Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

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**Program Information**

This is a three-credit graduate level course and is one of three elective courses (students must complete two of three elective courses) in the online graduate certificate program Sustainable Environmental Planning and Management.

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**Course and Instructor Information**

**Course Title:** Decision Methods in Natural Resources (NRE 5205)  
**Credits:** 3  
**Format:** Online  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Professor:** Chadwick Rittenhouse

**Email:** chadwick.rittenhouse@uconn.edu  
After the first day of classes, students registered in the course should send emails to the instructor via their official UConn email.  
**Telephone:** +1/860 486 0335  
**Office Hours/Availability:** Unless otherwise noted, I will check into the course at least five days a week to monitor discussions and respond to emails. If I expect to be away due to illness, travel or family obligations, I will make every attempt to notify you in advance. I commit to reading every discussion post throughout the class but please understand that I cannot respond to every one.

In addition to daily monitoring of discussions and emails, I will maintain online office hours for one hour per week. Date and time of office hours are flexible – please email me in advance to set an appointment.

**Permission Requests:** A permission number is required to enroll in this course. Contact the course instructor by email (chadwick.rittenhouse@uconn.edu) to request permission. Include your Peoplesoft ID number and reason for taking the course.

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**Course Materials**

**Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.**

Texts are available through a local or online bookstore of your choice. The UConn Bookstore carries the required text(s), which can be shipped (fees apply).

**Required Materials:**


**Optional Materials:**

Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through either an Internet link or Library Resources.
Course Description

Course Description from Course Catalog.

Aspects and methods of decision making for individuals, organizations, and institutions, including structured decision making, adaptive resource management, and organizational learning; concepts and techniques for managing risk and uncertainty, model-based and experience-based approaches to link alternative actions and consequences, tradeoff and optimization approaches, and monitoring and evaluation of resulting outcomes.

Additional faculty description.

This course presents aspects of decision making for individuals, organizations, and institutions. The first component explores frameworks for decision making, including structured decision making, adaptive resource management, and organizational learning. The second component addresses tools and techniques for managing risk and uncertainty, including model-based and experience-based approaches to link alternative actions and consequences, tradeoffs and optimizations approaches, and monitoring and evaluating outcomes. This course introduces some of the central topics in decision making theory, research, and practice and provides the basis for understanding decision processes in natural resource management.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the essential components of decision processes,
2. Apply theories, tools, and techniques of decision methods in natural resource issues,
3. Exhibit the ability to reframe decision processes from multiple perspectives,
4. Analyze and evaluate a decision made by individuals, groups, or organizations in a natural resources context
5. Operate effectively in individual and team-based settings.

Course Outline (and Calendar if Applicable)

Week 1: Introduction to Structured Decisions
Week 2: Foundations of Structured Decision Making
Week 3: Decision Sketching
Week 4: Understanding Objectives
Week 5: Identifying Performance Measures
Week 6: Incorporating Uncertainty
Week 7: Creating Alternatives
Week 8: Mid-Term Exam
Week 9: Spring Break – No Class
Week 10: Characterizing Consequences
Week 11: Making Trade-offs
Week 12: Learning
Week 13: Implementation
Week 14: Decision Methods for Individuals
Week 15: Decision Methods for Organizations
Week 16: Final Exam

Course Requirements and Grading

Summary of Course Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Activities</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts &amp; Responses</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Weekly Activities

Weekly Activities (45% of total grade). Each of the learning modules contains a learning activity (or activities) where you will be asked to apply your knowledge related to the topic covered. These activities are varied in format and may include research assignments, written response to questions, lab reports, etc. A significant portion of your grade is based on the quality and thoroughness of your required weekly activity reports. Your responses to specified questions, at the conclusion of each module, are meant to provide evidence that you understand key concepts from the readings. Much of your learning in the course will come from your reading, discussion postings and responses to the postings of other students. Within the course, each activity explains your expected role and outlines the grading criteria. The deadline for completing each activity is listed in HuskyCT’s Course Schedule. Late activities will be graded in accordance with the Late Policy.

### Discussion Posts & Responses

Discussion Posts & Responses (15% of total grade). These are weekly online discussions, where you post your response to discussion questions, read and post at least one substantive response to other student postings. Reflective responses are due by the dates listed HuskyCT’s Course Schedule. Substantive responses are due within 2 days of the reflective posting due date. Late discussion posts will be graded in accordance with the Late Policy.

### Mid-term Exam

Mid-term Exam (20% of total grade). There will be one mid-term exam in Week 8 of the course. The format of the exam will be based on short answer questions meant to punctuate and evaluate understanding of key concepts and theories addressed to that point in the semester. You will be graded on your critical thinking, ability to provide thorough yet concise responses, and writing quality.

### Final Exam

Final Exam (20% of total grade). There will be one comprehensive final exam at the end of the course. The format of the exam will be short essay questions meant to punctuate and evaluate understanding of key concepts and theories addressed during the semester. You will be graded on your critical thinking, ability to provide thorough yet concise responses, and writing quality.

### Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-96</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
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<td>GPA</td>
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<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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**Due Dates and Late Policy**

All course due dates are identified in the Course Schedule in HuskyCT. Deadlines are based on U.S. Eastern Standard Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.

Late weekly activities and discussion posts will be penalized 1 letter grade (10% of the activity's total points) for each day late.

**Feedback and Grades**

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades in a timely manner. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

**Religious Holidays and Extracurricular Activities**

I will make reasonable accommodations in response to student requests to complete work missed by absence resulting from observation of religious holidays. Students anticipating such a conflict must inform the instructor in writing within the first three weeks of the semester, and prior to the anticipated absence, and must take the initiative to work out with the instructor a schedule for making up missed work.

Students may request to complete work missed by absence resulting from extra-curricular/co-curricular activities performed in the interest of the university and/or those that support the scholarly development of the student. Examples include participation in scholarly presentations, performing arts, and intercollegiate sports, when the participation is at the request of, or coordinated by, a University official. Students involved in such activities need to inform their instructor in writing prior to the anticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion.

**Student Responsibilities and Resources**

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important standards, policies and resources, which include:

- The Student Code
  - Academic Integrity
  - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

**Students with Disabilities**

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from Blackboard's website)
Software Requirements

The technical requirements for this course include:

- Word processing software
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Reliable internet access

Help

Technical and Academic Help provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, HuskyCT. If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the Help Center. You also have 24x7 Course Support including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the Computer Technology Competencies page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.