APPLIED BIODIVERSITY SCIENCE NSF-IGERT PROGRAM
http://biodiversity.tamu.edu

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES SCIENCES
210 Nagle Hall, College Station, TX USA 77843-2258

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE	Cross Cultural Communication: Communities & Conservation
COURSE NUMBER	WFSC 681/600
CREDITS	1 credit seminar (workshop format)
PRE-REQUISITES	Graduate student status (audits by approval of instructor)

JUSTIFICATION

Conservation practitioners, those who actually apply the principles of biodiversity sciences to global problem-solving, experience the challenges of communicating with stakeholders from diverse cultures. Cultural gaps may be as subtle as the different jargon used by scientists from different academic disciplines, or as clear as language barriers, for example between Spanish and English. Most perplexing may be the diversity of stakeholder perspectives, as if people view the same issues through diverse cultural lenses acquired during their different personal life experiences.

The skills, knowledge and experience required to effectively bridge across cultural gaps can be improved through participation in the activities of a collaborative learning community. This course is designed to introduce students to a network of scientists and practitioners who share a desire to improve communication within communities engaged in conservation activities. The goal is to foster continued dialogue through creation, evaluation and revision of case studies that illustrate lessons learned and best practices for fostering cross-cultural communication.

OBJECTIVES

1. Enhance awareness of the on-line resources available for self-study regarding the principles and practices of cross-cultural communication, in particular relevant case studies on communities and conservation.
2. Stimulate dialogue about the (a) concept of a cultural model of conservation, (b) distinct viewpoints of stakeholders in selected case studies, (c) "tool-kit" of options available for effective communication within conservation communities and (d) application to cases from personal experience.
3. Expand the portfolio of relevant case studies to include those of participants in the collaborative learning community served by this course.

ANALYTICAL CONTENT

PART 1. ENHANCE AWARENESS IN PREPARATION FOR WORKSHOP
(Distance education procedures)

Module 1 **Problem statement**; interfaces between cultural and biological diversity; cross-cultural communication; cultural models; stakeholder perspectives as cultural lenses; relevance to research ethics
Module 2 **Familiar lens(es)**; identifying the cultural lens(es) resulting from personal life-experience; factors influencing acceptance and rejection of new lenses
Module 3 **Unfamiliar lens(es);** identifying cultural boundaries; tacit understanding within a group with shared life experiences; listening for gaps in communication between groups; cognitive filters; ethical responsibilities
Module 4 **Select case studies** to stimulate dialogue at the workshop; relevant conservation challenges; grounding in bio-cultural georegions; expand understanding of unfamiliar lenses; ethical dimensions

PART 2. STIMULATE DIALOGUE DURING WORKSHOP
(2-day weekend, date and location to be arranged)

Module 5 **Cultural Models Approach**; presentation; small group discussion activity related to selected case study
Module 6 **Stakeholders and Tools** (same process as above)
Module 7 **Collaborative Learning** (same process as above)
Module 8 **Application to Cases from Personal Experience** (same process as above)

PART 3. EXPAND PORTFOLIO OF CASE STUDIES: WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP
(Distance education procedures)

Module 9 **Prepare** to write up a case study: frame the problem, community and stakeholder perspectives; identify relevant readings
Module 10 **Draft** a 2-page case study relevant to personal experience; list resources for further reading
Module 11 **Review** a draft case study; comment on how well the conservation problem is framed, the community identified with multiple stakeholder perspectives; suggest revisions that could strengthen the presentation of the case study
Module 12 **Finalize** a case study to be added to the portfolio for the learning community; revise your draft based on peer review; submit it for publication on the website

EVALUATION SYSTEM

Pass: Successfully complete 8 of 12 modules

Fail: Complete fewer than 8 of the modules

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BIBLIOGRAPHY- READING LIST (Pick three)

1. Smith, R. J., D. Verissimo, N. Leader-Williams, R. M. Cowling, and A. T. Knight. 2009. Let the locals lead. *Nature* **462**:280-281.
2. Weeks, P. and J. M. Packard. 2009. Feral hogs: invasive species or nature's bounty?. *Hum. Organ.* 68: 280-292.
3. Bizerril, M.X.A., C. Cruz Soares, and J.P. Santos. 2011. Linking community communication to conservation of the maned wolf in central Brazil. *Envir. Educ. Res.17: 815-829.*
4. Turner, A. 2012.Men pair up to try saving endangered Houston Toad. Beaumont Enterprise. Friday, April 13, 2012
5. Reyes-Garcia, V. et al. 2013. Community-based conservation as an alternative paradigm. *Conserv. Biol*.. 27: 856-865 DOI: 10.1111/cobi.12056
6. Paolisso, M. 2002. Blue crabs and controversy on the Chesapeake Bay: A cultural model for understanding watermen's reasoning about blue crab management. *Hum. Organ.* 61:226-239.

INSTRUCTOR	Dr. Jane M. Packard, j-packard@tamu.edu, 979-845-1465 http://people.tamu.edu/~j-packard/
COURSE MATERIALS	http://people.tamu.edu/~j-packard/courses/wfsc681/wfsc681home.html
ELEARNING TOOLS	http://ecampus.tamu.edu
RESOURCE LINKS	http://biodiversity.tamu.edu http://library.tamu.edu => course reserves => WFSC-681 http://library.tamu.edu => databases => ISI Web of Science http://software.tamu.edu => EndNote