NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.

Oregon State University Ecampus
Consensus and Natural Resources (3 credits)
ANS 485/585—FES 485/585—FW 485/585—SOC 485/585
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Bruce Shindler, Emeritus Professor—Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society (FES) in the College of Forestry. Preferred communication method is Email: bruce.shindler@oregonstate.edu. Or on campus in Peavy 115, (541) 737-3299.

Course Catalog Description: Students will use a working group approach. They will select a natural resource topic, study the team process and interaction as a method of learning, explore the issue using systems practice, and strive for consensus on solutions to their issue. CROSSLISTED as FES 485/FES 585, FW 485/FW 585, SOC 485/SOC 585. (Bacc Core Course)
Baccalaureate Core Course Attributes: Core, Synth, Sci/Tech/Soc

This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 3 credits.

Course Overview: In this course we will consider methods suitable for gaining consensus in a range of situations as found in the professional workplace. The course examines selected natural resource topics and explores issues through adaptive planning processes, particularly collaborative and consensus building strategies for reaching agreement among multiple parties.

There are no pre-requisites for this on-line course; however, it is a senior and graduate student level class for individuals pursuing a career in the natural resource professions. The course also satisfies Oregon State University’s baccalaureate core synthesis requirement for Science, Technology, and Society. The course is designed to consider both ecological and social perspectives in natural resource communities as well as to promote teamwork and communication skills. Students will have the opportunity to learn how to 1) be effective participants on collaborative planning teams and 2) to effectively engage stakeholders (other agencies, local organizations, and citizens) in communities to reach consensus and make decisions that are supported by multiple interests.

This course capitalizes on a variety of factors. For example, the instructor has a long history of management experience and research activities that focus specifically on this topic. Additionally, there is a diversity of students in this class from a range of degree programs... all with substantial coursework leading up to this point. Students also have a range of experiences gained from summer or full-time employment. Most are familiar with the goals of natural resource organizations and the need to respond to the interests of groups beyond their own specific discipline. Thus, each student is a resource for this class. Participation and engagement are central to our success. Your insights will make this class richer and more diverse. I look forward to learning more about you.
About Your Instructor: I am not your ordinary academic professor. I spent the first half of my career working for natural resource agencies in California, Nevada, and Oregon. The second half has been at Oregon State University where I have taught numerous courses, been an advisor to hundreds of undergrads, and supervised dozens of graduate students. So I believe I am able to bring the real world into my classes. I also have a substantial research program, although I am winding down on this these days. With regards to this class, I have spent the last 15 years focusing specifically on this topic… particularly the relationship between natural resource agencies, communities, and stakeholders. I am interested in helping people get to “yes,” whatever that may be for them. I have conducted research in all regions of the United States and am currently team leader of an international project involving scientists from Canada, Australia, and the U.S. I am also advisor to the Forest Certification Cooperative in Chile regarding planning strategies. Closer to home, I am working with an interdisciplinary team on a climate change project in central Oregon.

Student Learning Outcomes: The course will target interface communities where resource professionals/practitioners are seeking ways to work cooperatively with federal, state, and local agencies as well as citizen groups and property owners. Their ability to come together in a collaborative planning environment will lead to more durable, well supported decisions. Upon completion of this course students will be better able to:

1. Understand complex social values—the political, economic, and ecological context within which natural resource decisions are made.
2. Develop communication skills for the professional workplace and for building successful community-based consensus about natural resource issues.
3. Apply concepts of strategic planning and integrated management to natural resource problems.
4. Examine concepts of stakeholder involvement built on leadership that ultimately lead to effective management decisions.
5. Identify the range of organizational and community resources for building consensus and sound decisions, including local knowledge about issues and places.
6. Explain the role of expectations among stakeholders and the importance of assessing tradeoffs.
7. Identify barriers to reaching consensus as well as steps to overcome them.
8. Develop/improve writing skills suitable for project planning within a natural resource organization.

In addition, graduate students will be assigned a leadership role during one of our weekly Discussion Forum topics and are expected to demonstrate an advanced level of critical thinking in written assignments.

Learning Resources: There is no required textbook for the class. All materials and resources will be provided online: **NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please always check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website. Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.**

- Required readings—many of which are directly suited to a management audience (meaning you will not just get a stack of journal articles from the science literature).
- Power point lectures with notes provided
- Several instructor videos
- DVD (provided by instructor)
- Additional readings and website links on topical issues—consult the Module tab for details each week.
- YOU… I consider each of you a resource for this class. Every one of you has on-the-job and/or real life experiences about our subject. Right now, many of you are living (personally or jobwise) in the
settings we are discussing. I expect you to share your ideas and opinions in our weekly Discussion Forum and nudge others to do the same. Our class will be richer for what each of you brings to our conversations.

Evaluation of Student Performance

There are three components upon which your grade for this course will be based: weekly class participation in our Discussion Forums, four written assignments, and a small group/team project plan (after all, this is a class on consensus). Details will come out with each assignment on a weekly basis. Your completion of these requirements will enable you to accumulate points that will determine your final grade in the course. Here is a summary of what to expect:

1. **Weekly class participation in our on Discussion Forum**  
   200 points

   Each week our course content will include a discussion page to further online learning from lectures, readings, and other activities. Weekly participation is worth up to 20 points. As mentioned, everyone brings some level of experience to this class… and you all have your own unique perspective. I will award active, informed, and genuine participation via your posts in discussions. Each week at least three substantive posts will be required. Please read and pay attention to the link outlining detailed requirements for your participation in our Discussion Forum. Typically your first post is expected by either Wednesday or Thursday evening (check the assignment) and additional posts are due by Sunday evening.

2. **Written assignments**  
   200 points

   There are four writing assignments spread throughout the quarter to help you gain further insights to our topics. Most are arranged to help you express your thoughts in a manner useful in the professional workplace. In other words, we want our writing to be suitable for other natural resource professionals as well as stakeholders. These assignments will vary considerably—but, of course, that’s the nature of our consensus topic. They will be 2-3 pages in length and worth 50 points each.

3. **Project plan**  
   200 points

   Students also will be involved in a collaborative project that will culminate in a team report (9-10 pages) due during Week 10. I will assign each of you to a four-person team and provide the project details and expectations during Week 3. Everyone is expected to have a role and all team members will receive the same grade. More on this to come.

**Note to graduate students:** As required for all slash (400/500) courses, grad student work is expected to be above and beyond that required of undergrads. Each of you will be a discussion leader for one of our weekly Discussion Forum topics. This is not an onerous task, but will require that 1) you review the week’s material in advance, 2) develop one or more questions suitable for the week’s topic and start the conversation with an initial post on Sunday, and 3) then monitor and respond to student posts through the week. I will lead the early discussions to set the context and expectations for your participation later in the term. Specific details for this assignment will be provided directly to you. Your work for the week is worth up to 60 points.

**Late work policy:** I typically do not like dealing with late assignments. Still, you will find I can be lenient when necessary and the reason is warranted. But if you abuse this trust, your grade will suffer. Since this is a 400/500 level course, there is a certain level of responsibility I expect from students. Late work will be
accepted at my discretion when you have notified me prior to the assignment due date. If you do not notify me ahead of time, assignments will not be accepted unless you are experiencing an unexpected crisis that I determine warrants consideration (e.g., hospitalization, death in the family). In these cases, we will determine what constitutes a realistic submission date and/or an appropriate form of grade reduction.

**Evaluation of Student Performance**

- Discussion Board – 200 points
- Written assignments – 200 points
- Project plan – 200 points
- Grad Student assignment – 60 points
- Total – 600 points undergrads/660 points for graduate students

**Grades:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergrads</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 540-600 points</td>
<td>A = 594-660 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B = 480-539</td>
<td>B = 528-593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 420-479</td>
<td>C = 462-527</td>
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<tr>
<td>D = 360-429</td>
<td>D = 396-461</td>
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<tr>
<td>F = below 360</td>
<td>F = below 396</td>
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**Course Content**

Each new week begins at 9:00 p.m. on Sunday (although I have given you access at 5:00 p.m.). You are strongly encouraged to log on to the course site on Monday and get started on that week’s content. Do not wait until the end of the week—or your grade will suffer. This is particularly the case with Discussion Forum participation. Here is an overview of the weekly topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Introduction and Overview</td>
<td>Setting a context for multi-party decision-making.</td>
<td>Discussion Forum, Instructor video, Lecture material, Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Consensus in many forms</td>
<td>Consensus, collaboration, public consultation, outreach, stakeholder engagement—what’s this really about?</td>
<td>Discussion Forum, Lecture material, Readings, <strong>Writing assignment #1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Three big drivers: climate change, wildfire, all lands management</td>
<td>The challenges ahead…risks, communicating about change, use of landscape models</td>
<td>Discussion Forum, Instructor video, Readings, Project plan assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Integrated Resource Management</td>
<td>Components of IRM, Why should we care? Value of ecosystem services</td>
<td>Discussion Forum, Lecture material, Readings, <strong>Writing assignment #2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Decision-making among multiple parties</td>
<td>Public acceptance concept, Decision types, roles, rules of the game.</td>
<td>Instructor video, Discussion Forum, DVD presentation, Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Planning in a team environment</td>
<td>Using a team approach, Stumbling blocks, Adaptive planning</td>
<td>Discussion Forum, Lecture material, Readings, <strong>Writing assignment #3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Leadership strategies, trust-building</td>
<td>Thoughts on leadership, Organizational barriers, Planning for trust-building</td>
<td>Introductory commentary, Discussion Forum, Lecture material &amp; readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Consulting the publics</td>
<td>Stepwise planning, Nominal group technique</td>
<td>Overview commentary, Discussion Forum, Readings</td>
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</table>
## Social acceptability judgments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing assignment #4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and group dynamics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology of communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designing message delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Forum</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **10** |
| Implications of ongoing demographic changes |
| Amenity migration |
| Rethinking consensus |
| Instructor video |
| Discussion Forum |
| Team Project Plan due |

**Finals**: You are finished! Have a good break

**Incompletes**: Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 80% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final project). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you from completing the coursework, please don’t wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

**Guidelines for a productive and effective online classroom**: Students are expected to conduct themselves in this course (e.g., on discussion forums, email) in compliance with the university’s regulations regarding civility. All communications should be conducted constructively and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor. Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Our Discussion Forum will include questions generated around the topics for each week. Please respond to these but realize your will be a better participant if you also have attended to the readings and viewed other instructional materials.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions. Value diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.
- Online discussions are public messages, and all writings in this area will be viewable by the entire class. Posting of personal contact information is discouraged (e.g. telephone numbers, address, personal websites). If you prefer that only the instructor sees your communication, send it to me by email, and be sure to identify yourself and the class.
- Observation of "Netiquette": All your online communications need to be composed with fairness, honesty and tact. Spelling and grammar are very important in an online course. What you put into an online course reflects on your level of professionalism. References that discuss writing online are:  

**Communication**

I will strive to return your assignments and grades for course activities to you within 4 days of the due date. Email is the best way to contact me (put 485 or 585 in the subject line). I usually respond to course-related email within 24 hours. I will respond to phone messages as well, but I am not in the office every day so I may not get your message immediately.

**Professional Conduct**: Students in this class are expected to be involved in learning and should demonstrate behavior that is acceptable in the professional workplace. From an OSU standpoint, student conduct is governed by the university’s policies as explained on the Office of Student Conduct website:  
[oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/regulations/index.php](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/regulations/index.php). Instructors and their students have the responsibility
to treat each other with understanding, dignity and respect. Disruption of teaching, administration, research, and other activities is prohibited by Oregon Administrative Rule 576-015-0015 (1) and (2) and is subject to sanctions under university policies, OSU Office of Student Conduct.

Students with Disabilities: Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or Disability Access Services (DAS). Blackboard, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a vendor statement certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:
If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

- COURSE DEMO
- GETTING STARTED

COURSE SITE LOGIN INFORMATION
Information on how to login to your course site can be found HERE.

REFUND POLICY INFORMATION
Please see the Ecampus website for policy information on refunds and late fees.

Avoiding academic Dishonesty
http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/subject-guide/1771-Academic-Integrity-for-Students

Policy on Disruptive Behavior
http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/disruptive-behavior