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BIOB 595.11: ST - International Conservation

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The University of Montana

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Syllabus

BIOB 595 –International Conservation

INSTRUCTOR

Jedediah Brodie (office = NS 208A)

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I'm happy to meet, but appointments *must be made in advance*

OVERVIEW

This 3-credit seminar will examine (i) the role of science in conservation, (ii) how that role (and the process of conservation) changes in different countries, with a focus on comparing developed to developing nations, (iii) the variety of strategies and tactics conservation scientists employ, and (iv) the part played by different conservation sectors such as NGOs, national governments, international bodies, professional societies, and universities. Have you ever wanted to work for a conservation group or agency, or do conservation-related research abroad? A sub-theme of the course will be to look at what it's like to do that and how to prepare for it while in grad school.

The class will be a mixture of lectures, readings, and student-led discussions. We will also examine a series of case studies in some detail, involving panel discussions (usually via Skype) with conservationists working in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should be able to understand and explain:

1. Different schools of thought surrounding the issues of what we are trying to conserve and why, how we prioritize strategies, and how we measure our success.
2. The roles of the different conservation sectors (e.g. NGOs, national and international agencies, IUCN, IPBES, UN, universities, CITES, professional societies, zoos, etc), what it might be like to work for each one, and how you might go about trying to work in different ones.
3. How changing human demographics, corruption, governance, and poverty affect conservation
4. The roles of “big data” and mapping in conservation
5. The individual and multiplicative impacts of land use, climate change, connectivity, and human-wildlife conflicts, and how the relative severity of these issues varies in different countries
6. The pros and cons of government- versus community-driven conservation, and the role of “supply chain” conservation
7. Conservation financing, certifications, and payments for ecosystem services

LECTURE / DISCUSSION FORMAT

The course will be a mixture of lectures, student- or instructor-led discussions, and discussions with numerous conservationists working on various issues in different countries. On most days you will have had to do some preparation work *before* coming to class including reading, writing short essays, organizing questions or presentations for discussion, etc.

MEETING TIMES

Tues/Thurs 11:00 – 12:20. There may also be several evening or early morning meetings so that we can skype with people on the other side of the world.

EVALUATION

There will not be any exams. Grades will be based on attendance and participation, leadership and content in presentations, short (e.g. 1 page) weekly writing assignments or presentations, and a final paper.

READING

There will not be a text book. For most classes there will be several articles (assigned by me or your fellow students) that you will have to read *before* coming to class.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The collaboration with instructors and Disability Services for Students, which is located in academic standards or retroactive modifications.