

 **Sample Course Syllabus**

Conservation Psychology

PSY 492 OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



Instructor: Dr. Hank Janpol

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Welcome to Conservation Psychology. I hope you will find this topic as interesting and important as I do. Since the 1970's, I have worked as a Psychologist in clinical, consulting, and supervisory roles in various settings including mental health clinics and hospitals. I have also taught Psychology on both a full time and part time basis at several different schools including Northern Arizona University, Lane College, University of Hawaii, and Oregon State University. Although I have taught many different Psychology courses over the years, the ones involving the natural environment have been my favorite. I am pleased to have the opportunity to work together with you this year.

I have had an interest in science and nature for as long as I can remember. A special interest of mine is the natural environment of oceans and rivers. Perhaps that is because I have spent so much of my life in water. I began surfing and sailing as a teenager growing up in California. Later, while living in Oregon, I added windsurfing, river rafting, kayaking, and scuba diving to my hobby list. For the past 12 years, I have been living in Hawaii where I continue to enjoy surfing, windsurfing, and observing whales and dolphins from small vessels such as sailing kayaks.

I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to many places where the natural environment can be appreciated. I have sailed in the Galapagos Islands, worked as a river guide in Costa Rica, and surfed and scuba dived in Australia and New Zealand. When I lived in the Pacific Northwest, I also served as a volunteer sailing instructor on a large

schooner. I enjoyed seeing the enthusiasm about nature of children as we taught them about sailing and about the sea life of Puget Sound.

I think when you spend a lot of time in nature, your level of concern increases. Over the years, I have been involved with a number of environmental organizations such as Greenpeace, Surfrider, and Sierra Club. While living in Oregon for more than 20 years, attending the International Conference on Environmental Law at U of O Law School was an annual event for me.

I have assisted in research projects involving satellite tracking of whales. I have served in a conservation role as a member of the Hawaiian Humpback Whale Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. My current area of research interest involves trying to measure affects of nature and science video media exposure on people's environmental perceptions and behaviors.

Well, there's a bit of information about myself. I look forward to learning more about you and what especially interests you about this course. I hope it will be a rewarding and meaningful experience for you. Please feel free to ask any questions and to let me know how I can be helpful to you in this course.

Textbooks & Readings:

Required:

- *Conservation Psychology: Understanding and Promoting Human Care for Nature*, Susan Clayton; Gene Myers, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. ISBN:140519409X, 9781405194099
- *The Psychology of Climate Change Communication*, published by the Center for Research on Environmental Decisions at Columbia University. *Available for download at: <http://www.cred.columbia.edu/guide/index.html>

Recommended:

- *The Psychology of Environmental Problems - Psychology for Sustainability 3rd Edition*, Susan M. Kroger; Deborah DuNann Winter, Psychology Press, 2010. ISBN: 978-1-84872-809-7 (paperback) 978-1-84872-807-3 (hardback) 978-0-203-84797-8 (electronic)
- *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: Community Based Social Marketing*, 3rd edition, Doug McKenzie-Mohr, William Smith, New Society Publishers, 1999. (ISBN 9780865714069). * a new 288 page paperback edition, is scheduled to be available from the publisher February, 2011 (2011 ISBN-13: 9780865716421, ISBN: 0865716420). An abbreviated version of the book is also available for download in pdf format at: <http://www.cbsm.com/pages/guide/preface>

Course Description:

Conservation psychology is the scientific study of the reciprocal relationships between humans and the rest of nature, with a particular focus on how to encourage conservation of the natural world. This applied field uses psychological principles, theories, and methods to understand and solve issues related to human aspects of conservation. Conservation Psychology explores connections between the study of human behavior and the achievement of conservation goals.

Understanding how people think about, experience, and interact with nature is crucial for promoting environmental sustainability as well as human well-being. During this course, students will examine theory and research on human cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to nature. They will review research on people's experience of nature in wild, managed, and urban settings. We will explore ways to encourage conservation-oriented behavior at both individual and societal levels. The course will demonstrate how and why Psychology is relevant to promoting a more sustainable relationship between humans and nature

Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- comprehend the abilities and limitations of human information processing as they relate to sharing information about the environment;
- know the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches to facilitating behavior change such as those used in community-based social marketing;
- understand the range of motivations people possess to engage in, ignore, or resist environmentally preferred behaviors;
- apply behavior change theories and models to develop interventions that can influence environmental stewardship;
- observe, record and analyze attitude and behavior change in small adaptively managed experiments; and
- critique various efforts and approaches currently used to involve people in solving environmental problems.
- apply psychological theory and methodology learned in this and other courses to problems involving conservation and protection of the natural environment.

Orientation:

Prior to beginning this course, please thoroughly read all sections of the Oregon State University Extended Campus Online Orientation document found here:

<http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/orientation/undergraduate/takingcourses/course.htm>

Course Location Online:

Students can log in to this course via Blackboard at: <http://my.oregonstate.edu>.

Icons:

Icons throughout the course will guide you to perform certain activities. The meaning of each icon is explained below.

	This icon directs you to complete an activity that is to be submitted along with the reading assignment for the unit.
	The Highlights of Experience: What do you think? icon shows you that it is time to journal about your own experiences, reflections, and opinions related to the topics and concepts presented in the unit. Share your thoughts about this week's material by using the Discussion (Chat) resource
	Watch a video. Students are expected to view several videos that have been selected by the instructor as part of this course. Be prepared to respond to questions about the video during weekly chats. You may also share your thoughts and feelings about video content with your classmates and instructor during your discussion postings.
	View slides. Students should thoughtfully review all presentation slides associated with each section. Slides are designated as numbered Units..

Topics:

Week 1:

General introduction to Conservation Psychology
Attitudes, values, and perceptions

Week 2

Ethical issues regarding the environment
Views of self and environment

Week 3

Theories about our connections to nature

Week 4

Our relationship with animals and plants

Week 5

Managed nature: Zoos, aquariums, and public parks

Week 6

Wild nature: Encounters with wilderness

Week 7

Applying Psychology to Promote Sustainable Behavior

Week 8

Community psychology, biodiversity conservation
Environmental education

Week 9

The Future: Looking Forward, Moving Forward

Projects:

• *SELF-CHANGE PROJECT:*

Changing from environmentally damaging behaviors to environmentally beneficial ones can be very challenging, and it is easy to underestimate these challenges when focusing on others' behavior. To help you understand some of the challenges that can arise and thought processes that accompany these challenges, you will choose an important conservation behavior change and attempt to carry it out during the quarter. As part of this project, you will keep a journal of your efforts, discussing challenges you are facing as you attempt to change your behavior. You will summarize your project in a project portfolio (including journal entries + summary of your experience) in the 4th week of the term.

• *CONSERVATION PROGRAM DESIGN PROJECT:*

Imagine that you are a member of team of scientists employed by an environmental organization or government agency (or a group of students at OSU working to increase campus sustainability!). You have been asked to design a program to address a specific environmental problem that is dependent on human behavior, such as global warming, habitat loss, etc. Your program should reduce a behavior harmful to the environment (for example, driving large vehicles), and/or increase an alternative behavior that is better for the environment (for example, bicycling). Identify a specific organization that could

potentially implement your program. Students may want to consult the "[Tools for Change](#)" website for case examples of successful community projects.

PART 1: Research the science and policy of the environmental issue, brainstorm potential psychological solutions, and propose a solution. Write a memorandum describing the problem you are addressing (ex: the impact of driving on global warming), and describing and justifying your program, in light of psychological theories and research, and the ways in which they have previously been applied. *About 5 pages.

PART 2: Design a study (ideally, an experiment) to evaluate the effectiveness of your proposed program. Include proposed method, expected results, and implications of the expected results (how would you need to revise your planned program, depending on what you find in your study?). * About 1-2 pages.

- *REFLECTING ON MY ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT*

Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees (1996) coined the term "ecological footprint" to describe the impact of an individual human or group of humans on the earth based on their consumption of resources including water, energy, food, space, and various materials. The measurement of ecological footprint is used to estimate the amount of resources and space that would be needed to sustainably support a given lifestyle on a global scale (i.e., how many planets we would need for every individual to live a lifestyle with a particular ecological footprint. Each student is expected to take the ecological footprint quiz [online](#) and write a reflection essay. Your essay should include the size of your footprint and comments about the process (e.g., were some of the questions difficult to answer or not directly relevant?).

- *APPLIED SERVICE PROJECT:*

Each student will do a service-learning project relevant to Conservation Psychology. Options for this project will be discussed with instructor. Service learning projects will have three components: 1) helping (for at least six hours), 2) analyzing/writing, and 3) participating in discussion about the experience. For the written part, you will describe the project and what you did as a volunteer, what you learned, and your personal reactions to the experience. There is a journal template posted in the Resources section on the class Blackboard website. The template is intended to serve as a guideline in journaling about your service learning experience.

Each assignment must be submitted to the instructor via the Assignments section of Blackboard. For additional guidance on how to do this, or if you have other technical questions or problems using Blackboard, try using the link below:

<http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/services/technical-help.htm>

Your assignment should be submitted containing all files specified as part of the assignment, as well as anything else you think I may need to grade your work.

To be considered for full credit, each class assignment must be completed and submitted to the instructor by email by 12:00 midnight PST on the posted due date. Assignments submitted after the due date will receive a 10% late penalty for each day overdue.

Exams: At various intervals throughout the term, the instructor will post questions in the Quiz section on Blackboard. Students are expected to respond to these. However, your responses to quiz items will not be officially “counted.” In other words, they will be considered as practice. The questions will be based upon text readings, and from materials presented/discussed in class, including class activities, lecture slides, videos, etc. In the Discussion section on Blackboard, I will also post questions for you to consider and respond to. At the end of the term, many of the practice quiz questions will be included on the final exam. The points you earn on the final exam will count towards your grade in the course. (The final exam will have a point value of 100.).

Presentation Slides: To augment your learning experience, the instructor has prepared many slides for you to view. The slides are organized into Units that correspond to each of the course topics and associated textbook readings. In many cases, the presentation slides may include more details and bridge to additional sub-topical content than the textbook. Therefore, it is very important to view all of the presentation slides for each unit. Some of the slides contain links to video material available via the internet. In such cases, your learning experience will be significantly enhanced if you take the time to view the linked videos. Material from the slides may be the basis for class discussions during the week. There will likely be questions included on the final exam that are based upon material contained in the slides.

Videos: During this course, students are also expected to view several videos that have been selected by the instructor. Those videos are listed in the Class Topics section above. Material in the class videos may also provide the basis for class discussions and/or for final exam questions. Therefore, it is important for you to take the time to watch each of the class videos. In some cases, it will be student’s responsibility to obtain videos for viewing via sources like Netflix. This is necessary because OSU has not yet been able to obtain permissions from the video publishers to digitize and broadcast along with this course. You will enjoy watching the videos and most likely they will stimulate your thinking as well as your emotions.

Class Activities, Interaction, and Participation

Discussions:

Online learning occurs within interactive processes centering on discussions and other individual and/or collaborative activities. A positive and direct correlation exists between frequency of student participation and learning outcomes. Because of that, students are expected to participate 4 or more times per week in class discussion activities.

Contributions by students to these activities form a rich learning environment that is diminished when students do not participate at this level. Set aside the time to be a

collaborative partner in everyone’s learning. Your instructor will submit discussion questions each week for students to consider and respond to.

To enhance your learning benefit in this class, you will be required to log into the class discussion section at least four times each week. Discussions are the way we "participate" in class. So it’s important that you post thoughtful messages that move the conversation forward in some way. “Yeah, I agree.” is not an acceptable posting and will not earn any points. Your participation in discussions can earn you up to ten points for each thread. After the due date for the discussion, you will be graded on your overall participation in that discussion thread. You can earn up to 2 credit points for each of your contributions to the discussion thread, up to a maximum of 8 points each week. Late posts are welcome for their intellectual value but will not be considered in your grade.

Your posts should show that you have read the material in the text as well as your classmates’ posts and have applied all of that to the question at hand. You should do more than merely spit back what the text says; you should engage with the material by analyzing and interpreting it. While you won’t be graded based mainly on grammar or spelling, your posts should be grammatically clear enough not to present anyone with a problem in understanding your point. It’s not a formal writing forum but it’s not like on “Facebook” either.

Below are criteria to earn full credit:

- Initial postings are completed early in the week
- Follow up posts (generally more than the minimum of one per discussion) are timely
- Content is complete, on-point, thoughtful, and offers new ideas. Supporting detail is abundant and appropriate (ie, references from the pieces read and/or other sources)
- Content often encourages further discussion on the topic or follows up on others’ thoughts
- Postings are characterized by originality, engagement, and relevance to the topic
- Postings demonstrate an understanding of the material assigned and familiarity with the ideas of the student’s partner and group members (in other words – it’s obvious that you’ve read and understood both the literature assigned and what your peers have written in their postings).

ACTIVITY	Exemplary	Proficient	Incomplete	POINTS
Demonstrates an understanding of the discussion question(s)	6-8 points Displays an excellent understanding of the course materials and the underlying concepts being	3-5 points Displays understanding of the course materials and the underlying concept being discussed. Limited use of course	0-2 points Displays little understanding of the course materials and the underlying concept being discussed. Use of course	

	discussed. Uses course materials and other information to support important points.	materials and other information to support points.	materials and other information to support points is incoherent or missing entirely.	
Expands discussion concepts	6-8 points Displays an excellent understanding of the concepts under discussion by... ...affirming statements and citing relevant research or, ...asking a new related question or, ...making an oppositional statement supported by personal experience or related research.	3-5 points Displays understanding of the concepts under discussion by... ...affirming statements and citing some research or, ...asking a new somewhat related question or, ...making an oppositional statement somewhat supported by personal experience or related research.	0-2 points Displays little understanding of the concepts under discussion as evidenced by... ...no affirming statements or references to relevant research or, ...asking no related questions or, ...making no oppositional statement supported by any personal experience or related research.	
Connections to personal understanding or professional practice	6-8 points Evidence of strong reflective thought pertaining to personal perspectives and professional development. Reflective statements go beyond what takes place in a classroom to include a theoretical rationale underlying the use of specific strategies or materials.	3-5 points Evidence of reflective thought pertaining to personal perspectives and professional development. Reflective statements contain some of the theoretical rationale underlying the use of specific strategies or materials.	0-2 points Little evidence of reflective thought pertaining to personal perspectives and professional development. Few, if any, reflective statements go beyond what takes place in a specific classroom. Little if any theoretical rationale underlying the use of specific strategies or materials included.	
Quality and frequency of writing	4-6 points Responses are free	1-3 point Responses are	0 points Responses contain	

	of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing facilitates communication. 8-10 postings occur over 3-5 days	largely free of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing generally facilitates communication. 4-7 postings occur over 2-3 days	more than 6 grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing does not facilitate communication. 1-3 postings occur over 1-2 days	
Total Points				/80

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Summary Listing of Assignments/Grading Schedule

Grading:

Each of the first 3 Projects will be worth 60 possible points.

Participation (Discussion) total points to be earned = 80.

The Applied Service Project will be worth 140 points.

There will also be a final exam worth 100 points. Total points possible = 500.

Course Grading Scale:

A = 450-500 points

B = 400-449 points

C = 350-399 points

D = 300-349 points

F = < 300 points

Remember to use Net Etiquette in your Discussions.

Do

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information, contact:
 Web: ecampus.oregonstate.edu Email: ecampus@oregonstate.edu Tel: 800-667-1465

- ▶ Make comments and questions that are relevant to the discussion topic
- ▶ Use respectful and polite language in your comments
- ▶ Make comments that are thoughtful but to the point
- ▶ Preserve confidential information
- ▶ Be sure to include your name at the end of the message
- ▶ If responding to a comment or message, be sure to include enough information so that the context of your response is understood
- ▶ Use appropriate upper and lower case and punctuation

Don'ts

- ▶ Do not write anything that you would not share in person in a class
- ▶ Do not share confidential information about yourself and do not provide identifying information about the infant or caregiver
- ▶ Do not write in all CAPITALS because this looks as if you are SHOUTING and makes your message more difficult to read
- ▶ Do not use unexplained acronyms or strange notations that may be unfamiliar to readers.
- ▶ Do not make rambling and off the topic comments.
- ▶ Do not post a message to point out other people's errors in typing or spelling unless they have asked for the correct spelling of a name or unfamiliar concept

Academic Honesty:

You will be expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner. Academic dishonesty such as plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Therefore, students are expected to be honest and ethical in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following areas:

- * cheating- use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids,
- * fabrication- falsification or invention of any information,

- * assisting- helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty,
- * tampering- altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents, or
- * plagiarism- representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own.

For more information about academic integrity and the University's policies and procedures in this area, please refer to the Student Conduct web site at: <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm> and the section on Academic Regulations in the OSU General Catalog: <http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/ChapterDetail.aspx?key=75>.

Course Calendar

Topics & Textbook Chapters	Date
Introduction; Attitudes, values & perceptions - Ch. 1, 2	Week 1  <i>Earth Days</i> available via Netflix http://www.netflix.com/http://video.pbs.org/video/1463378089/  view Unit 1&2 slides
Ethical issues; Self, identity & the environment - Ch. 3,4.	Week 2   <i>The Cove</i> available via Netflix http://www.netflix.com/  View Unit 3&4 slides
Theories about our connection to nature - Ch. 5	Week 3    <i>Saviors of the Forest</i> http://www.videowired.com/watch/?id=1272471512  Unit 5 slides
Our relationship with animals and plants – Ch. 6	Week 4   Reflecting On My Ecological Footprint project report due Mon. of this week <i>Botany of Desire</i> *(available from Netflix) http://www.netflix.com/http://video.pbs.org/program/1217163594/  Unit 6 slides
Managed nature: Zoos, aquariums, and public parks - Ch. 7	Week 5   National Parks: America's Best Idea-Episode One: "The Scripture of Nature" (1851–1890) *(available via Netflix) http://www.netflix.com/  Unit 7 slides
Wild nature: Encounters with wilderness	Week 6    Unit 8 slides

- Ch. 8	
Applying Psychology to Promote Sustainable Behavior – Ch. 9	<p>Week 7   Unit 9 (A&B) slides </p> <p>Poisoned Waters (Frontline series)</p> <p>*available via Netflix http://www.netflix.com/</p> <p>* Self Change Project Due Mon. Week 7</p>
Community psychology, biodiversity conservation; Environmental education – Ch. 10, 11	<p>Week 8   Taking Root – The Vision of Wangari Maathai</p> <p>*(available via Netflix) http://www.netflix.com/</p> <p> Unit 10 & 11 slides</p>
The Future: Looking Forward, Moving Forward – Ch. 12	<p>Week 9 * Conservation Program Design Project: Due Mon. Week 9 </p> <p>  Unit 12 slides</p>
	<p>Week 10 (Dead Week - refer to AR 16 for policy)</p> <p>* Applied Service project report is due Mon. this week  </p>
	<p>Week 11 (Finals Week)</p>

*Instructor reserves the right to make minor adjustments/changes to the course schedule as dictated by unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the term.

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. Information about how to apply for accommodations or services can also be found at <http://oregonstate.edu/affact/how-request-access>.

Course Evaluation

We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions by Ecampus. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.