NRSM 121S.01: Nature of Montana

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NRSM 121S, Nature of Montana
Fall 2013, 3 credits
MW 1:10-2:00 pm, LA 11
Friday Discussion Labs (check your schedule for time and room)

Instructor: Laurie Yung
Office: Forestry 201A
Office Hours: MW 2-3:00 pm
or by appointment
Phone: 243-6934
laurie.yung@umontana.edu

Course Description
Nature of Montana examines key issues in contemporary natural resource management and conservation with a focus on human relationships with the environment in Montana and the Northern Rockies. The course utilizes a case study framework to examine social and political processes and ecological forces as they relate to forests, fire, water, agriculture, wolves, and climate change. These topics are explored from multiple disciplinary perspectives and provide windows into the interplay of culture, history, politics, and economics with biophysical processes. Nature of Montana fulfills the UM social science general education requirement. Lectures, class activities, readings, films, and written assignments are designed to impart information, examine different viewpoints, and encourage critical thinking.

Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Describe key social, political, and economic forces that influence conservation and natural resource management in Montana
• Examine natural resource and environmental issues through multiple disciplinary lenses
• Apply knowledge and critical thinking skills to problem solving

Readings
All course readings are required and available through the University of Montana library course reserves (password is: nature). Readings include book chapters, white papers, journal articles, reports, magazine and newspaper articles, and online resources.

Important note: You are expected to complete all assigned readings before class, and to come prepared with questions. Lectures will build on readings and assume students have a reasonable understanding of the reading for that day. Students who fail to do readings on-time will find lectures and classroom activities difficult to understand.

Assignments and Grading
Your course grade will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class Essays</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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Exams
There will be three in-class exams throughout the semester. They will not be cumulative. Each exam will have short answer and short essay questions that require students to demonstrate factual knowledge and critical thinking skills. Exams will cover material from course readings, lectures, films, class activities, and guest speakers.

In-Class Essays
There will be occasional in-class essays in response to readings, films, and lectures.

Optional Paper
Students can opt to write a 3-4 page (typed, double-spaced) paper on a specific natural resource or conservation issue relevant to Montana. Students may select an issue of their choice, but it needs to be well-defined (e.g. energy would be too broad, but coal-bed methane development would work). Students then need to write a concise, persuasive argument about this issue akin to an op-ed one would find in a newspaper. Because the paper is short, you will need to be clear and focused, emphasizing your main point and providing evidence or arguments to support it. You do not need to use citations or provide a bibliography. Papers will be evaluated based on the clarity of the argument and the quality of the writing (including grammar, spelling, etc.). Papers will be due in-class on Friday, December 6th. Late papers will not be accepted under any circumstances. Your grade on this optional paper can replace an exam grade, if the paper grade is higher than the exam grade. Papers cannot be used to make-up missed exams. If you do poorly on your paper, it will not be counted toward your grade.

Participation and Discussion Sessions
While NRSM 121 is a large class, there will be opportunities for questions, discussions, and group activities, allowing for interaction and active engagement with course topics. In addition, students will participate in Friday discussion labs throughout the semester, allowing for more focused engagement with course material. Course grades will be based, in part, on student participation. Participation includes attendance, punctuality, attentiveness, effort, and being prepared for class (having completed any assignments, including the reading for that day). Participation also includes offering one's thoughts, ideas, opinions, and questions during class. Your participation grade is not based on knowing the "right" answers or the quantity or length of your comments (in fact, concise and succinct comments, where appropriate, are favorable), but rather on your willingness to contribute, evidence that you have completed and thought through material presented in the reading, and the quality of your contributions. In addition to talking in class, participation includes respect for differing opinions. Students who arrive late, miss class, and/or fail to do readings will be penalized. Students who miss five or more class periods (except in cases of documented illness or emergencies) will have points deducted from their participation grade. Students who miss more than 1/3 of the class will automatically fail.

Grading Scale
Final course grades will be determined based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>930-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900-929</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>880-899</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>830-879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>800-829</td>
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</table>
All students must practice academic honesty. Cheating will not be tolerated and cell phones cannot be accessible during exams. Academic misconduct is subject to academic penalty by the course instructor and or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: http://life.umi.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php

This course is accessible and usable for otherwise qualified students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in determining appropriate accommodations.

Office Hours
You may contact me by e-mail or phone, or come to my office hours (MW 2-3:00 pm). You are always welcome to make an appointment to talk outside of office hours. I encourage you to talk with me if you have any questions or difficulties with the material. Please don’t wait until the day before an exam.

Communication and Expectations
Information about the course will occasionally be distributed to the class email list. Students should check their UM email accounts regularly so that they have current information about course readings and exams.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining the material they missed. Please be sure to borrow lecture notes from fellow students, or otherwise find out what was covered so that you are not disadvantaged when taking your exams.

Please note that EXTENSIONS OR MAKE-UP EXAMS REQUIRE PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE INSTRUCTOR (except in cases of family or medical emergency). In the absence of such approval (and presuming no serious emergency), a zero will be given if you fail to take an exam or turn in an assignment. Be sure to let me know by 11:00 am if you are going to miss the midterm and why. Make up exams will be given the following Monday or Wednesday. Students with family emergencies or serious illnesses that require them to miss multiple classes will need to provide documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note). Again, if you do not contact the instructor prior to class, you will not be able to make up the exam (exceptions for family or medical emergencies).
Course Schedule

8/26 Sustainability and Social-Ecological Systems  

8/28 Change and Continuity in Montana and the Western U.S.  

8/30 Discussion Lab: Your Environmental History

Forests and Fire

9/2 No class (Labor Day)

9/4 The Innovation of National Forests  
The Greatest Good, Part I Film

9/6 Discussion Lab: Public Lands as Experiments in Democracy  
The Greatest Good, Part II Film

9/9 Multiple Views of National Forests  

9/11 Montana’s Forests: Communities and Timberland Legacies  

9/13 Discussion Lab: Forest Conflicts and Controversies

9/16 A History of Forest Management  
Guest Speaker: Jim Burchfield, College of Forestry and Conservation  

9/18 National Parks and Wilderness

9/20 Discussion Lab: Native Peoples and Public Lands
   Backbone of the World Film

9/23 Montana Fire Ecology
   Guest Speaker: Ron Wakimoto, Ecosystem and Conservation Sciences

9/25 Fire History and Policy

9/27 Discussion Lab: Fire, Fuels, and the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
   Headwaters Economics (2011) Summary: Wildland Fire Research

9/30 EXAM #1

Water, Agriculture, and Energy

10/2 Water in Montana

10/4 Discussion Lab: Water and Energy
   Powder River Valley Film

10/7 Water and Agriculture

10/9 Water Policy and In-Stream Flow
   Guest Speaker: Sarah Bates, Natural Resources and Environmental Policy Center

10/11 Discussion Lab: Water Allocation
Trout and Drought Film

10/14 Collaboration and Watershed Groups
Guest Speaker: Jim Burchfield, College of Forestry and Conservation

10/16 River Restoration on the Clark Fork

10/18 Discussion Lab: Copper Mining, Waterways, and Communities
Butte, American Film

10/21 EXAM #2

Biodiversity and Wolves

10/23 Endangered Species Policy

10/25 Discussion Lab: Biodiversity and Social Values

10/28 History of Wolf Management
Bozeman Chronicle. 2010. An Expanded Wolf Timeline

10/30 Wildlife Conservation, Rural Communities, and Livelihoods
To Kill a Wolf: Wolves and the Ranching Community Film

11/1 Discussion Lab: Wolves and Social Conflict
Additional reading on course reserve

Climate Change

11/4 Population
Human Overpopulation. Wikipedia.

11/6 Consumption and Globalization
Executive Summary. Overconsumption? Our Use of the World’s Natural Resources. SERI.

11/8 Discussion Lab: Thinking about Fairness and Justice

11/11 No class (Veteran’s Day)

11/13 Climate Change 101

11/15 Discussion Lab: The Politics of Climate Science

11/18 Climate Change and Montana’s Forests

11/20 Climate Change Impacts at Multiple Scales
11/22  Discussion Lab: Climate Adaptation in Montana

11/25  Building Solutions to Climate Change I
11/27  No class (Thanksgiving Break)
11/29  No class (Thanksgiving Break)

12/2   Building Solutions to Climate Change I

12/4   Systems Thinking Revisited
       Thinking and The System Rules: Creating a Mind Space for Resilience Thinking.
       In Resilience Thinking: Sustaining Ecosystems and People in a Changing World.

12/6   Discussion Lab: Social-Ecological Systems in Montana

12/11  1:10-3:10 pm Exam #3 (not cumulative)