ESM 270P: Conservation Planning Practicum  
Course Syllabus, Fall 2020

Professor: Ashley Larsen (Larsen@bren.ucsb.edu)  
Office hours: Monday, Weds 9:15-10:00 (and by appointment).

Teaching Assistant: Brian Lee (brianlee52@bren.ucsb.edu)  
Office hours: TBD (and by appointment).

Class: **Monday, Wednesday 8:00-9:15 (Zoom, Remote Desktop)**

The objectives of this course are for you to:
1. Gain practical experience developing a conservation plan
2. Gain experience troubleshooting technical challenges associated with imperfect data
3. Gain experience communicating technical material to broad audience using diverse approaches

**Course Structure:** This course is designed for hands-on experience. Most classes will be working labs. Students will be in pre-assigned breakout groups on Zoom and working on the course project as the TA and instructor move between groups. The goal of this course is to give you time to use what you learned in 270 and extend your practical knowledge of conservation planning. You are expected to be creative, motivated and problem solve. Some days will go smoothly, other days you will spend class troubleshooting an error or dealing with technological difficulties. Use your theoretical and practical knowledge from previous coursework, consult google, stackexchange and the academic literature when necessary, and be as thorough as possible. We are here to help you think about your project and how to overcome the roadblocks you will inevitably hit. You will be in the driver’s seat the entire time. Consider this course a dry run on developing a conservation plan.

**Lectures:** Lectures will be rare and short. Feel free to let Ashley or Brian know if you want supplementary readings on a general topic. Lectures will be live, though we may revisit this if class time is feeling short.

**Lab:** This is a lab course. You are strongly encouraged to use your GP project as the basis for your conservation plan. You can work individually or in groups of 2. If there are multiple people/teams from a single GP, you will need to coordinate so you do separate but complementary projects. Using your GP, you will hopefully be able to make substantial progress on your project or take it in a new direction that would otherwise be impossible.

**Grading (165 pts total):**

**Written assignments* (100 pts):**
- Updated conservation plan proposal: 10 pts
- Data description and meta-data: 10 pts
- Report outline + detailed methods: 10 pts
- Press release: 10 pts
- Peer evaluation of presentations & stakeholder comments: 10 pts
- Final report: 50 pts
Presentations (40 pts):
- Practice presentation: 10 pts
- Final class presentation: 30 pts

Participation** (25 pts)

*Assignments are due at 5pm on the day listed, unless otherwise noted. Late assignments will lose 1 point if it is not turned in by midnight on the day it is due and 1 additional point each day that it is late. We will make exceptions in rare and extenuating circumstances, but will do our utmost to be fair to the entire class.

**Attendance is necessary, but not sufficient to obtain participation points. Attendance includes being on time and staying the entire period. Participation points are for being engaged, self-motivated, and participating in the class Slack. The instructor and TA will be jumping between groups on Zoom helping you troubleshoot barriers. There are two of us and class is short so we expect that you’ve tried to sniff out a solution on the web before asking us. Participation will be used to adjust final grades up or down.

Please email the instructor prior to class (Larsen@bren.ucsb.edu) to request an excused absence in the case of illness or family emergency. In the case of a unique career opportunity (e.g. interview, etc), please email the instructor as early as possible in the quarter to arrange make-up work.

Note 1: For projects with two people, please keep in mind that we expect both individuals to participate fully in the analysis and we expect the analysis, in particular, to be more thorough and extensive than for individual projects. For example, where an individual project might end at designing a reserve network, a team project might then project how effective the network would be under a climate change scenario. Or where an individual project may make more assumptions and back of the envelope calculations, a team would sleuth out the parameters in the scientific literature. Examples of A-level individual and team projects are on gauchospace. Please come talk to us if you have questions.

Note 2: Students are expected to conduct themselves with exceptional academic integrity. There is nothing more important to me, as an instructor, than academic integrity. We expect you to be honest with us and each other, describe your methods and results with accuracy, and document all of your literature sources. Academic integrity is a baseline requirement to succeed in 270p.

Note 3: Assignments are back-loaded to the end of the quarter. Please plan ahead!

** Week 1 **
MO, Oct 5: Class overview, summer recap, overview of the conservation planning process.

WE, Oct 7: CP tools recap & project discussion.
**Discussion:** please be ready to give a very brief pitch (5min) of your proposed project, focusing on any updates since spring—the focal topic, the data you have in-hand already and what you plan to get. If there are others in your GP in class, prep this discussion together.

**Suggested reading:** Example conservation plans (gauchospace).

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**Week 2**

MO, Oct 12: Data management lecture & discussion; Working lab

*Assignment 1:* Updated conservation plan proposal; data management in place Monday @ 5pm

WE, Oct 14: Working lab

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**Week 3**

MO, Oct 19: Working lab

WE, Oct 21: Working lab

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**Week 4**

MO, Oct 26: What makes a compelling and useful report (mini-lecture), working lab

*Assignment 2:* Data description + metadata Mon @ 5pm

WE, Oct 28: working lab; [sign up for ‘mid-course progress check-in” time slot](#)

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**Week 5**

MO, Nov 2: mid-course check-in (focus on big picture, not technical stuff); working lab

WE, Nov 4: mid-course check-in; working lab

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**Week 6**

MO, Nov 9: working lab

WE, Nov 11: Veteran’s day

*Assignment 3:* Report outline + detailed methods FRIDAY 11/13 @ 5pm

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**Week 7**

MO, Nov 16: How to write a press release (lecture); working lab

WE, Nov 18: working lab

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**Week 8**

MO, Nov 23: What makes a good presentation (lecture); Working lab.

[Sign up for practice presentation slot on Monday (2 parallel zooms)](#)

*Assignment 4:* Press release Monday @ 5pm
WE, Nov 25: working lab (optional)

**Week 9**

MO, Nov 30: Practice presentations  
*Assignment 5:* Practice presentations

WE, Dec 2: Working lab  
*Assignment 6:* Written comments on two other presenters (provide peer feedback on presentation quality & comments/questions as a stakeholder).

**Week 10**

MO, Dec 7: working lab

WE, Dec 9: final presentations (*this class will extend into office hours, or a second class will need to be scheduled)*  
*Assignment 7:* Final presentations

**Due by 5pm Friday, Dec. 11th:** *Assignment 8: Final report*