

FOR 471X: Ecotourism Impacts Spring 2004

Oregon State University – Cascades Campus

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours
Tuesday 1:00 to 3:00
Feel free to arrange other times by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide students with an in-depth understanding of the impacts of ecotourism, using the broad categorization of economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts. Although the focus is on ecotourism's impacts, these will be set within the context of the impacts of tourism generally. Issues and examples both from the US and overseas will be presented. The spatial focus will be at the site level (e.g., attractions, natural areas, communities), but broader issues also will be discussed. Impact evaluation methods will be described, and students will conduct a case study evaluation.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

FOR 371 International Ecotourism (waivers may be granted by the instructor).

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

The course goal is for students to develop an understanding of ecotourism's impacts and how they are evaluated. By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- describe ecotourism's economic, environmental, and socio-cultural impacts and the factors that affect the type of magnitude of these impacts;
- critically evaluate impact evaluations conducted by others; and
- conduct their own impact evaluation using a case study site and primary and/or secondary data.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND/OR READINGS

The text for this course is:

Mason, P. (2003). *Tourism Impacts, Planning and Management*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

This text will be a foundation for the course, but it will be supplemented by additional readings.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with documented disabilities who may need special accommodation, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible – and no later than the first week of the term. If alternative testing is needed, the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodation should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND CONDUCT

This course conforms to the Oregon State University Administrative Rules Relating to Student Conduct. Put simply, you are expected to do your own work. For those of you who need more guidance, the following comes from OSU documents:

Academic Integrity – students are expected to be honest and ethical in their academic work.

Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following areas:

- cheating: use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids
- fabrication: falsification or invention of any information
- assisting: helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty
- tampering: altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents
- plagiarism: representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own.

Example: you must write your own report and term paper in your own words. “Cutting and pasting” blocks of text from other sources is considered plagiarism. Of course, you may quote from source material, but the quote must be brief (usually less than a paragraph), enclosed within quotation marks, and correctly cited in the text and in the reference section. Please ask in advance if you are uncertain regarding the appropriate use of material from other sources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Exam (30% of grade). One hour-long exam will be given, approximately halfway through the course. The exam will assess the extent to which instructional objectives have been met. For example, you will be asked to provide examples of different types of impacts and the factors that affect them.

2. Article report (15% of grade). For this requirement, you will read and report on a manuscript relating to ecotourism's impacts. The manuscript can cover a case study of a specific location (e.g., tourism at a particular national park) or an analysis of a specific topic (e.g., economic impacts). It is recommended that the article contain an empirical (data collection and analysis) component.

I recommend selecting an academic journal article for this report, but you may select a book chapter, report, or other manuscript. If the publication is not a journal article, it **must be** approved by the instructor in advance. You will submit a written report on the article, with a target length of 3 to 4 double-spaced pages. This report will summarize and critique the article. You will also make an oral presentation in class. Each presentation will be allocated 20 minutes, during which you will summarize and critique the article and respond to questions from fellow students or the instructor. I recommend that you make your presentation in PowerPoint.

In your written report and oral presentation, you will demonstrate:

- your ability to access a relevant manuscript;
- your knowledge of the manuscript content;
- your ability to critically evaluate the manuscript content; and
- your ability to convey your knowledge and evaluation in both written and verbal forms.

Your grade will reflect the extent to which you demonstrate these skills. The written report is worth 10% of your grade and the oral presentation is worth 5%.

3. Impact evaluation (45% of grade). This will be the major assignment for the course. In consultation with the instructor, you will select a site (e.g., a community or natural area) and conduct an impact evaluation of that site. The extent of the evaluation (e.g., economic, environmental, and/or socio-cultural) and whether primary data is collected (e.g., through a resident survey) will be determined in consultation with the instructor. This will be a group project, with group composition and size depending on the number of students in the class. The evaluation will be written up in the form of a term paper. The paper should contain:

- an introduction to ecotourism's impacts, including a review of the relevant impact literature;
- a description of the site being evaluated;
- a description of the methods used in the evaluation (e.g., secondary data, a resident survey);
- a description of evaluation results; and
- a concluding section that summarizes the above.

I recommend a length target of 15 to 20 double-spaced pages, but quality is more important than quantity.

By 12 April, you are required to discuss with me your topic and the results of your initial literature search, as well as to submit a written outline of your paper. You will make an oral presentation of your paper on **28 April**. The report itself will be due at the beginning of class that day, but this date may be adjusted if needed due to the nature of the analysis.

In your written report and oral presentation, you will demonstrate:

- your ability to access multiple relevant manuscripts on your topic;
- your in-depth knowledge of manuscript contents;
- your ability to synthesize, critically evaluate, and make conclusions from content across the multiple manuscripts (as well as relevant material from class lectures and readings);
- your ability to conduct a case study evaluation and to interpret results;
- your ability to convey your knowledge in a paper that is logical, easy-to-read, grammatically correct, and with correct spelling; and
- your ability to convey your knowledge in an oral presentation.

Your grade will reflect the extent to which you demonstrate these skills. The written report is worth 40% of your grade and the oral presentation is worth 5%.

4. Class participation (10% of grade). You are expected to participate in class discussion – of the instructor's lectures, of guest lectures, and of student presentations. Students who attend class and demonstrate their achievement of the learning objectives through informed discussion will be allocated the full 10%. Points will be deducted for students who miss classes and/or do not engage in informed discussion. Because of the class size and seminar format, it is especially important for students to do the reading *before* each lecture.

Your grade will be comprised of the following requirements:

Requirement	Portion of grade (%)
Exam	30
Article report (report and presentation)	15
Impact evaluation (report and presentation)	45
Class participation	10
Total	100

LITERATURE SOURCES

Both the term paper and the impact evaluation should utilize the available literature. The three leading journals in tourism are *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, and *Tourism Management*, and each periodically contains articles on ecotourism or related topics. The *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* and the *Journal of Ecotourism* are more specialized and regularly contains relevant articles. Many other journals in tourism and other fields also periodically contain articles on ecotourism and impact evaluation. Access to these journals, and searchable journal databases, will be discussed in class. There is much overlap between ecotourism, nature tourism, and just plain tourism and recreation; you should keep this in mind when selecting terms for database searches.

You may also utilize books, reports, web material, and other sources of information. However, you should keep in mind that these sources typically do not undergo the same review process that journal articles do, and thus may have lower quality standards. Therefore, these sources should supplement journal articles rather than replace them. Regardless of the source, you should read material with a critical eye.

WRITING AND REFERENCING

For guidance on writing, refer to the paper or web versions of *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. (<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>), material on the OSU Writing Intensive Curriculum (WIC) web site (http://wic.oregonstate.edu/wic_stdnt_writ_help.html), and/or other sources.

The APA. (American Psychological Association) format must be used for referencing. The APA publication manual is on reserve in the OSU-Cascades/COCC library. Tips are also available at the OSU WIC site above.

RESOURCES FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Although your oral presentations count for a modest part of your grade, I encourage you to use this opportunity to enhance your presentation skills. A couple resources that may help in this regard are: *A Guide to Effective Oral Presentations: The 4 S's*. Adapted from: David Whetton and Kim Cameron (<http://www.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/mob/presents.html>) and *Effective Presentations* by Jeff Radel (<http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/effective.html>).

COURSE CONTENT

Note: there are two lectures on each day.

Date	Topic	Chapters in Mason
29 Mar	Course introduction Review of tourism and its impacts	1, 2
31 Mar	Economic impacts (including fiscal/revenue)	3, 4
5 Apr	Ecological impacts	6
7 Apr	Socio-cultural impacts	5
12 Apr	Evaluation methods – economic	
14 Apr	Evaluation methods – ecological + article reports	
19 Apr	No class – work on impact evaluation project!	
21 Apr	Evaluation methods – socio-cultural	
26 Apr	Exam	
28 Apr	Presentations	

Additional readings will be assigned, with originals or copies provided in class. The lecture material on evaluation methods will be adjusted according to the case study approaches selected by students (e.g., socio-cultural evaluation will be treated earlier in the term in the case of a resident survey).