marty Nicely, Gatlinburg Parks Department]
- 2:45 Gatlinburg: Economic Impact of Tourism/Visitors
- 4:45 Leave for Tremont
- 6:00 Dinner at Tremont [Tremont staff introductions]
- 7:00 Evening Program: Elk Reintroduction Program with Jennifer Murrow, University of Tennessee (Cove Room)

Wednesday, March 24

(7:00 Breakfast ONLY for those leaving early)

- 8:00 Breakfast [Tremont staff introductions]
- 8:30 Daily Orientation and Objectives (Mark Morgan, U. of MO)
- 8:45 Interest Tracks
 - Backcountry Management* – Gerard Kyle (TAMU)
 - Wildlife Management in the Great Smokies* – Alan Graefe (Penn State) & Hans Vogelsong (East Carolina U)
 - Historical & Cultural Preservation and Sustainable Tourism* – Katharine Pawelko (Western IL U.)
 - Visitor Center Evaluation* – Mark Morgan (U. of MO)
- 6:00 Dinner [Tremont staff introductions]
- 7:00 Evening Program: Appalachian Storytelling with Elizabeth Rose (Council House)

Thursday, March 25

- 8:00 Breakfast [Tremont staff introductions]
- 8:30 Daily Orientation and Objectives (Alan Graefe, Penn State)

All Day Option

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

- 1. Old-Growth Forest Hike – Brian Ballenger, GSMIT**
- 2. Old-Growth Forest Hike – Josh Davis, GSMIT**
- 3. Old-Growth Forest Hike – Tyson Wepprich, GSMIT**

Morning Session Options

9:00-Noon (Concurrent Sessions)

- 1. The Role of the National Park Service Ranger – Helen McNutt, GSMNP**
- 2. Half-Day Hike: Signs of Spring – Mary Silver, GSMIT**
- 3. Half-day Hike: Survival Skills – Tesha Omeis & Adam Leiterman, GSMIT**

12:30 – Lunch

[Tremont staff introductions]

Afternoon Session Options

1:30 – 4:30 (Concurrent Sessions)

- 1. Half-Day Hike: Leave No Trace – Christina McCoy, GSMIT**
- 2. Half-Day Hike: Campsite Cleanup (Service Project) – Jeremy Lloyd, GSMIT**
- 3. Salamander Project – Tesha Omeis & Adam Leiterman, GSMIT**
- 4. Geology Hike to the Falls – Mary Silver, GSMIT**
- 5. Service Project – Ken Voorhis, GSMIT Executive Director**

6:00 Dinner

[Tremont staff introductions]

7:30 Evening Program: Old-Time Music with Lost Mill String Band (Council House)

Friday, March 26

8:00 Breakfast at Tremont

[Tremont staff introductions]

8:30 Daily Orientation and Objectives

(Hans Vogelsong, East Carolina U.)

Morning Session Options

9:00 – 10:30 a.m. (Concurrent Sessions)

- 1. Fire Management in the National Park – Rob Klein, Fire Ecologist, NPS**
 - 2. Managing a Residential Environmental Learning Center – Ken Voorhis, GSMIT Executive Director**
- 3. Citizen Science in Your Park – Tyson Wepprich**
 - 4. Stream Survey – Adam Leiterman, GSMIT**
 - 5. Natural Resource Inventory & Nature Trail Design – Mary Silver, GSMIT**
 - 6. Winter Tree & Spring Wildflower Identification – Tesha Omeis & Christina McCoy, GSMIT**

10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. (Concurrent Sessions)

1. Fire Management in the National Park – Rob Klein, Fire Ecologist, NPS

2. Naturalist Skills – Ken Voorhis, GSMIT Executive Director

3. Citizen Science in Your Park – Tyson Weprich, GSMIT

4. Stream Survey – Adam Leiterman, GSMIT

5. Natural Resource Inventory & Nature Trail Design – Mary Silver, GSMIT

6. Winter Tree & Spring Wildflower Identification – Tesha Omeis & Christina McCoy, GSMIT

12:30 Lunch

[Tremont staff introductions]

1:30 Case Study Presentations

3:00 Group Photos

3:30 Faculty Meeting in GSMIT Office Bldg.

4:00 Free time

6:00 Cookout – Pavilion

[Tremont staff introductions]

7:30 Awards Ceremony

8:00 Evening Program: Folk Dancing with Bob Grimac (Pavilion)

Saturday, March 27

6:00 Clean Up and Pack

7:00 Breakfast

7:30 Depart for Home

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND FACULTY

East Carolina University - Hans Vogel song, PhD

North Carolina State University - Roger Moore, PhD

Penn State University- Alan Graefe, PhD

University of Missouri-Columbia - Mark Morgan, PhD

Western Illinois University - Katharine Pawelko, PhD

Texas A&M University – Gerard Kyle, PhD