

Your State Parks in the Classroom
Longwood University

Professional Studies *Non-Credit* Class

Instructor:

Dr. Julie Mersiowsky
Longwood University

Contact information:
E-mail: mersiowskyjc@longwood.edu
Phone (cell): 434-414-6082

Office Hours
By Appt.

Class Description:

Learners will visit a state park of their choice and explore the significance and history of the area. The learner will research when and why the park was added into the State Park System. The learner will also learn about the wildlife and plant life, through their exploration, and why the state park they selected is important to the conservation of natural resources and integrate this newfound knowledge into their classroom through the development of an integrated unit plan. You will have the option of visiting a state park local to Longwood's Farmville Campus with the instructor on a chosen date.

This is a non-credit bearing class and will not be reflected on a Longwood transcript. We recommend that it is equivalent in content and scope to a one credit graduate class or 30 recertification points. Upon successful completion, you will receive separate written documentation of this.

Class Overview:

This class is designed to be self-paced and does not require participants complete the work at the same time or participate in activities or discussions at the same time. However, reviewing what your fellow participants post and initiating discussions with them will greatly enhance your learning and overall experience.

Text:

No textbook is required for this class. Readings will be posted online within the Canvas shell. Students are encouraged to spend book funds on copies of books and resources for their classroom instruction.

Goals & Objectives:

Upon completion of this course the learner will be able to:

- Upon completion of this course, the student will have demonstrated knowledge of the state park of their choice through either a historical essay or lesson plan, and a photographic essay.
- Explain when and how a chosen state park was added into the State Park System.
- Explain the importance and role of the chosen state park in the state park system and locality.

- Identify the wildlife and plant life local to the chosen state park.
- Explain the importance of the chosen state park to the conservation of natural resources.
- Participate in course activities from the perspective of a student to better understand and apply those activities to your own lessons
- Integrate knowledge learned into a unit plan integrating at least 2 subject areas, at least 3 levels of Bloom’s taxonomy, and a variety of activity types.

SCHEDULE		
Dates	Topics	Assignments
Module 1 Week 1	The Virginia State Park System & their resources Bloom’s Taxonomy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & activities • Introduction Discussion Board – original post due by Friday at midnight, reply to others due by Monday at midnight • Identify your park – post in Discussion Board • Research your park
Module 2 Week 2	Conservation vs. Tourism What makes a good resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to a local park • Readings & activities • Post your favorite photo to the Discussion Board – original post due by Friday at midnight, reply to others due by Monday at midnight • Submit first 3 slides of your Resource Set
Module 3 Week 3	Community Involvement Field Trips & Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & activities • Work on Unit Plan Sketch or Historical Essay • Work on Resource Set • Photo Essay Due
Module 4 Week 4	Compare & Contrast Parks within the system Putting it all together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & activities • Compare/contrast parks • Unit Plan Sketch OR Historical Essay Due • Resource Set due

Class Assignments: Detailed instructions are provided for all assignments within the online class modules located in Canvas. These are general descriptions of the expectations. A full rubric is supplied within each of the assignments on Canvas.

Participate in/Complete Class Activities:

Each module will have at least one activity that you will be asked to complete, post your results, and reflect upon.

- Complete all readings and viewings.
- Introduce yourself through the discussion board.
- Visit a state park of your choice.
- Photograph several important features of your chosen park and post your favorite photo.
- Learn the history of your chosen park.
- Compare/contrast your chosen park to that of your classmates.

Resource Set:

Student will select a concept related to their chosen state park and create an annotated presentation of at least 10 different resources (videos, children’s books, trade books, audio recordings, etc.). The resources will support that concept at your chosen grade level or range of grade levels. The set should include the title, author, concept, and 2-3 sentences explaining why the resource was selected and/or how you plan to use it in your instruction. Detailed instructions can be found in Canvas.

Lesson Sketch or Historical Essay:

Students will create EITHER a unit lesson sketch (outline) or an Historical Essay relating to their chosen state park. The unit sketch should:

- Include at least 5 days of lessons covering multiple subject areas
- Include related standards (SOL)
- Include at least 3 levels of Bloom’s taxonomy
- Include a variety of activity types.

If selecting to complete an Historical Essay, it should:

- Be 3 to 5 pages in length, exclusive of any images included
- Describe how the state park came to be established
- Detail the park’s its historical significance to the area, state, and/or country
- Discuss conservation efforts

Photo Essay:

Students will create a photo essay should contain at least 15 photographs taken within the chosen state park and include descriptions of the photos. The photo essay can be created through any software you are familiar with such as PowerPoint, Sway, Prezi, StoryTeller, or even as a Word document. You are welcome to use whatever you are comfortable in using.

Optional Activity:

The instructor will host a visit to a state park in VA, that is optional, but a fun way to meet one another and to explore that state park. Additional activities will be provided outside of the course for that field trip. This optional field trip will take place during the course, and is intended to support and enhance your course experience. Email notification will come to you with details once the course is underway. It is understood that we live all across the state so can’t necessarily all get together therefore it is a truly optional activity.

Class Grading:

Participation in /completion of Class Activities	50 points
Resource Set Presentation	50 points
Photo Essay	50 points
Lesson Sketch or Historical Essay	100 points
<hr/>	
Total Points Possible	250 points

Grading Scale

Non-credit classes are Pass/Fail. If you earn 85% or 212.5 points, you receive a grade of Pass for the class.

CLASS POLICIES

Student Responsibility:

It is your responsibility to inform yourself of, and to observe, all regulations and procedures required by the university. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of the regulation or assert that they were not informed of the regulation by an advisor or other authority.

Communication Policy:

The instructor will respond to student messages within 24-48 hours, generally through email. For all assignments, feedback will be delivered within one week of the due date.

Professor Contact: It is easiest to contact your professor through her cell phone – 434-414-6082. Texting is acceptable, be sure to identify yourself the first time you text. Office hours are flexible. Appointments can be made for in person and telephone meetings as needed.

Attendance & Participation Policy:

Attendance for online courses is determined by how many times and for how long you access the Canvas course (this information is available for each student to the instructor), your participation in the assignments, and your timeliness in submitting requested work or response. Online courses can get away from you if not carefully scheduled. Take the time to review your online commitments, schedule regular and consistent time to be online, and stick to the schedule. You are expected to participate in all Canvas activities. Failure to participate in Canvas activities may impair academic performance and result in a lower grade. You must assume full responsibility for your online presence.

Technical Assistance:

Please contact your instructor directly for assistance with Canvas.

Netiquette: In a fully online course, students will interact with the professor and other students in various online forums. The professor expects that students will engage in online discussions, emails, and other forms of communication in a professional manner. It is important to treat all of these online interactions as if they are occurring within a classroom setting. Students should carefully edit their written responses and ensure that Standard English is used in all posts and discussions.

Technology Skill Requirements: Students will need basic technology skills to engage fully in this online course. Students should refer to Longwood University's *Technical Skills and Requirements* webpage to ensure that you are prepared to take this course in a virtual environment. This can be found at the following link: <http://www.longwood.edu/online/28310.htm>

Class Evaluation:

At the conclusion of the course, each student will have the opportunity to evaluate the class and instructor through Canvas. Your feedback is important to us. Please take the time to complete the online evaluation.