Conservation Beyond Borders
An experiential field expedition in the Balkans exploring the prospects of “International Peace Parks.”

UVM EXPEDITION
July 6 - 23, 2012
Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro

Transferable Credits through UVM

UVM EXPEDITION
COURSE NUMBER ENVS 295
3 Credits

IPPE EXPEDITION GUIDE

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COURSE SYLLABUS

OVERVIEW
This course will provide students with a unique learning opportunity, a cross-cultural experience, an introduction to the “field”, and all the dynamics involved in creating and managing an International Peace Park. Designed for advanced undergraduates and graduate students interested in topics including, but not limited to, environmental studies, community and international development, natural resource management and peace and conflict studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. Understand International Peace Parks - how they are created, managed and utilized as a tool of international diplomacy, conservation, and cross border collaboration.
2. Observe a cross-discipline field - who are the actors? how do they relate?
3. Explore relationships between eco-tourism, international development and conservation.
4. Experience the cultures of Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro - through homestays, trekking on ancient trade footpaths, learning with local students, and enjoying unique traditions in meals, music and sport.

COURSE FORMAT - PEDAGOGY
International Peace Park Expeditions utilizes the best of traditional academic teaching and learning practices, combined with proven experiential learning methodologies to create a unique, dynamic expedition which will provide students with a strong understanding of the theory around International Peace Parks, based on observations of how that theory translates into practice on the ground in the proposed Balkans Peace Park in Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. Course readings and lectures provide the academic base, guest lectures from subject matter experts working in the field create the bridge, and first hand experience trekking through the proposed Balkans Peace Park, crossing the borders, and living among the local people brings that theory into reality and allows students to experience it for themselves.

- Readings - before and throughout the course - with class discussion and student presentation
- Lectures - in the field, often at the end of a day of vehicle travel or trekking throughout the Peace Park
- Guest Lectures - at different destinations throughout the Peace Park
- Interviews - using the Flip HD Video recorder, students will interview Guest Lecturers, Homestay Families, Local Students, etc
- Teachable Moments - instructors will identify these learning opportunities and take advantage of them with brief explanations and Q&A
- Experiential Learning - facilitated reflective discussions that elicit learning from student experiences in another culture
- Collaborative Group Project - utilizing “new media” technology to convey lessons learned over the course of the expedition in a format that can be posted online on the IPPE website, Facebook, YouTube/Vimeo, Google Earth/Maps, etc.
- Individual Writing - daily journal entries and a post-expedition analytical paper
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BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)

Letter of Good Intent – Signed by the Commune Head’s and Mayors of Peja, Kosovo, Plav, Montenegro; and Shkodra, Albania.


Wolmer, W. “Transboundary Protected Area governance: tensions and paradoxes.” Paper prepared for the workshop on Transboundary Protected Areas in the Governance Stream of the 5th World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa. 12-13 September 2003.


ADDITIONAL READINGS


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### COURSE SECTION 1

**Peace Parks: Definition, Objectives, Historical Evolution of the concept.**
Theoretical framework of Peace Parks within the Peace Studies, Environmental Studies, and International Relations fields.
(Days 1-2) Shkodra, Albania

**GUEST LECTURERS**
- Dr. Arieta Troshani – Dean of the University of Shkodra, Professor of Eco-tourism and marketing.
- Arian Gjura, Chair of B3P Albania

**READINGS** (to be completed prior to arrival)

### COURSE SECTION 2

**Traditional Village Life, Cross Cultural Homestays, Village Tour**
Water powered corn mill, waterfalls, archeological site, traditional water management, sustainable farming and cooking.
(Days 3-4) Village of Thethi, Albania

**GUEST LECTURERS**
- Mark Rupa, Forestry Specialist, SNV Albania
- Balkans Peace Park Summer Programme Director – visit with students, group discussion with volunteers, lecture from Programme Director.

**READING**

### COURSE SECTION 3

**Political History of the Balkans Region and Evolution of the proposed Balkans Peace Park**
(Days 5-6) TREKKING Thethi, Albania to Plav, Montenegro

**GUEST LECTURERS**
- Boris Erg, Director, IUCN South Eastern Europe
- Gorica Bojic, Project Specialist – Eco-Tourism, SNV Montenegro.

**OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**


**READINGS**
- Kennard, Ann – The Balkans Peace Park as a paradigm for transboundary conflict resolution. “Conflict and Reconciliation Symposium, held at the Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre, near Trondheim, Norway in June 2009”.

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COURSE SECTION 4

Peace Parks: A Tool for International Diplomacy, Environmental Conservation & Sustainable Development
Examining water resource sharing initiatives and their lessons.
(Days 7-8) Montenegro – Plav

GUEST LECTURERS
Mersedin Ahbadagovic, FOPER, European Forestry Masters Program
Enko Dreshkovic, President, PSK HRID Mountaineering Club

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


COURSE SECTION 5

Peace Park Management Challenges and Best Practices
Conservation vs Development and Top-down approach vs Grassroots – is there a balance point? Where?
(Days 9-11) Trekking from Plav, Montenegro to Peja, Kosovo

GUEST LECTURERS
Fatos Lajci, Founder, Executive Director, Environmentally Responsible Action Group
International Conservation Organization working in the region (IUCN, WWF, etc).

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


READINGS


COURSE SECTION 6

Taking the Next Step: Linking Theory, Policy and Practice
Sustainable Development Projects, Eco-tourism Initiatives, Environmental Education, Coordinating Legal Frameworks and their Implementation
(Days 12-14) Kosovo – Peja

GUEST LECTURERS
Mayor Ali Berisha – Mayor of Peja, Kosovo, and signatory to the “Letter of Good Intent” to work towards creating the Balkans Peace Park. “Balancing Conservation Goals with Development.”
Ellen Frank, Program Director, Environmentally Responsible Action Group
Burim Leci, Representative, Ministry of Youth, Culture & Sport

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

READING

COURSE SECTION 7

Individual Student Consultations and Time to work on Final Group Project
(Day 15-16) - Trekking to TriBorder Peak, Lake Komani Ferry, Return to Shkodra, Albania

LECTURE
Todd Walters - Executive Director, International Peace Park Expeditions

READING

FINAL STUDENT PROJECT PRESENTATIONS AND CELEBRATION DINNER

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