

RLEM 481 – Seminar

Spring 2006

TOPIC: Current Issues in Range Management: Past, Present, & Future**WHERE: Room: 317 ANIN****WHEN: Monday: 8:00-8:50 AM****OFFICE: 206 ANIN****PHONE: 979-845-5575****E-mail: m-kothmann@tamu.edu****INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to RLEM 481 Seminar. I am excited about working with you this semester. I am available to visit with you whenever I am in my office if you want to drop in. To schedule an appointment with me, you may call or email me. Our class will explore and discuss a variety of important current issues affecting natural resources. RLEM faculty will join us as expert guests to join you in dialogue on these issues. The primary focus on this course is to help you develop professional communication skills (emphasis on writing) and attitudes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Enhance your communication skills through reading, writing, dialogue, public speaking, and listening.
- Develop and stimulate original and critical thinking.
- Gain a broad understanding of important current issues that impact rangelands and their management.
- Develop professional attitudes and behaviors.
- Experience professional dialogue with faculty.
- Stimulate you to think about your future role in professions related to natural resources.
- Introduce you to job search possibilities.

THINGS YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO DO

- Be present, on time, and properly prepared for each class meeting.
- Read the instructions for speakers and moderators described in separate attachments.
- Prepare your resume and a cover letter to apply for a specific job of your choosing.
- Read the assigned papers, give the subject critical thought prior to class
- Write an abstract for each topic using the classnotes as the primary source of information.
- Participate in class discussions each week.
- Research, develop and present a 10-minute Power Point presentation on an issue.
- Learn the duties of a moderator and serve as moderator for one class.

GRADES

50% Abstracts (See course policy for late work)

20% Classroom presentation (Evaluated on content & style, quality of visuals and presentation skills)

10% Moderator (Evaluation based on written notes and classroom execution)

10% Participation in class discussions (includes class attendance)

10% Resume, cover letter & interview with Dr. K

TEXTBOOK

Classnotes (Available at Copy Corner on Texas Ave.)

ABSTRACTS

You will write 10 abstracts. You will not be required to write an abstract for the class periods when you are the speaker or moderator.

Style and Form: Please use double spacing. The abstract should have a title, body (at least 300-400 words), and literature cited. (10 points)

Question: At the end of each abstract you should have one relevant, probing question that you would like to ask the faculty guest expert. (10 points)

Content: The abstract is to be a **synthesis** of the several articles that are in the class notes. **Do not copy material from the papers; write it in your own words.** Present the big picture and critical issues, blending the information from the various papers. Abstracts will be evaluated on the completeness of coverage of all the assigned readings. Write in technical style, not casual. Use (**Author date**) citations in the text to give credit for the sources of the information you use in your abstract. Include a list of Literature Cited at the end of the abstract. The Literature Cited is in addition to the 3-400 words for the body of the abstract. (50 points)

Grammar: Sentence organization, writing style, clarity, and conciseness will be marked. Abstracts that receive a grade of C or less must be rewritten and resubmitted within one week to receive credit. Final abstract grade will be based on the quality of the revised paper. (30 points)

Late Policy: Abstracts are to be submitted during the class period they are assigned. **Late papers will be accepted for one week only and with a penalty of 10 points.** Students with a University excused absence may submit the abstract within one week of when the student returns to class with no penalty. **Students with an un-excused absence will receive a grade of zero for the abstract and class participation that day.**

RESUME AND COVER LETTER

Select a position announcement that interests you. Prepare your resume and a cover letter as an application for that position. Refer to the instructional materials in your classnotes on how to write the cover letter and the resume. You will submit these on the date due in the course schedule. I will mark them and return them to you. You will then be responsible for revising them and bringing the original copy and the revised copy with you to a 20 minute interview with me. **You will receive your grade for this assignment when you complete the interview and submit the revised documents.**

PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DIALOGUE

Each class member is expected to contribute to the dialogue/discussion. You may participate by:

1. Asking a question,
2. Responding to a question asked by the moderator, faculty guest, or other class member,
3. Making a comment or observation.

It is important that you read the assigned papers as background information on the issue/topic prior to the seminar session. The abstract you prepare is to synthesize the main points from the readings and is not the place for you to present your personal opinions. The class discussion will provide you an opportunity to present your views and opinions on the topic for the week. **Your opinions and concerns are important and you are encouraged to share them with the group.** Our goal is not to “argue” or to try to reach consensus of opinions on the issue, but to share in dialogue with each person contributing. You are encouraged to listen carefully to what others have to say.

Be considerate of other class members at all times. Do not interrupt. There should be only one person speaking. **Wait to be recognized by the moderator before speaking. The moderator is responsible for controlling and directing the dialogue.** Do not start “side conversations” with another class member during the class. **All contributions should be addressed to the whole class.**

Each student should try to make at least one contribution to the dialogue each week. For some of you this will be difficult as your natural inclination is to listen, not to speak. For others, you will need to restrain your desire to speak frequently. Some topics will be of greater interest to you than others, but your contribution is expected on a regular basis. Your participation will be monitored during each seminar and your grade for class participation will be based on the contributions you make.

DUTIES OF MODERATOR

As moderator, you will need to read all of the papers for the topic and prepare moderator’s notes. **You will submit your moderator’s notes instead of an abstract.** You will receive a grade on your notes instead of an abstract for the class when you are moderator. These notes should contain:

- 1) Introductions for faculty guest and speaker,**
- 2) Opening comments to introduce the topic,**
- 3) Questions and discussion starters to guide the dialogue,**
- 4) Closing comments that summarize the topic and dialogue.**

The “evaluation for moderators” will be used to determine your grade as **Moderator**. In cases where there are two moderators assigned, duties will be split with each moderator taking specific responsibilities from the list of items. This should be discussed and agreed to prior to the class and noted on the moderator’s notes. Each moderator should have a complete set of moderator’s notes.

Duties of the moderator during the class period are outlined below.

1. Check with the speakers and see what kind of media they will use for their PP.
2. Arrive at least 10 minutes before time for class to start and prepare the room.
3. Take charge of the meeting and open with appropriate comments to introduce the topic.
4. Introduce faculty guest(s) present for the class.
5. Introduce the speaker(s).
 - The moderator should have a signal to warn the speaker when they have been speaking for 10 minutes.
 - At the 11 minutes, the moderator should rise and stand on the side of the room.
 - If the presentation exceeds 12 minutes, the moderator must stop the speaker and move to the discussion.
6. After the speaker completes the presentation, the moderator takes charge of the discussion.
7. Make brief comments to transition from the presentation to the discussion.
8. Address a question to the faculty person.
9. The moderator is responsible for providing everyone an opportunity to participate in the discussion. This may require active intervention on the part of the moderator. This may be done by saying something like, "Let’s see what comment (name of student) has on this point."
10. The moderator is responsible for preventing individuals (faculty or students) from monopolizing the time during the discussion.
11. Two minutes before the end of the class period, the moderator should:
 - close the dialogue,
 - make appropriate concluding remarks,
 - thank the speaker(s) and thank the faculty guest(s) for participating, and
 - return control of the class to Dr. Kothmann for any class announcements.

Moderator Evaluation

- _____ Set up the room and equipment
- _____ Moderator takes charge during the entire class period.
- _____ Introduce faculty guest(s) present for the class.
- _____ Introduce the speaker(s).
- _____ Warn the speaker when they reach 10 minutes in the presentation.
- _____ If the presentation reaches 12 minutes, stop the speaker and move to the discussion.
- _____ Open the dialogue with appropriate comments to introduce the topic.
- _____ Address a question to the faculty person and allow them to make the first comments.
- _____ Provide all persons an opportunity to participate in the discussion. This may require active intervention on the part of the moderator. You may do this by saying something like, "Let's see what comment (name of student) has on this point."
- _____ Prevents individuals, faculty or students, from monopolizing the time during the discussion
- _____ Two minutes before the end of the class period (8:48), the moderator should close the dialogue and summarize the discussion that has taken place.
- _____ Moderator thanks the speaker(s) and thanks the faculty guest(s) for participating.
- _____ Returns control of the class to the instructor for any class announcements.
- _____ Submit Moderator's notes
- _____ Returns room to original configuration

Comments:

Name _____

Grade _____

CRITIQUE OF PRESENTATIONS

Points

CONTENT (1/3)

1. Was the introduction relevant and descriptive? (25 pts)
(The introduction is very important. Spend time to make it good!) _____
2. Were the issues clearly defined and are different sides presented? (25 pts)
(Present all sides of the issue. Make a balanced presentation.) _____
3. Was the presentation organized and presented in a logical manner? (25 pts)
(Cover all of the points found in the readings.) _____
4. Was the summary/conclusion logically and clearly presented? (25 pts)
(Restate the major points. Make sure that you clearly state the conclusions. Have a slide(s).) _____

Total for Content (100 pts) [_____]

VISUAL AIDS (1/3)

1. Readable (25 pts)
(Font size, style and color; background clarity) _____
2. Well composed (25 pts)
(Use key words; limit number of points and amount of text per slide.) _____
3. Relevant (25 pts)
(Slides should relate to the points made in the presentation. Have a slide for each major point.) _____
4. Visual impact (25 pts) _____

Total for Visual Aids (100 pts) [_____]

PRESENTATION SKILLS (1/3)

1. Audience Command (20 pts)
(Does the speaker stimulate interest and hold the attention of the audience?) _____
2. Voice/Articulation (20 pts)
(Volume, pace, variety, clarity) _____
3. Eye Contact (20 pts)
(Look at audience, minimize reading) _____
4. Confidence/Enthusiasm (20 pts)
(Body language, energy level) _____
5. Timing (8-10 min. length) Start _____ End _____ Min _____ (20 pts)
(Points will be deducted if the presentation is too short or too long.) _____

Total for Presentation Skills (100 pts) [_____]

Grade on Presentation [_____]

Name: _____