

NRRT 401 – Collaborative Conservation – Fall 2015

Collaborative conservation-working with diverse stakeholders at the nexus of ecological, economic, and human dimensions to benefit both natural communities and human communities.

“When asked if I am pessimistic or optimistic about the future, my answer is always the same: if you look at the science that describes what is happening on Earth and aren’t pessimistic, you don’t have the data. Yet, if you meet the people in this unnamed movement and aren’t optimistic, you haven’t got a heart.”

Paul Hawken, *Blessed Unrest*, 2007.

Instructor

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OH: Tues: 9:30-10:30,

Thur: 9:30-10:30,

and by appointment

Course Purpose

“There are two things that interest me, one is the relationship of people to land and the other is the relationship of people to each other.” Aldo Leopold

My overarching goal in this course is to prepare you for careers that are not only successful, but enjoyable. Beginning a career in natural-resource management with the point of view of "business as usual" will be both discouraging and will not help protect the land and resources that brought you to this career in the first place. Though there are many things land and people need today, one thing they most certainly don't need is an education whose usefulness has come and gone. It is my desire that this course introduces you to an emerging way of doing conservation that benefits both people and land.

Course Description

NRRT 401 focuses on the contemporary natural-resource paradigm called collaborative conservation." Although there are many other things it can be called, one element of truth that rings throughout all of these titles is *Collaborative conservation is conservation that works for both land and people, things that benefit one at the expense of the other are not conservation, they are something else.*" Importantly, collaborative conservation acknowledges the essential interaction of human, economic, and ecological dimensions. It's the shared space where these powerful forces are working together rather than pulling each other apart.

Course Objectives

- Students will learn the evolutionary nature of collaborative conservation in relation to historical approaches to conservation.

- Students will learn how collaborative conservation fits within the context of current social and political realities.
- Students will be able to recognize and use basic concepts of collaborative conservation.
- Students will learn how to analyze, evaluate and learn from existing collaborative conservation examples.
- Students will practice skills to build collaborative partnerships, including situation assessment, relationship building, facilitation, conflict management, and collaborative leadership.
- Students will learn the stewardship of ecological systems in the context of land use, land health, local communities and communities of interest.

Course Textbook – Conservation for a New Generation by R. L. Knight & C. White, eds. 2009. Island Press, Washington, D.C. Weekly, you'll be assigned chapters in the textbook to read and post questions/observation on Canvas.

Grade Distribution

This course utilizes project-based learning and student-directed learning as important ways of learning and student evaluation. Grading in this course has **six** distinct components. **First**, class attendance (10%) counts; and remember, show up for class on time! **Second**, two field trips (10%) into the watershed where you will meet stakeholders who are actively involved in collaborative conservation. **Third**, your efforts will be assessed through one mid-term and a final exam (30%). **Fourth**, we will evaluate your participation in group and individual exercises in class (20%). **Fifth**, you will evaluate (10%) each other based on your group contributions. And, **sixth**, your groups will each be assigned an existing collaborative conservation effort which you will study in depth. For 20% of your total grade, your group will give two presentations, a pre-situational assessment and a final situational assessment.

As a result, your final grade represents a combination of individual and team-based accomplishments. The items listed below, followed by their weights, will form the basis of your grade.

- a) Tour in watershed (5%)
- b) First exam (10%)
- c) Second exam (15%)
- d) In-class exercises (10%)
- e) Responses to out-of-class readings (20%)
- f) Group presentation of pre-situational assessment presentation (10%)
- g) Group presentation on situational assessment (20%)
- h) Out of class integrative course essay (5%)
- i) Group evaluation of team members (5%)

Each member of your inter-disciplinary team will evaluate each team member in terms of their contributions to exercises, presentations and report. Good natural resource

management is more than getting the facts right, it is also about relationships and the ability to work constructively with those different from you.

Student Matters

Lectures **begin** at 12:30; if you cannot be seated and ready to participate by then, **do not attend**. Because of my faith in you, and that you take your education seriously, it is important that an atmosphere which enhances learning be present at all times. All cell phones and pagers must be turned off prior to entering the classroom. I expect you to be attentive, polite, and **not a source of distraction to any other student**. Distracting behaviors such as talking to your neighbor, checking your computer for anything other than course material, reading newspapers, coming to class late or leaving early are not acceptable behavior. Every effort will be made to make the classroom experience both profitable and enjoyable for you.

In a nutshell, this class is dedicated to those students who take their education seriously; for those who don't I make no promises...

Student Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for attending lectures, field trips and discussions and for understanding the information presented in this syllabus and the course materials. It is your responsibility to bring your questions to our attention. This requires seeing us during class as well as during our office hours. You are expected to actively participate in your working groups and to complete all assignments according to the instructions and deadlines provided with those assignments. Your work must be your own, unless you are specifically asked to work in groups (as in the group project).

Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication of information is a violation of the regulations of the University and will not be tolerated. In fairness to other students who put in an honest effort, academic dishonesty will result in failure (grade of F) of the course. In addition, we will also pass your name on to the Vice President of Student Affairs Office. The requirements for academic integrity are covered in the CSU General Catalog (<http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/>).

How to get Help:

I am available to help you on all aspects of the course. In the spirit of interdisciplinary teamwork, you are encouraged first to seek information and assistance from your teammates and classmates on assignments and projects. Then contact me.

Tour in the Watershed

I am both a bioregionalist and a practicing conservationist. My experiences have been gleaned on different continents and different watersheds but I believe that for conservation to work you have to know both your human and natural histories on the landscapes where you live. It is my belief that both your education at Colorado State

University and your growth as citizens will be enhanced if I connect the concepts offered in this course to a real place. Accordingly, we will take two field trips in the watershed where you live, work, play, and worship; the *Cache la Poudre River Watershed*.

By integrating your education in the classroom with the watershed where you live, I deliberately run against the trend in higher education to compartmentalize complex subjects and discourage interdisciplinary thinking. Aldo Leopold had it right when he wrote:

Perhaps the most important of these purposes [of higher education] is to teach the student how to put the sciences together in order to use them. All the sciences and arts are taught as if they were separate. They are separate only in the classroom. Step out on the campus and they are immediately fused. Land ecology is putting the sciences and arts together for the purpose of understanding our environment... "The Role of Wildlife in a Liberal Education," 1942.

Field trip

- We will **depart** from the parking lot just east of the Forestry Building at **8:00 am** for the field trip to meet stakeholders and discuss issues relative to our course objectives. Do not miss this!
- **Bring plenty of water, appropriate clothing (hats, rain gear if necessary, warm clothes if necessary, boots, etc.), and lunch.**
- You can expect to be back at CSU around 6 pm.

Field Trip : September 26 (Saturday): Cache la Poudre Watershed. Reading before field trip: Knight, R. L. 2011. The great awakening: Transitioning from top-down to bottom-up conservation. Pages 101-106 in Nowak, P. and M. Schnepf, eds. Managing Agricultural Landscapes for Environmental Quality II: Achieving More Effective Conservation. Ankeny, IA: Soil and Water Conservation Society.

8 am - Leave Forestry Building parking lot

8:30 am - Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, - Nate Borschman – Campbell Valley (Roberts Ranch)

10 am – George Seidel (Waterfall and Rabbit Creek ranches)

Noon – NRCS, John Fusaro, Antelope Canyon

2 pm – The Nature Conservancy - Heather Knight – (Phantom Canyon)

Note: The field trip is mandatory, only a written doctor's statement explaining an illness or an official school function will excuse you.

Group Project

To address the objective of developing critical thinking, evaluation skills, as well as experiencing firsthand the challenges of working collaboratively, you will work as part of an interdisciplinary team. Each group will choose one established collaborative group from a larger list and prepare a situational assessment. You will investigate the group and interview one leader of that group in person or on the phone. Your group will give two

presentations, one a pre-situational assessment presentation and the second a final situational assessment presentation.

This is demanding work, make no mistake about it. My goal, remember, is to expose you to contemporary approaches to successful conservation planning and natural resources management. My hope is that the lectures and projects will be instrumental in developing your skill levels and building your confidence so that your careers as resource practitioners will serve as levers in the transition of a society that takes its environment seriously.

Lectures

Date	Topic
Aug. 25	Course overview
27	Human dimensions of conservation
Sept. 1	How did we get to collaborative conservation: North America
3	The Poudre runs through It: Collaborative conservation and the wrinkles involved (MaryLou Smith)
8	How did we get to collaborative conservation: An international perspective (Robin Reid)
10	Collaborative conservation: The what and the how
15	Explanation of group project
17	Stakeholders
22	How to do a situational assessment (Ch'aska Hyayhuaca)
24	Class exercise – stakeholder mapping (Brett Bruyere)
29	No class due to field trip
Oct. 1	Class exercise – role playing and classroom theater
6	Pre-situational assessment presentation and interview questions brainstorming
8	Pre-situational assessment presentations and interview questions brainstorming
13	Conflict management (Shay Bright, University of Colorado Health)
15	Mid-term exam
20	Values and empathy
22	Measuring values (Tara Teel)

- 27 Challenges and opportunities in putting collaborative conservation in action (Heather Knight)
- 29 Class exercise: Challenges and opportunities (Heather Knight)
- Nov. 3 Participation and group decision making (Karina Mullen)
- 5 Class exercise (Karina Mullen)
- 10 Critiques of collaborative conservation and measuring success (Kim Skylander)
- 12 The Colorado Atlas of Collaborative Conservation (Ch'aska Huayhuaca)
- 17 Future of Collaborative Conservation – student panel
- 19 Individual Reflection Essays (out of class)
- 24 No class-Thanksgiving Break
- 26 No class-Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 1 Group presentations- Situational Assessment
- 3 Group presentation-Situational Assessment
- 8 Class evaluation
- 10 Final exam