

RMP 511: Issues of Wilderness and Nature in American Society
Department of Recreation Management & Policy
University of New Hampshire

COURSE SYLLABUS J-Term 2019: Dec. 27, 2019 – Jan. 18, 2020

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Email is the best way to contact me!

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide students with a contextual and historic view of the evolving relationship between wilderness, nature and American society. Contemporary works of literature and philosophy will be read and discussed to illustrate issues relating to nature and the environment. We will examine how wilderness and our natural lands have influenced philosophy, politics, ethics, the arts, and values in American culture. Related current issues will be explored and critiqued. Ultimately, this course will challenge students to develop their own viewpoint on wilderness and nature through readings, online discussions and personal experiences.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- Define basic ethical positions that influence natural resource management and how these ethical positions have influenced historical and current relations with our environment
- Discuss key influential philosophers and influential figures from American wilderness history
- Articulate and debate different philosophical positions relating to wilderness through readings of classic to modern nature writers and philosophers
- Develop their own wilderness ethic, and present it logically and defensibly
- Explain how social construction of nature has influenced natural resource management

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Nash, R. (2014). *Wilderness and the American mind* (5th edition). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Additional required readings will be provided via Canvas.

Several films and videos will be recommended throughout this course as beneficial supporting materials.

ASSIGNMENTS / GRADED WORK

1. Reading Responses (75 points) *see Course Schedule*

Throughout each week, students will be asked to submit responses to specific questions about a variety of required readings:

- Each Friday, the next week's readings/questions will be posted under that week's Module on our course Canvas site.
- In addition to answering a specific question about the reading, *responses should reflect your viewpoint* when possible. Challenge the author when appropriate.
- Responses are submitted directly into Canvas, as directed for each assignment (attached word documents are preferable to text entry, but video or voice recordings are also acceptable if desired).
- Responses are typically no longer than 300-500 words (or 3-5 minutes) and will be graded mainly on the depth of understanding about each reading/question.
- 15 submissions worth up to 5 points each = 75 points possible.

2. Discussion Board (100 points) *see Course Schedule*

Throughout this course, students will be asked to contribute to and stimulate discussions regarding our course material:

- Questions will be posted under the "Discussions" tab, in the discussion board forum. Respond to the appropriate thread.
- Discussion board threads are due per the dates listed on the Course Schedule but will be available on Monday mornings each week.
- 4 discussion board responses, worth up to 25 points each = 100 points possible.
- **Additional responses (to other student discussion board posts) are highly encouraged and contribute to your class participation points in this course.**

3. Early Term Quiz (25 points) *Fri, Jan 4*

The early term quiz is intended to keep students attentive, current with reading assignments, and to act as a primer for what can be expected on the final exam.

4. Final exam (100 points) *Fri, Jan 18*

Cumulative, including all material covered throughout the semester:

- The final exam will be multiple-choice, T/F, matching, and "open book".
- You will be given one hour to complete the exam, but on your own schedule.
- Details to follow, as we get closer to the final exam date.

4. Nature Blog (100 points) *see Course Schedule*

Students create their own "Nature Blog", which ultimately reflects their evolving wilderness ethic and serves as the capstone project for this course:

- Each week, students submit a reflective blog entry.
- 4 blog entries, worth up to 25 points each = 100 points possible.
- Detailed directions for this component of the class can be found under the Nature Blog Module on our Canvas site.
- **Blogs will be completed through Wordpress – see the "Nature Blog" Module for details.**

GRADING

Summary of Grading:

Reading Responses	75 points
Early Term Quiz	25 points
Discussion Board	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Nature Blog/URL	100 points

Total **400 points**

Participation Points: Each student has the potential to receive 5 participation points, which will be added to their total points accrued from assignments and the final exam (an addition of 1.5 % to the overall grade).

- This can act as the “maker/breaker” points for those on the edge of a letter grade.
- Participation, timeliness with assignments, and genuine dedication to course material will be considered for these points.
- **Contributing to discussion board threads and commenting on other student blogs are two examples of ways to achieve these points.**

UNH default grading scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Points (%)	Total Points
A	94-100	376-400
A-	90-93.9	360-375
B+	87-89.9	348-359
B	84-86.9	336-347
B-	80-83.9	320-335
C+	77-79.9	308-319
C	74-76.9	296-307
C-	70-73.9	280-295
D+	67-69.9	268-279
D	64-66.9	256-267
D-	60-63.9	240-255
F	Less than 60	Below 240

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Participation: Students are expected to stay up with the readings, assignments and lectures barring exceptional circumstances. Consistent access to the Internet will be important to maintain this requirement, and to succeed in this class. Please inform me of any issues you may have as soon as possible.

Late Work: All assignments must be received by their due date. You are free to hand in assignments *before* they are due when appropriate, however. **Late work will not be accepted.**

Graded Work: Graded assignments will be posted as quickly as possible. Students have 10 days after grades are posted to address any issues or questions regarding their grade(s). After 10 days grades will not be re-visited.

Readings: To facilitate a dynamic and discussion-based online class environment, students are expected to complete assigned readings in a timely manner. Be prepared to discuss and reflect upon difficult questions about the readings, and to share your opinion on the topic.

Virtual Classroom Climate: This class is intended to test higher-level cognitive abilities. Students are expected to think, question and debate information presented. I will do my best to create an environment in which expressions of uncertainty, conjecture and alternative and competing views can be freely shared. I expect the same of you regarding your peers.

Writing and Grammar: The ability to write well is an indispensable and powerful attribute. Beyond this, good writing skills are imperative in nearly every profession. Consequently, written work is expected to be concise, organized and with minimal errors (don't rely on spell check!). **Grammar and professionalism will be criteria for grading on nearly all assigned material.**

Students with Disabilities: According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended, 2008), each student with a disability has the right to request services from UNH to accommodate his/her disability. If you are a student with a documented disability or believe you may have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at **201 Smith Hall**. Accommodation letters are created by SAS with the student. Please follow-up with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of the identified accommodations in the letter. Faculty have an obligation to respond once they receive official notice of accommodations from SAS, but are under no obligation to provide retroactive accommodations. For more information refer to www.unh.edu/studentaccessibility or contact SAS at 603.862.2607, 711 (Relay NH) or sas.office@unh.edu.

University of New Hampshire Emotional and/or mental health distress: Your academic success in this course is very important to me. If, during the semester, you find emotional or mental health issues are affecting that success, please contact Psychological

and Counseling Services (PACS) at <http://www.unh.edu/pacs/>. They are located on the 3rd floor of Smith Hall; 603 862-2090/TTY: 7-1-1. They provide counseling appointments/other mental health services. **Please note:** If you choose to share your personal concerns with me, you should be aware that **I am a mandatory reporter** and must report any cases of harassment and/or abuse to the appropriate authorities. The Counseling Center does not share this same obligation and confidentiality can be found there.

Ethics and Academic Honesty: Students are expected to abide by UNH policies on academic honesty and integrity as noted in the UNH Student's Rights, Rules and Responsibilities Handbook: <https://www.unh.edu/student-life/handbook>. Any act violating this policy will place you in jeopardy of disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or dismissal from the university. Included among violations of academic honesty are: cheating on in-class exams, unauthorized collaboration on assignments outside of class, plagiarism, misrepresentation, violations of academic policy, and violation of computer code of ethics. Procedures for handling cases of violations will be followed as outlined in the UNH Student Rights, Rules and Responsibilities Procedures for dealing with Academic Misconduct. If you have questions about this policy, or what constitutes violations of academic honesty, please ask me.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting: The University of New Hampshire and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students and for the university as a whole. To this end, the university requires faculty members to report to the university's Title IX Coordinator (Donna Marie Sorrentino, dms@unh.edu, 603-862-2930/1527 TTY) any incidents of sexual violence and harassment shared by students. If you wish to speak to a confidential support service provider who does not have this reporting responsibility because their discussions with clients are subject to legal privilege, you can find a list of resources here: <http://www.unh.edu/affirmativeaction/offices-resources-support>. For more information about what happens when you report, how the university considers your requests for confidentiality once a report is made to the Title IX Coordinator, your rights and report options at UNH (including anonymous report options) please visit: <https://www.unh.edu/affirmativeaction>.

Academic Honesty: All instances of academic misconduct will be referred to the UNH policy on academic honesty (UNH Student's Rights, Rules and Responsibilities, Section 0.9, p. 32).

Questions / Concerns: The sooner the better! We can usually figure out a reasonable solution to any problem you may have. Please feel free to contact me via phone or email. I encourage transparent communication, so if you have a thought, issue or idea I want to hear it.