Conservation Education Essay

**Recommended Length:** 2-3 pages, typed (single-spaced).

**Due Date:** Thursday 29 November 2018

This essay assignment consists of two multi-part questions, each worth 50 points. An optional bonus question is worth two additional points. Please be clear and concise in your answers. Clarity and completeness are more important than length; excessive verbiage may obscure key points that you make.

1. (50 points) North Cascades Grizzly Bear and Southern Resident Orca design projects in this course address legally mandated requirements to restore protected wildlife populations. Imperiled status of those populations resulted from conflicts between biodiversity needs vs. human activities and resource use. Controversy ensues when resolving those conflicts necessitates restrictions or reductions in human activities or resource use. In the context of controversy, scientific analysis arguably can provide the most objective basis for making conservation decisions. Scientific analysis can determine criteria that effective conservation solutions must fulfill. Although science provides our society its most reliable means of forecasting and evaluating policy options*, policy decisions often contradict science-based criteria. The future of biodiversity in our region, continent, and planet may depend on reconciling policy decisions with scientific understanding. As one of “tomorrow’s interdisciplinary [environmental] problem solvers,”† you may be tasked with helping to achieve this reconciliation between science and policy.

   a) Describe educational experience(s) that would offer greatest promise for preparing you and your peers to achieve reconciliation between science, policy, and practice.

   b) Describe how well your undergraduate program has provided you experience(s) in (a), or describe what has been lacking.

   c) What changes in your undergraduate program would be necessary to fully achieve (a)?

**Question 1 Evaluation Rubric**

   a) (30 points) Description of educational experience(s) will be evaluated by relevance science-policy reconciliation, convincing arguments about promise of that experience(s), and writing clarity.

   b) (10 points) Description your undergraduate program will be evaluated by relevance to experience(s) in part (a), and clarity of your evaluation.

   c) (10 points) Change descriptions will be evaluated by relevance to and efficacy in achieving science-policy reconciliation, logical arguments for full achievement of (a), and writing clarity.

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*Some assert traditional indigenous knowledge provides equal or greater guidance than Western science.

†Quoted from the Huxley College Mission Statement, approved in 2008.
2 (50 points) Conservation in our culture and time faces an apparent paradox: total and per-capita human impact are greater than ever before, while information about those impacts and the need to reduce them is most accessible and widely distributed. Why do so few people with knowledge about conservation issues take effective action to address those issues? In chapter 8 of More Good News (2010), authors Suzuki and Dressel provide a resolution to the paradox. The authors describe Dick Roy’s assertion that “Motivation, not education, is the principle impediment ….”* By this logic, your preparation here as one of “tomorrow’s interdisciplinary environmental problem solvers”† should include measures to strengthen your motivation for solving environmental problems. Otherwise, your commitment may not endure and much of your “education” would find limited application.

a) Which knowledge, experience(s), or other part of your post-secondary education has motivated you most to work on conservation issues? What made that experience or component most motivating?

b) Describe how your post-secondary educational experience or program would have to change to motivate you to dedicate your professional and/or personal life to solving conservation or other environmental problems. If you believe your motivation now is as great as possible, explain how your experience to date has been so motivating.

c) Is your answer to (b) generally applicable? Could the approach(es) you describe in (b) be applied or adapted to most colleges and universities? Explain why or why not. Describe the greatest obstacle that must be overcome to implement the change(s) in (b) at WWU, or if has been implemented already, to implement the change(s) in colleges and universities across the nation.

Question 2 Evaluation Rubric

a) (15 points) Identify, describe most motivating undergraduate/graduate experience(s).
   Excellent answers should clearly describe the experience(s) and reason(s) for effectiveness.
   (i) Clarity of description ______
   (ii) Directly addresses motivation ______
   (iii) Accounts for effectiveness ______

b) (15 points) Changes in under/graduate programs needed to maximize motivation.
   Excellent answers should clearly describe changes that would be needed or why your experience has fostered peak motivation.
   (i) Clarity of description ______
   (ii) Directly addresses motivation ______
   (iii) Practical and applicable to WWU (or your college) ______

c) (20 points) Are changes generally applicable among colleges and universities?
   Excellent answers should explain clearly why or why not the approach(es) could be implemented at other colleges and universities. Answers should be generally applicable to students who have not benefited from your prior (pre-WWU) background or experience. Obstacle to implementation is described clearly and convincingly.
   (i) Clarity of description ______
   (ii) Relevant application/adaptation to other programs ______
   (iii) Obstacle to implementation ______
   (iv) Convincing arguments ______

* Although not required for this essay, the website of Roy’s organization provides more information: http://earthleaders.org (accessed 20 November 2018).
† Quoted from the Huxley College Mission Statement, approved in 2008.
3 (2 bonus points) What was missing from the course? One quarter is a brief time to consider such an immense subject area. Name a topic or experience that interests you, but that was not included in the course. If that topic or experience was to be included next year, which topic(s) should be eliminated or shortened to make room for it?