ENVR 590
SENIOR CAPSTONE SEMINAR:
ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY IN PUBLIC LANDS

Wednesday, 9:40am-12:10pm
Petigru 217

Course Description
This seminar will introduce students to a range of research techniques, interpretive strategies, and resource management applications of environmental history through an exploration of Congaree National Park, local state parks, and sustainable tourism and conservation initiatives in lower Richland County. During the first part of the course, short lectures and small group discussions prompted by Blackboard discussion forum responses will give students a working background in the environmental history of wilderness, national parks, and conservation debates. We will explore the relationship between nature conservation and nation building, urban and industrial expansion, recreational management, and the evolution of environmental governance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

We will complement the lectures and discussions in the first half of the term with learning modules and field excursions that demonstrate and assess the integration of historical data into resource management and interpretive programs at nature reserves and heritage sites in the Midlands. Students will have the opportunity to interact with a range of environmental professionals who will serve as community partners for our class and cosponsors of the research projects.

During the second part of the course, students will work in teams to develop a research plan, compile a literature review or field report, and conduct an oral presentation. The research project will address a resource management or interpretive challenge that emerges out of our local explorations in consultation with one of our community partners. We envision ENVR 590 as a bridge to graduate study or professional development and a stepping stone to longer-term collaboration with our community partners. As such, we expect students to serve as hard-working, reliable, and creative ambassadors of the university.

Contact Information for Professor Lekan: lekan@mailbox.sc.edu and 777-5928. Office hours: Wed., 1:30-3:00 or by appointment, in Gambrell 135.

Contact Information for John Williams, Instructional Assistant: will3497@email.sc.edu. Office hours by appointment only.

Learning Outcomes
ENVR 590 is the capstone course for environmental science and environmental studies majors. Students will apply the knowledge and skills they have gained over the course of
their undergraduate studies to conceptualize, research, interpret, and present the results of an interdisciplinary research topic. During the semester, students will:

- Define an interdisciplinary research question related to local environmental history and its application to the management or interpretation of public lands.
- Design a manageable and efficient team research plan for answering the question and making recommendations.
- Place the research within the context of the relevant secondary literature and assess the project's contribution to this literature.
- Produce a fully documented, informative, well-written literature review or field report linked to community environmental history.
- Conduct a visually compelling and well organized PowerPoint® presentation based on research results.

**Required Reading**


The rest of the readings will be available on Blackboard or online.

**Course Format and Policies**

Students will be evaluated on attendance, active participation in seminar discussions and site visits, the development of the literature review or field report, and the conducting of a group oral presentation. ENVR 590 serves as a starting point for longer-term collaborations with our community partners. Therefore, engagement in the process of defining a research problem, working as a team, and producing results for our community partners is as important as the results of that work.

**Class Participation:** ENVR 590 may differ from previous classes you have taken at USC because there is no formal lecture. To succeed in this course, you will need to complete all readings before class, take notes on the readings and identify areas that need clarification or further discussion, post responses to the discussion questions listed on Blackboard each week, and bring specific questions about the readings to the seminar. **You will earn full participation points only if you attend class and actively contribute to class discussions.** Please turn off and stow away cell phones before class begins.

**Attendance** is an important part of the course grade and is taken at the beginning of class. As the university undergraduate policies state: "Absence from more than 10 percent of the scheduled class sessions, whether excused or unexcused, is excessive and the instructor may choose to exact a grade penalty for such absences."

Because ENVR 590 meets only once a week, for a total of 14 weeks, missing more than two classes will result in a grade penalty of one-half a letter grade for each subsequent missed class.
If you become ill or have a family emergency, please contact us as soon as
possible or have a friend or family member contact me. Extended absence in the
capstone seminar can lead to a failing grade—don’t fall behind!
Accommodating Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for
students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need
accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Student
Disability Services: 777-6142, email sasds@mailbox.sc.edu, or stop by LeConte
College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Office
of Student Disability Services.

Field Trips
This course includes a mandatory field trip to Congaree National Park and, depending on
your research project, smaller field excursions linked to the community project. The
Congaree field trip will take place on February 8 or 15 (depending on your group
number). Additional excursions will be organized for Week 10 or 11. We will make
every effort to limit the excursion times to our Wednesday morning time slot, but please
make every effort to ensure flexibility on the return time where possible.

Assignments and Grading

Assignments:
The major assignment for ENVR 590 is a final team research project consisting of the
following elements:
  • Research Plan and Team Contract
  • Public Draft and Final Written Draft of a Literature Review or Field Report
  • Oral Presentation

The due dates for these various phases of the process are staggered to allow ample time
for group work, consultation with the instructors, refinement of the research problem, and
re-drafting of the written text. There will also be individual components of the final
grade that assess students’ mastery of the content in the first half of the term and
individual assessments of projects in the second half. Further guidelines on the
assignments will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

Grading: Grading will be on a 1000-point scale:
  • Class Participation: 125
  • Blackboard Discussion Form: 125
  • Reading Quiz (if discussions and posts show good engagement and understanding
of the material, we’ll skip this and add the points to the final score!): 50
  • Scholarly Article Review: 75
  • Research Plan and Team Contract: 75
  • Public Draft of Literature Review or Field Report: 75
  • Individual Peer Review of Papers: 15
  • Final Lit Review or Field Report: 200
  • Final Oral Presentation: 200
• Individual Peer-Assessment of Oral Presentations: 35
• Individual Self-Assessment of Group Project: 25

The grading scale for ENVR 590 is as follows: A = 90-100%; B + = 87-89; B = 80-86; C + = 77-79; C = 70-76; D + = 67-69; D = 60-66; F = 59 or below.

• Late Policies: All work must be word-processed and submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date unless otherwise specified. Assignments not completed and submitted on their due dates will receive a one letter-grade penalty for each subsequent day they are late. No e-mailed assignments are accepted unless explicitly arranged with the instructor.

Academic Honesty
The USC Code of Academic Responsibility calls on students to “adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program.”

• Academic essays require citations for all materials from which you borrow ideas, quotations, statistics, or other information. Further information on citation format will be announced in class and available on the website. Failure to cite such materials, or to copy text from library materials, other students, or papers posted on a website, constitutes plagiarism.
• PLAGIARIZED PAPERS will receive a “0” and be turned over immediately to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for further disciplinary action.

Schedule of Class Meetings
**All dates and readings are subject to change!

Week 1 (Jan. 11): Introduction to the Seminar
• Review syllabus, assignment handouts, and course expectations.
• Blackboard Discussion for 1/18/16: Please post responses by Tuesday, Jan. 17 at 8:00PM.

Week 2 (Jan. 18): What is Environmental History? Concepts and Sources
• Donald Worster, “Doing Environmental History.”
• William Cronon, Changes in the Land, Chaps. 1-2.
• Bonebrake et al. on baselines and historical date in conservation biology.
• In-class source exercise: documenting ecological baselines in historical and conservation research.

Before next class:
• Blackboard Discussion: Post by 8:00p.m. on Jan. 24.

Week 3 (January 25): The Wilderness Ideal: Origins of the National Parks
• Read: Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, Chaps. 1-5; 7-8.
• In-class concepts and primary sources exercise: Bradford, Thoreau, Muir, Pinchot.
• In-class film and discussion: The Wilderness Ideal or segments of Burns' America's Best Idea.

Before next class:
• Blackboard: Please Post Response by Tues., Jan. 31, at 8:00.

Week 4 (Feb. 1): Wilderness Controversies: Then and Now

Preservation versus Conservation around 1900: Yosemite under Threat
• Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, Chaps. 9-12.
• In-class and film exercises: Muir, Pinchot, and the Hetch Hetchy Debate

The Great Wilderness Debate around 2000: Environmental Justice and Anthropocenic Perspectives
• Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness.”
• Group 1 (public history): Lockhart, “The Case of the Lost Cattle Mounts of Congaree.”
• Group 3: Wohl (geomorphology), “Wilderness is Dead: Whither Critical Zone Studies.”
• Group 4: Pringle (ecology), “How to be Manipulative”—on "intelligent tinkering" in ecosystem rehabilitation.
• Group 5: Cronon (environmental history), “The Riddle of the Apostle Islands.”

Before next class:
• Blackboard: Please Post Response by Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 8:00p.m.

Week 5 (Feb. 8): Congaree Field Excursion/Thomas Cooper Library Research Workshop

Group I: Environmental History, Interpretation, and Resource Management at Congaree National Park (Site Visit)

• Complete online course module for the Arthur Carhart Wilderness Training Center (to be assigned).
• Read: selections from Congaree Foundation Document (2014).
• Visit Website: Congaree National Park (http://www.nps.gov/cosw).

Group II: Research Tools—Finding Primary and Secondary Sources at Thomas Cooper Library

In-class activities:
• Complete workshop on research methods with Kathy Snediker and Stacy Winchester, Research Librarians
• Visit Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library with Herbert J. Hartsook, Director, South Carolina Political Collections (Floyd Spence Papers)
• Locate scholarly article for article review assignment

Before next class:
• Blackboard: Please Post Response by Tues., Feb. 21, at 8:00p.m.

Week 6 (Feb. 15): Group II: Environmental History, Interpretation, and Resource Management at Congaree National Park (Site Visit)

  Group I: Research Tools—Finding Primary and Secondary Sources at Thomas Cooper Library

Week 7 (Feb. 22): Landscape Interpretation and Environmental History in Lower Richland County
Guest Speaker: Gregory Sprouse, Director of Research, Planning and Development Central Midlands Council of Governments

• READING QUIZ
• Read: Selections from Rebecca Bush, "Owning Home: African-American Agriculture in Lower Richland County"
• Read: Selections from "Prized Pieces of Land: The Impact of Reconstruction on African-American Land Ownership in Lower Richland County."
• Review Birnbaum, National Park Service Preservation Brief #36, Protecting Cultural Landscapes
• Visit: Lower Richland tourism plan: (http://www.lowerrichlandtourismplan.com/)

Before next class:
• Blackboard: Post Response by Tues., Feb. 28, at 8:00p.m.

Week 8 (March 1): Landscape Interpretation and Environmental History in the South Carolina State Parks
Guest speaker—Al Hester, Historic Sites Coordinator, SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

• ARTICLE REVIEW DUE
• Read: Selections from Mielnik, New Deal, New Landscape.
• Read: Selections from Earley, Looking for Longleaf.
• Visit: Sesquicentennial State Park website at (http://southcarolinaparks.com/sesqui/introduction.aspx)

In-class: selection of project teams and preliminary topics.

Week 9 (March 8): Spring Break
Week 10 (March 15): Small Group Site Visits and Group Meetings
- Group meetings with instructor or IA to discuss research planning.
- Commence small group field site investigations and/or library research as needed (e.g., Sesquicentennial State Park, Lower Richland, Congaree).

Week 11 (March 22): Small Group Site Visits and Group Meetings
- Continue group meetings, field site investigations, and library research as needed

Week 12 (March 29): Part I: Research Plan, Team Contract, and Annotated Bibliography
- In-class: short group presentations of initial findings
- Research Plan, Team Contract and Preliminary Annotated Bibliography due by Friday, March 24 at 4:30p.m.

Part II: Special Topic: Altered Horizons: Climate Change and Park Management
Guest Speaker: Dr. Carol Boggs, Director, School of the Earth, Ocean and Environment
- Group 1: Read: Glassberg, "Place, Memory and Climate Change."
- Group 2: Read: Heller et al. "Biodiversity Management in the Face of Climate Change."
- Group 3: Read: Baron et al. "Options for National Parks and Reserves for Adapting to Climate Change."

Week 13 (April 5): Team Presentations
- Public Draft of Literature Review or Field Report Due!
- Team Oral Presentations begin

Week 14 (April 12): Team Presentations
- Individual Peer Assessments of Papers Due; Discussion and Suggestions
- Continue team oral presentations

Week 15 (April 19): Team Presentations
- Complete team oral presentations

FINAL PAPERS DUE on Friday, April 21 by 4:30PM