

Professional Expectations for Students in the Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture Program

1. JUSTIFICATION:

Natural Resource Conservation and Management is a profession, and individuals training within this vocation are expected to conduct themselves as professionals, beginning with their education. Behaviors and habits developed now will carry over and affect your career progress. Natural Resources Conservation and Management is more than animals and plants; working with people is an important element of your successful career. You will interact with people from all walks of life, in all manner of ways. Respecting others, being aware of how your behavior affects them, and the impression you are conveying are crucial to your professional development and how society views your profession. Your demeanor and actions reflect on you and Mississippi State University, the College of Forest Resources, the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, our faculty, the student body, our Alumni, and our profession as a whole. Therefore, you should conduct yourself appropriately regarding conduct, appearance, and respect for others.

2. EXPECTATIONS:

The Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture has collectively agreed that the following expectations relative to behavior and habits apply in classes on campus, on buses and vans, and during indoor or outdoors laboratories, which include trips to private property, professional meetings and symposia, federal and state forests, refuges and monuments, field and industrial operations, and field sites:

Conduct

- a. ***Arrive to class on time.*** If you have a schedule that causes you to be late, notify the instructor as early as possible at the start of the semester.
- b. ***Be attentive, engaged, and responsive in the classroom.*** Devote your total attention to classroom activities such as lectures, discussions, and note taking. Participate in instructor/student dialog, while taking notes. Faculty also encourages student engagement in the form of questions and discussion. Refrain from non-class related topics or activities during class such as private conversations, passing notes, text messaging, reading non-class related materials (e.g., newspapers), studying for other courses, and wearing head garments (e.g., ball caps). If using a computer lab, you may not use the computer for any other purpose than what the instructor has directed (e.g., surfing the web, reviewing websites not relevant to material of lecture, checking personal email, etc.). No disruptive conversations (e.g., talking, laughing) or conduct will be allowed while the instructor is lecturing or during an exam period (Student Affairs OP 91.109: <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/PDF/91109.pdf>).
- c. ***Disable your cell phones*** and other electronic devices such as smartphones and PDAs (you may adjust your cell phones to vibrate mode to sense Maroon Alerts only). Notebook computers may be used for class-related work. Other uses will not be tolerated. If there is an imperative need to have a cell phone due to an impending personal emergency, inform the instructor prior to class. In general, there will be zero tolerance for the use of electronic devices unless otherwise permitted by the instructor.

- d. ***Tobacco products and alcoholic beverages*** may not be used in classes, within Thompson Hall, on buses and vans, and during indoor or outdoor laboratories, which includes trips to private property; professional meetings, workshops, field days, demonstrations, and symposia; federal and state forests, refuges and monuments; field industrial plants; and field sites.
- e. ***Do not leave the classroom*** during lecture, discussions, or when taking an exam unless it's an emergency. Go to the restroom before class. If you arrive to an exam after a fellow student has already completed their exam and left the classroom, you may not be permitted to take the exam. Students leaving the classroom during lecture, discussion, or when taking an exam may be readmitted only at the discretion of the instructor. In cases of unexpected, sudden, or extreme illness the student should seek medical attention, and not return to the classroom until they have met with the instructor before the next class period. Please consider the health of others if you think you have an infectious condition or consider not coming to class until you are well. Inform the instructor at the start of the semester or class if you have a medical condition that may require you to leave the classroom and sit near a doorway.
- f. ***No eating and drinking during class***. If you have a medical problem that requires food or drink, inform the instructor in writing from a reputable source.
- g. ***Stay awake during class***.

Appearance

- a. ***No hats or other head gear*** are to be worn in the classroom, or in any office or place of business you are invited to enter. Wearing hats or other head gear indoors is considered professionally inappropriate. If you have a medical condition or religious imperative that requires keeping your head covered, inform the instructor in writing during the first day of class.
- b. ***Dress in an appropriate fashion***. Clean, neat, and non-provocative clothes are recommended for the classroom and field. Remember your hardhat and other safety equipment in those field situations where such safety equipment is necessary.
- c. ***Clean the mud from your boots*** before entering the building after being in the field.
- d. ***Clothing with inappropriate logos or wording***--are discouraged. In addition, any attire that is offensive to any person or group in the classroom does not demonstrate good professional judgment.

Respect for Others

- a. ***Natural Resources Management and Conservation is a profession*** that requires working with people of all ages, races, cultures, backgrounds, education, and demeanors. Professional success depends on finding ways to work cooperatively with all people.
- b. ***Do not discriminate*** against, mock, or ridicule fellow classmates because of physical handicaps, accents, or gender, race, religion or cultural beliefs. People are different. Respect, enjoy, and learn from diversity.
- c. ***Be courteous, respectful, and professional*** to your fellow students and the instructor at all times.
- d. ***Do not disturb others during lectures***. Disruptive behavior is rude and disrespectful to your classmates and the instructor.

3. CONSEQUENCES:

Consequences for inappropriate behavior or appearance may vary depending on the nature of the incident. Failure to adhere to any of the above items may result in the student being dismissed from class by the professor, instructor, or teaching assistant as allowed under Student Affairs OP 91.109. Readmission to the class will be contingent on the outcome of a meeting with the professor or instructor in charge of the course. The meeting will take place within two days of the infraction. Other consequences may include a loss of points for an assignment or a course grade reduction, as specified in the course syllabus.

Consequences may be life long including the distrust and disrespect of your peers and indifferent recommendations from faculty. Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture are small professions and reputation matters!

Please see: http://www.msstate.edu/web/student_policies.html for additional guidance on appropriate student conduct.

Adapted from Department of Forestry, MSU, used with permission of Dr. Stephen C. Grado.

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