

## **EVDB 697.68 Seminar: Topics in Conservation Design**

**Q (18 hours)**

Room? Friday 3:00 - 5:50

Fall 2011

Dr. Cormack Gates

### **INTRODUCTION**

Conservation design is an interdisciplinary field involving synthesis of information and knowledge from multiple disciplines including but not limited to ecology, environmental and social impact assessment, law and policy analysis, and institutional analysis. It involves engaging people in appropriate planning processes to design actions for achieving conservation outcomes in the public interest. Conservation designs may be desired for private land holdings, parks and protected areas, or for larger multi-tenured landscapes or regions. Knowledge and process requirements vary with the scale. At the simplest scale of private individual land holdings, conservation actions may be defined and implemented by very few stakeholders and authorization may require little more than a landowner agreement. In contrast, at the regional scale, some conservation designs, for example conservation of crucial habitat or migration corridors, may require the agreement and coordinated actions of several agencies and many landowners.

Conservation design research involves the creation of products or processes to achieve ecological outcomes desired by society. This course provides opportunities for graduate students involved in research relevant to conservation design to discuss concepts, theories and issues relevant to their research interests.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the course is to provide a forum for graduate students from a variety of disciplines to increase their knowledge and understanding of conservation design and to critically explore key concepts and theories relevant to their research.

### **TEACHING APPROACH**

This is a student-driven seminar and discussion course. With facilitation provided by the instructor students will develop a list of concepts and theories they wish to explore during the term. Emphasis is placed on learning through dialogue among students, instructors, and visiting researchers and practitioners.

### **CONTENT: TOPIC AREAS**

The following topics are suggested for discussion and may be revised based on the interests of participating students:

1. Key concepts and theories from the field of ecology (corridors, fragmentation, population viability, ecosystem integrity or health, resilience)
2. Focal species vs. ecosystem approaches for conservation planning
3. Ecological goods and services (utility values, conservation incentives)
4. The policy process and governance (critical gaps, planning and implementation).
5. Cumulative effects assessment and management (defining outcomes, assessing

- effects and risks, monitoring, evaluating, and managing change).
6. Placing nature and culture through design (spatial aspects of conservation planning)

### **MEANS OF EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be based on presentation of one discussion topic during the term, leading the discussion on that topic, and participating in other class discussions. The learning model relies on active learning and participation. Consequently students are normally expected to participate in scheduled classes. Students satisfying these criteria will receive a CR. A letter grade will not be assigned; rather the course will be graded CR/F.

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#### **Notes:**

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.
4. The Blackboard learning support system used at the University of Calgary is employed in this course. When you access the site you will find course documents and recommended readings, including a selection of relevant URLs.