

BIO 412 CONSERVATION IN PRACTICE
Spring 2016
LSE 204; TTH 1:30-2:45



INSTRUCTORS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will explore the human dimensions of biodiversity conservation, focusing on issues and debates that both constrain and motivate contemporary conservation efforts. Emphasizing international conservation challenges, we will examine a range of controversial issues and key debates in conservation practice and policy via lectures, organized student-led discussions, and semester-length research projects. Subjects to be covered include: the origins and evolution of conservation policy and philosophy; the park vs. people debate; the conservation potential of ecotourism and bioprospecting; the role of community-based conservation and adaptive management; the conflict between animal welfare and species/ecosystem conservation approaches; advocacy and objectivity in conservation science and policy; and the challenges of doing good conservation work under conditions of global conflict and change.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To gain a deeper appreciation of the human dimensions of conservation (especially the ethical, policy, economic, social and political aspects of conservation practice), and a more informed and nuanced understanding of the field of conservation biology as a “mission-oriented science.”

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

First Exam (25 February)	20%	100 points
Second Exam (12 April)	20%	100 points
Final Exam (5 May)	20%	100 points
Class Participation	10%	50 points
Course Project		
Term Paper (due 21 April)	20%	100 points
Class Presentation	10%	50 points
Total	100%	500 points

READINGS

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, we will read from a selection of journal articles and book chapters available on the course Blackboard site. In general, readings will be posted at least a week in advance of the class in which they will be covered. This flexible format will allow us to examine and discuss relevant ideas and arguments in the conservation literature, as well as incorporate newer scholarship on emerging controversies in conservation policy and practice.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance and participation in class discussions is expected. In addition, over the course of the semester we will have six class meetings structured as “Discussion & Debate” sessions, which will be student-driven discussions of controversial issues and topics in conservation practice. For these sessions (facilitated but not led by the course instructors), two student teams (each comprised of two-three students) will be responsible for leading class discussion of the readings. Each team will prepare a 1-1.5 page summary & response focused on the assigned reading, including a set of 3-4 questions for group discussion. *These reports are to be posted on Blackboard by 5:00 PM the day before each Discussion & Debate session.* Everyone will participate in a discussion team once during the semester. We will schedule teams for these sessions at the beginning of the semester.

EXAMS

Exams will be held in class and each is weighted equally (the final exam will be comprehensive, though it will emphasize material from the final third of the course). The exams will be structured as a combination of short answer and short essay questions. Missed exams may only be taken with a documented medical excuse.

COURSE PROJECT (TERM PAPER AND PRESENTATION)

Each student will choose a subject for their course project, which is comprised of a) a medium-length paper (~10 pages); and b) a 15-minute class presentation given in the final weeks of the semester. You are required to submit a short project summary (one paragraph) and a preliminary bibliography listing *at least 3 journal articles* relevant to your topic on or before *18 February* for topic approval (there will be a 2 point/day penalty for late submissions to be subtracted from the paper total). Duplicate topics are not allowed, so we encourage you to start thinking about what you would like to study as soon as possible – and visit a course instructor during office hours to discuss your ideas and get signed up for your topic. Papers should be typed double-spaced in a normal font (11 or 12) with normal margins. Style should mimic the format of *Conservation Biology*, including an Abstract and how sources are cited in the text and in the Literature Cited section. *Papers are due in class on 21 April.*

In addition, each of you will deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation of your paper to the class in the last weeks of the semester. Scheduling of presentations will be determined by random drawing. Your projects/presentations are an important part of the course content and will be incorporated into the final exam.

Many of the best projects for this assignment will be grounded in real cases and conflicts in conservation (e.g., an analysis of a particular community-based conservation project; a study of a specific conflict between indigenous peoples and protected area management; an examination of a new conservation policy or management proposal, etc.). But it's also great if you address a more conceptual topic (e.g., the ethical foundations of conservation, the tensions between traditional biodiversity conservation and sustainable development models, etc.). You should select a topic that appeals to you, that is manageable (i.e., not too large in scope), and that you will be able to examine effectively with available resources (i.e., there must be sufficient scholarly literature to support your study). Remember, this is not a scientific paper in the narrow sense of describing an experiment, reporting findings, and so on. Rather, your task is to examine an area of conservation as a human endeavor that raises important and difficult questions, and that offers lessons (positive, negative, or both) for the way we conduct and/or think about conservation today.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

In the "Student Academic Integrity Policy" manual, ASU defines "Plagiarism" [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately." You can find ASU's policy on plagiarism and academic integrity at: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

Academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration, will not be tolerated. There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing, and any other form of dishonesty. We do, however, encourage you to study together and discuss the issues raised in class!

**NB: All cell phones and similar electronic devices must be turned off and out of sight during class and during exams. If a student is spotted with a cell phone out during an exam, the student will receive an immediate grade of zero for the exam, and potentially further disciplinary action.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	SUBJECT
12 January	Course Introduction (BAM and ATS)
14 January	Human Population and the Demographic Transition (ATS)
19, 21 January	The Evolution of the Conservation Idea in Policy and Practice (BAM)
26 January	Evolution of the Conservation Idea/Foundations of Conservation Ethics (BAM)
28 January	<i>Discussion & Debate I: Is Trophy Hunting a Viable Conservation Tool?</i> (BAM)
2 February	Oceanic Fisheries and the Limits of Sustainability (ATS)
4 February	Ecological Economics (ATS)
9 February	<i>Discussion & Debate II: How Should We Value Biodiversity and Ecosystems?</i> (ATS)
11 February	Community-based Conservation and Adaptive Management (ATS)
16 February	Ecotourism: Promise or Peril? (ATS)
18 February	<i>Discussion & Debate III: Do Bottom-up (CBC) Approaches Work?</i> (ATS) <i>[Final date to submit Course Project summary for approval]</i>
23 February	Bioprospecting, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and the Politics of Conservation (BAM)
25 February	Midterm Exam I
1, 3 March	Wilderness or Biodiversity, Parks or People? Means and Ends in Conservation (BAM)
8, 10 March	Spring Break
15 March	Conservation in Peril: Warfare, Illegal Wildlife Trade, and the Bushmeat Crisis (BAM and ATS)
17 March	<i>Discussion & Debate IV: Can a Conservationist be an Animal Welfare Supporter (and Vice Versa)?</i> (BAM)
22 March	The Top-down Approach: International Instruments for Biodiversity Conservation? (ATS)
24 March	Conservation Under Rapid Global Change (BAM)
29 March	Conservation, Culture, and Commerce: <i>Milking the Rhino</i> (film)
31 March	<i>Discussion & Debate V: Pleistocene Rewilding and De-Extinction</i> (BAM)
5 April	Choosing Indicators of Biodiversity; Biodiversity Databases (ATS)
7 April	<i>Discussion & Debate VI: What does the Future Hold?</i> (ATS)
12 April	Mid-term Exam II
14 April	Student Presentations

19 April	Student Presentations
21 April	Student Presentations <i>[Term Papers Due]</i>
26 April	Student Presentations
28 April	Final Wrap-up Discussion: On Advocacy and Objectivity in Conservation Biology (ATS and BAM)
5 May	Final Exam (12:10-2:00 PM)

A LIST OF SAMPLE JOURNALS FOR PROJECT RESEARCH

Conservation Biology/Ecology/Environmental Management

Ambio
Animal Conservation
Biodiversity
Biodiversity and Conservation
Conservation Biology
Biological Conservation
Oryx
Conservation and Society
Frontiers in Ecology and Environment
Ecology
Oikos
Ecology and Society
Ecological Applications
Ecological Economics
Economic Geography
Environmental Conservation
Environmental Management
Society & Natural Resources
Human Ecology
Human Ecology Review
Human Dimensions of Wildlife
Journal of Ecotourism
Journal of Applied Ecology

General Science

Science
Nature
BioScience
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Global Studies/Development/Anthropology

American Anthropologist
Current Anthropology
Development and Change
Environmental Health Perspectives
Geoforum
Mountain Research and Development
Native Peoples
World Development

Environmental Philosophy, History & Ethics

Environmental Ethics
Ethics and the Environment
Environmental Values
Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics
Ethics, Policy, & Environment
Environmental History
Environment and History