Course description:
This course offers an interdisciplinary framework for understanding human interactions with wildlife. We begin with ‘puzzles from prehistory’: Were humans responsible for eliminating megafauna across the continents ~12,000 years ago? Was big game hunting foundational to human evolution? These puzzles have ecological significance as well as cultural import as metaphors for human-nature relations. We then turn to contemporary human-wildlife interactions, delving into the ecological and social conditions underlying patterns of coexistence and conflict. Conservationists have traditionally assigned mutually exclusive places to wildlife (wilderness) and humans (rural areas, cities). But the boundaries separating these places are permeable. Elephants leave African parks to forage in banana plantations. Coyotes dwell in Madison suburbs. We analyze the resulting people-wildlife conflicts and explore alternative strategies for conserving wildlife in human-dominated environments. You will learn key Geographic approaches to studying the human role in environmental change, particularly biogeography, political ecology and environmental perceptions. You will also learn basic methods for studying environmental attitudes. Class assignments will help you better understand the material and improve your professional writing and speaking skills.

Readings

Weekly readings are drawn from geography and allied disciplines, including conservation biology and environmental sociology. Readings are available on-line via Learn@UW. Everyone must read the ‘Required Readings’ (see below). Additional readings are offered in case you are particularly interested in a topic and/or want to earn extra credit on exams.

Grading:
Students will be graded based on a possible 250 point total for the semester:

Writing
The writing assignments are designed to help you synthesize course material and improve your professional skills.

- Position Paper (3-4 pp) on Hunting Wolves in Wisconsin 30 points
- Reflection paper (4 pages) on Living with Wildlife at Kibale National Park, Uganda 20 points
- Policy brief (4 pp) on human-wildlife conflict or invasive species 45 points

Tests
Format: Short answer questions plus 1 essay (30 pts each x 3) 90 points

TEST DATES: Feb 16, March 16, April 20.

Each week I will hand out essay exam questions related to the readings, lecture and discussion. During each exam, I will select one of the essay questions from the list for you to answer. Exams will also include ~5 short answer questions. There will also be an option to write 1-2 paragraphs on an extra credit question related to one of the ‘additional’ readings I select (up to 5 pts extra credit per exam, must be completed within same 75 min period).
Participation and discussion activities 65 points (total)

- Discussion essays 10 points (5 points each x 2)
  During the semester, you will write two 1-page (~300 word) essays on one of the required readings for the breakout discussions (see ‘Small group’ boxes in schedule below). Focus your essay on one reading and write no more than one essay per week. Do NOT write an essay for the week you are a discussion leader. These essays will be graded 0 (fail), 4 (pass) or 5 (high pass) points (see handout). You must upload your discussion essay to the Learn@UW course page by noon on the Monday prior to the breakout discussion session. No late essays will be accepted.

- Small group work for “Living with Elephants” exercise 10 points

- ‘Pop’ quizzes on readings (5 points each x 2) 10 points
  During the semester I will run 3 ‘pop’ quizzes in class (short answer, T/F, multiple choice). You will drop one of these from your score. No make-ups.

You will also be graded on how much you enrich the learning experience of your classmates:

- Attendance (you can’t enrich your classmates’ experience if you are not present…)
  two absences allowed w/o penalty 7 points

- Quality of participation in class discussions (Do you ask good questions? Draw effectively from readings? Engage in constructive debate?)
  8 points

- Serving as discussion leader (Did you read your classmates’ discussion essays? Prepare a study sheet on the readings for your group? Lead an interesting, productive discussion? Alert me to exam material that your peers found confusing?)
  10 points

- Oral presentation of analysis of Human-wildlife conflict case
  (5 pts group grade + 5 pts individual grade) 10 points

Extra Credit Option: Completing ebird project & entering data 10 points

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LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READINGS
Note: readings should be completed before the date listed.

UNIT I. Puzzles from prehistory & Lessons for contemporary conservation

Thur 1/19 Class overview & Intro to Pleistocene Megafauna Extinction Mystery.

Tue 1/24 Who or what killed the Pleistocene megafauna?
  Guest speaker: Yue Wang, Geography Dissertator. The mammoth mystery of St Paul island

Required readings:


Additional reading
Thur  1/26  SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION  Who or what killed the Pleistocene megafauna? (cont.)

Tues  1/31  Current trends in public participation in hunting in WI. Guest: Keith Warnke, DNR.

Required readings:


Thur  2/2  SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION  Public participation in hunting (cont) Guest: Pao Vue, Geography Dissertator

Tues  2/7  Man the Hunter. Did big game hunting make us human? Why don’t more women hunt?

Required readings:
Cartmill, M. 1993. Chapt 1, 2 and 12 A View to a Death in the Morning. Harvard Univ Press: Cambridge, MA.


No required reading.


Tues  2/14  Why were so few tropical animals domesticated? Did nature ‘deal a bad hand’ to people living in the tropics?

Required reading:

Thur  2/16  Test I. Format: Short answer and essay question.

No readings.

UNIT II. PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD WILDLIFE

Tues,  2/21  Introduction to Unit II and Wisconsin wolf hunt writing assignment

Required readings:

Heberlein, T. 2009. Navigating Environmental Attitudes: Chap 1. [Course textbook]

Thur  2/23  Wolf Recovery in Wisconsin. Guest: Randle Jurewicz, MSc, DNR Endangered Resources (Retired).

Required readings:

Required reading (2/23 cont):

Additional reading:

**Tue 2/28** What is an ‘attitude’? Why is it important? How do we measure attitudes?

**Required readings:**
Text: Heberlein’s “Navigating Environmental Attitudes”: Chap 2-4


**Additional reading:**

**Thur 3/2** SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION Is it possible to change people’s attitudes? Why are norms so important?

**Required reading:**
Text: Heberlein’s “Navigating Environmental Attitudes”: Chap 5.

**Tues 3/7** Measuring public attitudes toward wildlife in E. Africa.
First 20 minutes recap
11:25 – handout. show a video.
Give a mini overview.

Wolf hunt position paper due at start of class (hard copy)

**Thur 3/9** Introduction to Living with Elephants/WhatsApp & writing assignment.

Students should rewatch the video and pull it apart. LISA - Handout - COMPRESS WVO attitidues.

Small group exercise.
What do you want to ask - Talk to Richard. Send Richard a preview.

**Required reading:**


**Additional reading:**
[DAVID TUMMUSSIMWE – Tourism](#)

**Tues 3/14** 25 min. richard speaks with us online.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION Attitudes toward wildlife in E. Africa
Thurs 3/16 Test II

SPRING BREAK 3/18-3/26

Tues 3/28 Understanding the roots of Human-wildlife conflict. Introduction to Policy Brief assignment.

**Required reading:**

**DUE: Reflection paper on Living with Elephants due at start of class (hard copy).**

Thur 3/30 Watching wildlife. How documentaries both reflect and shape public attitudes toward wildlife.

**Required readings:**

**Additional reading:**

Tues 4/4 Animal rights activists & conservation biologists: an uneasy relationship. Guest: Dr. Patricia McConnell

**Required reading:**

Thur 4/6 NO CLASS

**Due by noon 4/6: Upload policy brief outline and 3 annotated references. (Not graded but 5 pts penalty if late)**

Tues 4/11 SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION “Cat wars” - Conservation Biologists vs Animal Welfare perspectives
Then short lecture: *Tracking wild animals. Are we helping or hurting?*

**Required readings:**

Humane Society “Finding Common Ground for Cats and Wildlife”
http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/cats/facts/cat_wildlife.html?credit=web_id212453451

**Additional reading:**

Thur 4/13 Attitudes toward introduced species.

**Required readings:**


Tues 4/18 Catch-up and Review.
Thur 4/20 Test III

Tues 4/25 Coaching on policy brief. Practice oral presentations in small groups. 

**DUE: 2-page Draft of policy brief upload by class time, no graphics necessary, just text**

Thur 4/27 Oral presentations of policy briefs.

Tues 5/2 Oral presentations of policy briefs.

Thur 5/4 Oral Presentations of policy briefs.

**Mon 5/8 5 pm DUE: Upload Final copy of policy brief**

NO FINAL EXAM.