

PROFESSIONAL TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT

PLSC 4800

SPRING 2008

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COURSE OBJECTIVE: Investigate the management and other unique aspects of intensively used turf area.

EVALUATION: Students will be evaluated based on points received on case study write-ups, article summaries, exams, and a research project.

This is not a typical lecture course. Instead, instruction and learning will be centered around readings and case studies. As a result, this class will **require** a significant amount of outside reading on various turfgrass topics.

Activity	Date	Point Value
Midterm Exam (take home)	Assigned 2/27/2008	100
Final Exam (take home)	Assigned 4/23/2008	150
Case Study Reports*	various	400
Project/report	4/23/2008	150
Total		800

* This is yet to be determined so points are subject to change

WRITING

This course involves several graded reports and/or presentations. As is expected in the professional world, all writings must be written well with good grammar, spelling, and structure. One or two small errors will be overlooked, but consistent writing errors will significantly affect the grade of an assignment.

GRADING: Grading will be done on a “modified curve” however percentages will not be higher than below:

<i>A</i>	<i>92-100%</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>70-77%</i>
<i>B+</i>	<i>88-91%</i>	<i>D+</i>	<i>65-69%</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>82-87%</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>60-64%</i>
<i>C+</i>	<i>78-81%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>0-59%</i>

Exams will be comprehensive. Assignments submitted late will have up to 10% of the possible points deducted for each university calendar day it is late.

Students with disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act states: “Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program.” In coordination with the Disability Resource Center, reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified students with disabilities. Please meet with the instructor during the first week of class to make arrangements. Accommodations and alternative format print materials (large print, diskette or Braille) are available through the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.usu.edu/drc/>), located in the basement of the University Inn, phone number 435-797-2444.

The Honor Pledge:

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.

To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged used of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined by the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as any "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." If you feel you are a victim of sexual harassment, you may talk to or file a complaint with the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office located in Old Main, Room 161, or call the AA/EEO Office at 797-1266.

Resources

Course materials on-line: www.hort.usu.edu

Fundamentals of Turfgrass Management by Nick Christians. This is the book used in PLSC 3800.

USGA Green Section Record: http://www.usga.org/turf/green_section_record/green_section_record.html

Turfgrass Information Center: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/tic/starserv/foundstu.html> [For this link you will need to be on the USU campus or refer to http://library.usu.edu/elecres/off_campus.php for off-campus access.]

Google or Google Scholar: <http://www.google.com/> or <http://scholar.google.com/schhp?hl=en&tab=ws>
It's amazing how much material can be found simply by using this search engine. However, be wary of unreliable or biased sources. All information obtained from sources, both print and electronic should be properly cited.

TENTATIVE CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

We will not be holding class every week scheduled. Additional dates where class is not held will be announced in the coming weeks. Methods to discuss class information outside of the classroom are currently being developed.

WEEK:	TITLE/SUBJECT
Jan. 9 th	Class organization; Soils issues; Blackfoot Falls Flooded Fields case study [E-mail draft of BFFF case report 1/16]
Jan. 23 rd	No class this week Modified root zones; Southern Dutchess Country Club case study Soil salinity; Carbon County softball field case study [Final draft of BFFF case report 1/25]
Feb. 6 th	Water quality; Utah County golf course salinity case study and others Fertilizers / Organics; Seattle Lawn Program, Experimental procedures [Carbon County field case due 2/8]
Feb. 20 th	Wetting agents; Plant Growth Regulators Midterm [Due 3/7/2008] Project outline due [Salinity and Organics case studies due 2/22]
Mar. 5 th	Species, cultivar choice; Bentgrasses, <i>Poa annua</i> , and their management Organic matter management [Midterm due 3/7/2008]
Mar. 26 th	Native grasses as turfgrasses; I-15 case study [Bentgrass-Poa case study due 3/28]
Apr. 4 th	People issues; Sunset View Golf Course case study; Business issues [I-15 case report due 4/6]
Apr. 23 rd	Poster presentations; Take-home final will be assigned

Case Report Format

Case Title: _____ Student Name: _____

Note: This format example is only one page, but most reports will require significantly more writing than one page.

Situation

(In this space, briefly outline of the case.)

Analysis

(In this space, provide an interpretation of the case. For example, if the case deals with a drainage problem, explain the problem more fully from your understanding of relevant soil physical and hydrologic principals. Your objective is to assist the reader in developing a richer understanding of the case than what can be obtained directly from the case description. Please carefully cite the sources of information used.)

Issues

(In this space, identify the core issues emerging from your analysis of the case. This should be composed of one or several general statements that capture the basic problem that must be addressed by the decision maker to improve the situation.)

Strategies

(In this space, provide generally stated courses of action for addressing the issues articulated earlier.)

Action Plan

(In this space, provide a plan for dealing with the above strategies. It should contain operations needed, time frames for the completion of specific tasks, and other details necessary for full implementation of the plan.)

Class Project Description

PLSC 4800: Professional Turfgrass Management

Spring 2008

We cannot adequately cover all topics of maintaining highly used turfgrass areas in a one semester, two credit course. In addition there are likely topics that may be very important to your particular situation or professional goals, but will not be discussed at length in this course. The unmet needs or goals are the purpose of the research project for this class. It is also to give you, the student, some practice in researching a topic and communicating those findings.

Assignment: (Please choose either type of project)

1. Write up a decision case or case study that you have been involved with or can become familiar with through interviewing a person involved or a decision-maker. In the report, please discuss what the problem is, issues surrounding the problem, and the important questions posed to the decision maker. Identify supplemental references that are useful to go with the case.

A good decision case goes beyond just the agronomic issues, but social issues as well. (If you write up a suitable case, I would be happy to work with you to get it published for other classes to use around the world.)

2. Go deeper into a specific topic we are not covering in these class sessions. Do a careful literature search and summarize what is known. Propose questions, ideas, etc. on the topic area, especially related to the Intermountain West region.

An outline of the project should be turned in the week of Feb. 18th for review and 10% of the project points.

The paper copy of the reports will be due the week of April 14th.

You are also required to prepare a "poster presentation" that can be seen by the others in the class, both on and off-campus, in electronic format. This poster should include a brief outline of your project complete with pictures, drawings, etc., whatever is useful to get the point across so the other students can learn from your work. I'll provide examples later in the semester. This will also be due April 14th.