

**ESP 110 Introduction to Nature Tourism**      3 Credits      Spring 2005

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Office hours: T/TH: 10:45 AM – Noon and by arrangement

Class meetings: Thursdays 7:00-9:45 PM

Class location: 304 Payson-Smith Hall; Instructional Television site, Portland Campus,  
University of Southern Maine

**Introduction**

This course covers the basics of a fast-growing field -- Nature tourism -- a broad category that covers ecotourism and adventure tourism, and a variety of activities and programs involving the outdoors. An emphasis is placed on Maine and northern New England nature tourism. ESP 110 is one of the required courses for the Nature Tourism Minor offered jointly between the Department of Recreation & Leisure Studies and the Department of Environmental Science.

**Course goals for the student**

1. Explain how Maine can use its natural resources in a sustainable manner through nature-based tourism, including opportunities, planning, policies, and practices.
2. Design a viable nature tourism or ecotourism activity, business, or event, and justify how it promotes sustainable resource use.

**Ancillary skills goals**

1. Improve ability to access and critically evaluate nature tourism literature and information from the Internet, libraries, trade associations, business, government, and non-government organizations.
2. Improve abilities in self-teaching.
3. Improve independent organizational and problem-solving skills.

**On-line support**

This course has a Blackboard site for materials, communications, announcements, discussions, and other course support activities. All students are expected to access this site and use it. The following link presents a quick guide for students new to Blackboard: [http://www.learn.maine.edu/crs/bb5\\_guide.html](http://www.learn.maine.edu/crs/bb5_guide.html). Some of the course readings are posted on Blackboard or have their URL links at the Blackboard site.

**Textbook**

Weaver, David. 2001. Ecotourism. Wiley: NY.

**Course evaluation**

10% Exam

10% Participation in class discussions, Blackboard, and with instructor

30% Assignments: In-class and out-of-class activities, worksheets, and homework

50% Nature tourism project.

## **Grades**

Assignments are graded on three categories: completeness, organization, and critical thinking. I will use the following guide in determining grades.

**A:** *Excellent work. Average of 90 to 100%. Shows quality writing, research, and analytical skills. Superior documentation. No significant errors or flaws.*

**A-:** *This is essentially a high B with an average of 87-89.*

**B+:** *Good work, with an average of 85 to 86.*

**B:** *Good work. 80 to 84 average. Good writing, research, analytical skills. Good reports, well-organized. Work shows good development of ideas and thorough support of analyses.*

**B-:** *Acceptable work, average of 77-79.*

**C+:** *Acceptable work, Average of 75-76*

**C:** *Acceptable or Average. 70 to 74 on assignments. Good participation in class. Acceptable college-level writing and analytical skills. Demonstrates reasonable organization and clarity.*

**C-:** *Marginal work. 68- 69 aggregate average performance on assignments and other evaluations.*

**D:** *Marginal work. Average of 65-67. Meets minimal requirements to not fail the course.*

**F:** *Below 65%.*

## **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance is required. Come to the class site prepared for the activities. Bring books, notebook, and other materials as requested. If you have to miss a meeting, be sure to let the instructor know and be sure to use the Blackboard site to stay current—students are responsible for all course content. Participation is expected and is included in the evaluation process. I particularly desire good participation with our guest speakers and via Blackboard.

## **Integrity and civics**

In accordance with USM policy, students are expected to do their own work and not appropriate or plagiarize the works of others. Proper behavior is expected in the classroom setting whether remote or local. Be sure to turn off cell phones.

## **Project 100**

This course is participating in Project 100, a program designed to support students in CORE and introductory level courses. Project 100 provides a process early in the semester for identifying students who may benefit from academic assistance. There are a number of support services and tools available at USM to help students achieve academic success. By providing this early assessment of your progress, we can discuss which of these academic support services best meets your needs. This information will also be shared with your academic advisor. If you have questions or concerns about your academic performance at any time throughout the semester, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## **Adaptations**

We want this course to work for everybody. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 mandates the elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability please let me know and also contact the Office for Students with Disabilities, 2nd floor Luther Bonney Hall (780-4706; TTY 780- 4395)

### **Assignments**

Unless otherwise informed, all assignments must be typed and double-spaced. Work must be turned in on time. Late work might not be accepted and even so is subject to a ½ letter grade (5%) penalty for every single day that it is late. Work can be submitted via Blackboard, except that final project must also be submitted in hard copy because it must be amendable to inclusion in a portfolio.

### **The major project**

This project is worth half of the grade for the course and requires strategic planning; it cannot be left to the last minute. Each student will complete a major project in which they either 1) develop a proposal for a nature tourism business, or 2) prepare a report on a nature tourism project in Maine in coordination. Both options must pertain to a need or issue identified by a stakeholder or by a market analysis. The project can focus on ecotourism, adventure tourism, outdoor recreation, environmental education—whatever a student proposes within reason. The project must be presented in a portfolio that includes a table of contents, proposal, interview with experts, draft conceptual business plan for start-up and first two years, logo and design, location analysis, market analysis, summary of major environmental impacts, summary of major economic impacts, summary of major regulations and policies that affect the project, summary of social impacts, and bibliography (use the citation format in the course textbook). Each project portfolio must also specifically address at least 20 of the following content topics.

#### **Project content topics:**

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| 1. Nature tourism terminology and concepts                                       | 11. Entrepreneurship  |
| 2. Nature tourism types and examples   | 12. Best management practices for nature-based tourism                  |
| 3. Ecosystem basics  | 13. Environmental interpretation  |
| 4. Conservation biology and biological diversity                                 | 14. Environmental education   |
| 5. Environmental impact documentation and assessment at regional and local level | 15. Environmental monitoring  |
| 6. Environmental planning and site design  | 16. The cultural politics of tourism development                        |
| 7. Visitor planning  | 17. Legal issues in nature tourism (property rights, liability)         |
| 8. Recreation planning   | 18. Economic issues in nature tourism (costs)                           |
| 9. Natural areas management  | 19. Planning for nature tourism (business and marketing considerations) |
| 10. Competitiveness and nature tourism   | 20. Community partners  |

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| <p>21. Issues in sustainable development--avoiding New Age Colonialism</p> <p>22. Tourism in modern society</p> <p>23. Disabilities and accommodations</p> <p>24. Health and safety in nature tourism: from personal safety to national security</p> | <p>25. Tourism economics</p> <p>26. Passive (resorts) and Active (outdoor recreation and guiding tours) nature tourism</p> <p>27. Global and national ecotourism and nature tourism development strategies</p> <p>28. Lessons learned: case study analysis</p> |
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**Class Outline**

<b>Mtg</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Read for today</b>	<b>Due today (in addition to specific homework)</b>
1	Jan 20	Introduction to nature tourism, history, definitions, terminology, course logistics. Guest host: Dr. Travis Wagner, Dept. of Environmental Science		Blackboard Logon.
2	Jan 27	Ecotourism concepts & approaches	Chapter 1	Bring a newspaper article pertaining to a nature tourism topic. Answer any three questions sets (a & b) on page 27 of text.
3	Feb 3	Opportunities & perspectives for nature tourism in Maine. Guest Mary Jean Packer, FERMATA Project Manager, Maine Strategic Plan	Chapter 2	Idea for major project. Answer 1 of the question sets on page 63.
4	Feb 10	Recreation & Leisure studies Markets. Guest: Carolann Ouellette, Senior Tourism Officer, Maine Office of Tourism.	Vail article	Proposal for major project. Write a 1-page reaction to Vail article.
5	Feb 17	Conservation Biology, biodiversity, & Environmental Science. Guest: Larry Berrin, Director of Programs & Exhibits, Vermont Institute of Natural Science	Chapter 3	Draft outline for project portfolio, draft location analysis. Answer question 1 on page 91.
	Feb 24	WINTER VACATION	NO CLASS	

6	Mar 3	Environments. Guest: Karla Hyde, GIS manager and environmental consultant.	Chapter 3	Draft market and needs analysis for project. Answer question 5 on page 91. Visit USM GIS Lab web site.
7	Mar 10	Social, environmental, economic impacts. Guest: Allison Murray, River rafting guide and environmental consultant.	Chapter 4	Draft summary of regulations & policies affecting project. Answer Q 1 on page 125.
8	Mar 17	Ecotourism as business, ethics, accommodations, stewardship. Guest: Russell Walters, Founder and President of Northern Outdoors, Inc.	Chapter 5	Draft summary of environmental, social, economic impacts of project. Answer Q 2 page 163. Visit Northern Outdoors URL
9	Mar 24	External systems—settings for nature tourism. In-class QUIZ	Chapter 6	Choose and answer a Q on page 197- 198.
	Mar 31	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS	
10	Apr 7	Organizations, management, and policies.	Chapter 7	Answer Q 1 and Q 2 on page 229.
11	Apr 14	Nature tourism experiences: Selected environments and activities, disabilities and creating opportunities	Chapter 8	Answer Q 1 and 2 on page 263.
12	Apr 21	World Ecotourism and global perspectives. Guest: Dr. Otrude N. Moyo, School of Social Work, USM	Chapter 9	Draft project portfolio. Answer Q 5 on Page 299 and also compare with northern New England in your answer.
13	Apr 28	Ecotourism, planning, and growth management. Education and research in nature tourism	Chapter 10 and Hitesh article.	Write a 1-page reaction to Hitesh. Answer Q 3 and 4, page 331.
14	May 5	Course overview. Each student presents summary of project		Written projects due. Give oral summary in class.

URL for readings

Geographical Information Systems Laboratory, University of Southern Maine.  
<http://www.usm.maine.edu/gany/GISLab.htm>

Hitesh Article: <http://www.asu.edu/caed/proceedings01/MEHTA/mehta.htm>

Maine Office of Tourism. <http://www.visitmaine.com/home.php> (For general reference and background)

Northern Outdoors, Inc. New England adventure resort in northern Maine.  
<http://www.northernoutdoors.com>.

Vail Article <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/faculty/D/dvail/op-ed/2003-june-sustainable-tourism.shtml>