Spring 2-1-2021

NRSM 344.B01: Ecosystem Science and Restoration Capstone

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Syllabus
NRSM 344: ESR Capstone
Spring 2021: W 3-4:50 pm, F 2-4:50 PM, EDU 214

Instructor information:
- Instructor: Ben Colman
- Email: ben.colman@umontana.edu
- Phone: (406) 243-6315
- Office Hours: Choose a time that works for you here: https://ben-colman.youcanbook.me

Overview:

This five-credit service-learning course is the planning course for the capstone experience in the Ecosystem Science and Restoration major. It is designed to get students active through the application of ecological principles in pursuing a research and/or restoration project. The course consists of six modules:

1. Professional preparation
2. Designing research and/or restoration project
3. Formalizing project in a proposal
4. Practicing field methods
5. Pitching proposal as a poster
6. Planning an outreach event(s)

Class structure
- Wednesdays: The first hour will typically be lecture or structured discussion; the second hour will be workshop periods
- Fridays: The first one to two hours will typically be lecture, structured discussions, or visits from guest speakers; the rest will be workshop periods.

Learning outcomes:

By completing this course students should be able to:
1) Compile a high-quality job application
2) Work constructively as part of a group
3) Use databases and reference software to compile and organize source material
4) Write a restoration or research proposal
5) Provide constructive criticism of restoration/monitoring plans developed by others
6) Plan a volunteer restoration work day for a community partner for fall
7) Communicate effectively with professionals and the public about the importance of ecosystems and ecological restoration

Writing specific outcomes:
- Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
- Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
- Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline

Course format:
Lectures: Either based on readings that will be made available through Moodle, or based on the expertise of guest speakers, these lectures will form the basis of in-class discussions.
Field trips: We will use field trips to see restoration and monitoring in action, visit field sites for your projects, and practice and refine field methods.
Group work: Peer learning has been shown to be a highly effective learning tool and is an integral component of the course. Group work is not without its challenges, but it is a reality of the "real world" and you will learn skills to help you be successful.

Course policies:
Grading:
Rubrics for each assignment will be discussed in class and posted on Moodle along with the in-depth descriptions of those assignments. The overall distribution of points is summarized in the table below. My goal will be to return all assignments no later than a week after receiving them.

Assignment	Points
Resume and Cover Letter	10
Restoration Plan Critique	10
Proposal	40
Poster	10
Attendance & Participation	10
Volunteer Day Plan	10
Self-evaluation	10

Academic Honesty:
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct (including plagiarism) is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. I can honestly say that if you email me and tell me of a time that you were honest, and put "honest" as the subject, I will give you a point of extra credit. All students should read and be familiar with the policies contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Adjustments for Students with Disabilities:
Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me; know that I required modifications when I was in college and I will be understanding and work with you.

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students in Lommasson 154. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. [Disability Services for Students](#) will assist in the accommodation process.

Communication:
All course communications outside of class will be sent to students' University of Montana email accounts. It is your responsibility to regularly check your University account. In an average semester, I get around 100 emails a day with over half requiring replies. If you do not hear from me within 24 hours (except on the weekend) feel free to email again, or call me in my office.

Illness policy:
Let's hope we all stay healthy and well this semester. Students are required to attend class remotely if they have had a close contact with anyone with COVID-19, or if they come down with symptoms including:
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Additionally, students are expected to wear a mask over mouth and nose, socially distance, and clean surfaces before leaving class.

Statement on safety (adapted from guidelines by Lisa Eby):
We expect that all students and the instructor will follow all UM COVID-19 safety protocols. This includes:
- disinfecting shared use equipment
- using hand sanitizer
- using masks properly for all inside and outside class activities
- practicing physical distancing
- having only one person per row and wearing masks when in vehicles

Please contact DSS for either an accommodation to be completely remote for the semester or for any safety protocol modification you may need (depending on the needs we may or may not be able to accommodate the modification without requesting that you complete the class

remotely). If students decide not to follow all safety protocols, we will immediately adjust our face-to-face activities and transition towards full remote-learning for the entire class.

This is for your safety, my safety, and the safety of the community and will help to minimize any risk of transmission. Secondary contacts of asymptomatic people will likely occur for all of us whether through family, work, socializing, or school. Working to reduce transmission increases the probability that we all stay healthy, be able to maintain all planned face-to-face activities, and the better the class will be for all. That said, we will be prepared to have all assignments able to be completed remotely if needed, so if you are feeling sick or have been exposed, please follow UM Policy. Please let us know and we will excuse or allow you to make up any participation points or any points from face-to-face activities.

If you feel uncomfortable with any proposed activity or if UM cases increase, please reach out and we can accommodate more remote learning through the rest of the semester. Again, this is an ever-changing landscape so mutual respect, honest and early communication, and flexibility is needed for us to have a successful semester.

Schedule and attendance policy:
Because of the nature of this class, attendance (in-person, remote, or in select cases, asynchronously) is mandatory and points will be deducted for absences. That being said, class will be recorded when students are absent and students will be expected to view the class asynchronously if they cannot make class synchronously due to reasons of illness, injury, family matters, religious observance, squirrel ate through your internet cable, participation in a University or community sponsored activity, military service, or mandatory public service.

Because of the nature of this class, the schedule will be a little dynamic, but will be posted on Moodle within the tab for each week and updated there.