

**FNR 4080:
Sustainable Ecotourism Development
Fall, 2025**



Tuesday Periods 8-9 (3:00 – 4:55) Newins-Ziegler Hall 219

Thursday Periods 9 (4:05 – 4:55) Newins-Ziegler Hall 219

Online Course Website: <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Instructor: Taylor Stein
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Office Hours: Mondays 1:00 to 2:00 and by appointment

Teaching Assistant:

Email:

Course Objectives: Students will learn how ecotourism and outdoor recreation concepts fit into natural resource management. Specifically, this course will take an approach in which natural resource managers control recreation and can actively plan and manage the individual, social, economic, and environmental benefits of recreation and ecotourism. The course will take a practical approach to ecotourism and recreation management by revolving around three issues fundamental to planning:

1. Defining the desired future condition of a site, region, and landscape;
2. Inventorying and defining the current condition and status of ecotourism areas; and
3. Identifying management strategies and tactics to transform a natural area into the desired condition using ecotourism and recreation.

To achieve these goals, the course will provide students with the ability to:

- Describe ecotourism and recreation and their relationship to natural resource management;
- apply planning and management frameworks for developing recreation opportunities on a site, community, and landscape level;
- plan for sustainable recreation facilities and services that result in positive outcomes for visitors, local communities, economies, and the environment;
- identify how recreation activities impact natural areas; and
- use strategies and techniques to manage natural areas for recreation and tourism.

Course Materials:

Readings will be found on the Canvas E-Learning website (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu/>) under “Modules.”

Grading

There are 100 points possible in this course. Students are responsible for all materials in reading assignments, podcasts, videos, and lectures. Final grades will be based on:

Projects/Exams	Percent	Final Percent	Grade
Course Participation	15	96.7 – 100	A+ (not real, but be proud)
Pre-Class Quizzes/Exercises	15	93.4 – 96.6	A
Planning Assignments		86.7 – 89.9	B+
Site Description	5	83.4 – 86.6	B
Zoning for Opportunities	10	80.0 – 83.3	B-
Facility or Service Plan	10	76.7 – 79.9	C+
Interpretation Program	10	73.4 – 76.6	C
Managing for Impacts	10	70.0 – 73.3	C-
Exams (2)	20	66.7 – 69.9	D+
Total	100	63.4 – 66.6	D
		60.0 – 63.3	D-
		Less than 60%	E (Fail)

Discussion of Grading

Course Participation

You must participate in all aspects of this course to get full credit. Specifically, participation will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Class attendance: It is expected that you will attend all classroom sessions.
2. Field trip attendance. It is expected that you will attend at least one field trip. If you cannot participate, please contact the instructor at least a week before the trip so other arrangements can be made. If you cannot attend any scheduled trips, you will be expected to visit a park or greenspace on your own and document your visit through the completion of the trip worksheet.
3. Class conduct. You will be expected to attend class on time and contribute to class discussions.
4. Small group discussions. You will be placed into groups throughout the semester to discuss class questions, concepts, and problems. The instructor will monitor these discussions, and we expect to hear or see everybody contribute.

Planning Assignments (See Canvas and Course Schedule for Due Dates)

The five planning assignments all relate to essential components of an ecotourism management plan. Each assignment is dependent upon your application of course lectures. Although you are welcome to talk to fellow students and share ideas, each assignment must be done individually, using the information you collected on your own. Instead of writing papers, each assignment will require you to integrate pictures and text to achieve the assignments objectives.

Summaries of each assignment are described below. Details will be provided closer to the assignment date.

Plan Component 1: Site Description: You will develop a PowerPoint presentation (or assemble a set of slides) on a natural area of your choosing. The area should have some recreation access, but that is not required. In your set of slides, you will describe the organization or agency that manages the property, the mission or vision statement of that organization or agency, the goals or objectives of the specific area, a detailed description of existing recreation opportunities in the area, and a brief description of the ecological character of the area.

Plan Component 2: Zoning for Recreation Opportunities. Using maps and any other spatial information you can acquire for your study areas, make two maps showing the area's opportunity zones. The first should be existing opportunities, given the settings that currently exist. The second map should be your changes to those zones. At least two zones should change. Using PowerPoint or a similar software, you will present your maps, zones, and text describing your zones and changes.

Plan Component 3: Facility or Service Plan. You will learn planning guidelines for various recreation facilities and services commonly found in nature-based recreation areas: campgrounds and trails. Using information provided in class and guest lectures, you will describe a development and management plan for a facility in your area of interest.

Plan Component 4: Interpretive Program. Interpreting natural and cultural resources is a fundamental skill for most ecotourism providers. For this component, you will use concepts from lecture and reading to develop an interpretive program on some aspect of your area

Plan Component 5: Managing for Impacts. You will be provided worksheets used by the National Park Service to identify existing and potential problems in your study areas. Using those worksheets, you will identify social and ecological impacts that result from recreation access to the study area. You must clearly describe at least one social and one ecological impact, which you will then focus on to identify management tactics for those impacts. Your paper will describe your thinking, including indicators, thresholds (i.e., standards), and management tactics.

Plan Component Perfection

Not all assignments can be perfect, and you might want to try for perfection. If you missed points on one or more of the plan components and would like to improve your grade on those assignments, you will have until Monday, December 9 to turn in improvements. To earn the maximum points, you will also need to also provide a short statement explaining what changes you made and why you think those improvements make the plan component (i.e., defend why I should give you more points). I will give you feedback on your initial submissions, so that should give you direction on how to make improvements, but always feel free to talk to me if you are unclear on how to improve your plan components.

Pre-class Quiz/Exercises

These quizzes/exercises help you focus on external media related to course topics. Each quiz/exercise will require you to answer several multiple-choice questions based on the material you reviewed for that class. They will also ask you to respond to a short-answer question, which will help you apply the concepts you reviewed. These questions will range from asking you your opinion to identifying examples of class concepts. Please stay up to date on the Canvas course page to understand all expectations for each class period. There will be approximately 15 quizzes/exercises throughout the semester, each worth 3 points. Your two lowest scoring quizzes/exercises will be dropped.

Exams

The exams will be composed of questions requiring short-essay answers, definitions, and multiple choice. Two exams will be given. However, the second exam is not comprehensive for the entire semester; some subjects and information flow throughout the semester and are testable.

Extra Credit

Several extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the semester. In all cases, you should tell Dr. Stein you plan to do the extra credit before you take part. More information will be discussed in class but use the descriptions below to understand what is expected in each activity. Thanksgiving must complete extra credit unless you receive permission to complete it later.

- Visit the UF Bat Houses with Dr. Stein at the announced date and complete the short survey you receive while visiting. This extra credit work can only be done on the night of the visit. (2 points)
- Write a summary and reflection paper of an approved reading. Make sure you get approval from Dr. Stein before you work on it. (2.5 points, maximum of 2 times)
 - Your summary should be about three pages long (double-spaced)
 - You should address two issues:
 1. What were the main lessons or points of the reading?
 2. Apply those lessons to a conserved natural area that you are familiar with.
- Write a reflection paper on a recreation experience you have during the semester. (2.5 points, maximum of 1 time)
 - The instructor must approve the experience.
 - In your write-up, you should address the following issues
 1. The paper should be about three pages long (double-spaced)
 2. Describe the area you visited (What is the official name? Who owns/manages it? Why is it interesting? Any other information you think is interesting?)
 3. Describe what you did there.
 4. Describe how well the area is managed for the benefits of ecotourism based on what you have learned in class. (What are managers doing and not doing to provide for the benefits of ecotourism?)

Special Notes

1. Class participation is expected. The instructor will consistently monitor all class and small group discussions to ensure you are participating.
2. I understand that it might not be possible for you to attend every class, and you might miss an assignment. Therefore, as soon as you know you will miss a class, TELL ME !! I will try my best to work with you if I see that you are putting forth the effort to work with me. However, if you blow my class off, expect the same consideration from me.
3. Individuals who miss classes are expected to make arrangements with other students in the class to get lecture materials.
4. **Remember, do not plagiarize!** When you use information from a source, tell us where you got that information. Copying information from other documents (whether they are websites, newspaper articles, or anything) is plagiarism and is not tolerated. This includes copying papers from other members of the class. Although discussion is encouraged, plagiarizing from fellow students is forbidden.

Important Course Information

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to upholding the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge:

"We, the University of Florida community members, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."

You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community. Therefore, on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission to collaborate on course tasks (e.g., assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to the appropriate personnel.

Your responsibility is to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see:
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

Use of AI and Chat GPT

Students shall

1. Give credit to AI tools whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations.
2. When using AI tools on assignments, add an appendix showing (a) the entire exchange, highlighting the most relevant sections; (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used (e.g. ChatGPT private subscription version or DALL-E free version), (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, turns of phrase, elements of text, long stretches of text, lines of argument, pieces of evidence, maps of conceptual territory, illustrations of key

concepts, etc.); (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to handle mounting stress, to clarify prose, to translate text, to experiment for fun, etc.).

3. Not use AI tools during in-class examinations, or assignments, unless explicitly permitted and instructed.
4. Employ AI detection tools and originality checks prior to submission, ensuring that their submitted work is not mistakenly flagged.
5. Use AI tools wisely and intelligently, aiming to deepen understanding of subject matter and to support learning.

Instructors shall

1. Seek to understand how AI tools work, including their strengths and weaknesses, to optimize their value for student learning.
2. Treat work by students who declare no use of AI tools as the baseline for grading.
3. Use a lower baseline for students who declare use of AI tools, depending on how extensive the usage, while rewarding creativity, critical nuance, and the correction of inaccuracies or superficial interpretations in response to suggestions made by AI tools.
4. Employ AI detection tools to evaluate the degree to which AI tools have likely been employed.
5. Impose a significant penalty for low-energy or unreflective reuse of material generated by AI tools and assigning zero points for merely reproducing the output from AI tools.

This policy recognizes that this policy depends on goodwill, a sense of fairness, and honorable character.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services for currently enrolled students at no cost. In addition, resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
- University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance concerning using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

- <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
- On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaintprocess>

Diversity and Inclusion

As we work to recognize the opportunities and limits of privilege and change the outcomes of systemic injustice in the United States, we must create a safe environment in this class to explore sensitive topics and help each other grow in our ability to respect all people and help them thrive. We can begin by using inclusive and preferred language, acknowledging assumptions, considering the consequences and limitations of research findings, and seeking research that challenges the status quo.

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>. In addition, attendance and Make-Up Work Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an essential part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. In addition, students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations on-line via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback professionally and respectfully is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the e-mail they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Outdoor Ethics

When visiting natural areas, we are guests of the land manager/owner and visitors to the area. Therefore, we strive to leave no trace of our visit, which includes removing everything we bring, leaving everything we find, minimizing stress to native wildlife, and being respectful and courteous to other visitors.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faculty-student disability-related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and university students must obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and criminal penalties for the individual violator. In addition, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate because such violations are also against

university policies and rules.

Hitchcock Field & Fork Pantry

The Hitchcock Field & Fork Pantry is a free resource to support UF undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff experiencing any level of food insecurity. Experiencing food insecurity may mean you have faced challenges in meeting your needs in quantity and nutritional quality of food. For example, food insecurity may look like eating ramen because you cannot afford foods you consider healthy, nutritious, or appropriate for yourself, to outright skipping meals or eating smaller meals.

If you are unsure whether you fit the criteria, come anyway! You only need to bring your UFID; you do not need to prove that you are in need. In addition, the Pantry does not discriminate based on income, class, race, ethnicity, gender, out-of-state or international student status, housing status, or ability.

The Pantry does not just offer canned food! The Pantry offers fresh, seasonal produce, frozen meat, milk, eggs, vegan options, menstrual products, and select toiletries. They are happy to accommodate requests if you cannot find what you need first.

The Pantry assures guests, potential and current, that accessing emergency services like the Pantry is not a reflector of one's self-worth, nor are they taking resources from someone "more deserving" or "more in need" than themselves.

You can visit the Pantry website (pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu) for more information, including current hours. The Pantry is located between Marston Science Library and McCarty Hall, behind the HUB, on the University of Florida Gainesville campus.

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All readings are in Canvas or are linked below

(Some topics and dates are subject to change)

Week	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Module 1 – Recreation? What is it good for?				
1	August 21	Understand the course and topic Course introduction Understand terms and concept		Watch video Complete questions on Canvas
2	26	Providing quality recreation opportunities AFM, EFM, and OFM Introduce Planning Component 1 – Site Description	Managing to Optimize the Beneficial Outcomes of Recreation What is Outcomes-Focused Management? (In Canvas)	
	28	Recreation Planning Goals Outcomes focused management Extra Credit: Visit the UF Bat house at Sunset		Submit Bat House Worksheet Extra Credit that evening
Module 2 – Supply and Demand				
3	Sept. 2	Demand – What do people want, and how do they want to get it (recreation trends)? Inequity and recreation participation	<u>Outdoor Foundation Report 2018</u> <u>Outdoor Recreation Economy</u> <u>Florida State Comprehensive Recreation Plan 2018 - Executive Summary (pages 2-4)</u> <u>Florida Wildlife Corridor: About the Corridor</u>	

Week	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due
	4	Recreation demand/non-traditional users	How Does Your City Interpret Equity? Black Birders Call Out Racism	
4	9	Field Trip: Sweetwater Wetlands Park Sweetwater Preserve (2:00 to 6:00)	America's Public Lands Explained All Agency Websites (In E-Learning Website, Suppliers of Ecotourism Folder)	
	11	Supply – public land management agencies		
5	16	Public agencies continued Guest Lecture: Isabella Guttuso Browne, Urban and Recreational Green Infrastructure Coordinator	Ecotourism Development Manual Vol 1, Chapters 5-6	
	18	Private and NGO providers		Plan Component 1 Due
	Saturday, Sept. 20	Field Trip: Ocala National Forest (8:30 to 5:30)		
Module 3 – Planning				
6	23	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class activity – zoning maps Introduce Planning Component 3 – Zones and Opportunity Descriptions	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Approach to Resource Planning (In Canvas)	
	25	ROS Zoning Exercise		
	Sat. Sept. 27			
7	30	Zoning continued Review for Exam 1 Guest Lecture: Rachel Stein, Urban Planner, VCBO		
	October 2	Exam 1		
Module 4 – Recreation Facilities and Services				
8	7	Planning for Facilities – Needs assessments and budgeting. Introduce Planning Component 4 – Facilities		

Week	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due
		and Services		
	9	Trails	Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook Ecotourism Development Manual Vol 2, Part 1 Chapters 2-3	Plan Component 2 Due
9	14	Field Trip: Paynes Prairie (2:00 to 6:00)		
	16	Campgrounds		
10	21	Hunting and game management (Andrea Boliek potential guest lecture)	.	
	23	Hunting and wildlife-based recreation facilities and service (Andrea Boliek potential guest lecture)	Decline in Hunters Threatens How the U.S. Pays for Conservation	
11	28	Interpreting the Environment: The many forms of interpretation and basics of the profession.	A Crash Course on Interpretation	Plan Component 3 Due
	30	Thematic Interpretation		Bring in interpretive panel
Module 5 – Recreation Impacts and Management				
12	Nov. 4	Recreation Impacts – ecological and social Introduce Plan Component 5	Chapter 14: Negative Impacts of Recreation Use, from Introduction to Outdoor Recreation: Providing and Managing Natural Resource Based Opportunities (In Canvas)	
	6	Complete recreation impacts/Monitoring		
13	11 Veterans Day No Class	Introduction to Management Strategies and Tactics	Chapter 16: Influencing and Managing Visitor Behavior Introduction to Outdoor Recreation: Providing and Managing Natural Resource Based Opportunities (In Canvas)	
	13	Limits of Acceptable Change		Plan Component 4 Due
14	18	Management strategies and tactics		
	20	Bringing it all together Discuss Final Plan	Listen to the podcast: Mountain Bikers Fighting New Trails	

Week	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due
		Course review		
15	25	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		
	27	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		
16	Dec. 2	Exam 2		Plan Component 5 Due
Monday, December 9			Final Planning Assignments Due	