Welcome to the "Forestry Capstone Consulting Firm"
Department of Natural Resource Ecology & Management
Oklahoma State University

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:
Dr. Omkar Joshi
Office: 549 Agricultural Hall
Telephone: 744-5614
E-mail: omkar.joshi@okstate.edu

Office Hours: An “open door” policy is generally maintained all day when I am not otherwise in another class or in a meeting. Students are welcome to drop-in, but appointments are recommended.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Dr. Tom Lynch (stand inventory and growth projection)
Dr. Rod Will (silvicultural prescription)
Dr. Tom Kuzmic (overall management)

Other NREM Faculty may be consulted for mentoring in GIS, wildlife, etc., as applicable to the project.

FINANCE OFFICER: Mrs. Terre Butler (013A Agricultural Hall)

CAPSTONE CONSULTANTS:
All students enrolled for the class

MEETING TIMES & PLACES:
Lecture – Monday and Wednesday, 9:30 - 10:20 AM; 014 Ag Hall
Lab - Wednesday, 2:30 - 5:20 PM; 019 Ag Hall

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course provides students with an integrative problem-solving experience, serving as the “capstone” course in the forestry undergraduate program. We function and operate as the "Forestry Capstone Consulting Firm" with student members formed into teams of three or four and working on specific projects. Teams utilize their forestry and natural resource knowledge and skills, applying biological, quantitative, economic, social, political, and management principles in creating a "real world" forest resource management plan. Teams interact directly with a faculty CEO and Board of Directors, and with a "real world" client in defining the scope of their project associated with a specific "real world" property, setting multi-resource objectives, and targeting attainable outcomes for a realistic and functional management plan for the property. Management of timber resources is the central focus of the capstone experience, with integrated management of associated natural resource outputs, values and services as directed by the CEO, the Board and the client.
COURSE OBJECTIVES:

As the "capstone" course of the forestry curriculum, this course is designed to:

- Broaden students' understanding of, and competence in long-range, prescriptive, management planning for forest resources.
- Provide students with a "real world" opportunity to integrate forestry and natural resource management principles learned throughout their studies and to apply them in the creation of a prescriptive management plan that meets the multi-resource objectives for a “real world” forest property and client.
- Enhance students' confidence in their forestry and natural resource management knowledge and skills.
- Sharpen students' integrative, analytical, and investigative skills in solving multi-faceted problems.
- Enhance students' skills and talents for the "team approach" to problem solving.
- Provide students with opportunities for leadership development; devising a project work plan and work schedule; delegating responsibility; and managing time, technical, fiscal, and human resources in an efficient and productive manner (including multi-tasking, prioritizing, and meeting deadlines).
- Strengthen students' abilities at effective written, verbal, and visual communication of information and ideas.
- Broaden and enhance students' abilities and confidence in interacting with forestry and natural resource professionals in a professional work-place environment.
- Provide students with an understanding of what it means to be a professional, and to forge a professional work-ethic, prior to graduation.

COURSE FORMAT:

This course is offered in a non-traditional format, meaning that we will not always meet for lectures and labs each week. The bulk of the workload associated with the course will be conducted independently by student consultant teams, with periodic consultation required between the teams and the CEO, the Board of Directors, and the client. Specific dates for oral presentations by the teams will be set.

Working independently throughout the semester, teams determine their work agenda, seek out resources, conduct fieldwork, document time and expenses associated with project travel, perform analytical and computational office work, and prepare written and oral reports.

Early in the semester, each team prepares a written preliminary project overview and a work plan, to be complemented by a PowerPoint presentation and an oral presentation to the full Firm, all done with professional caliber.

By the conclusion of the semester, each team prepares a comprehensive, written management plan complemented by a PowerPoint presentation, and then delivers the key elements of their plan to the CEO, the Board of Directors, the client, and other interested NREM faculty, in a formal, oral presentation, all done with professional caliber.

There are no exams or quizzes in this course.

TEXTBOOK: There is no textbook for this course.
CAPSTONE PROJECT SCENARIO:

The CEO of the Forestry Capstone Consulting Firm received request to prepare management plan for public forest (Ouachita National Forest) owned by United States Forest Service, hereafter referred to as the "client". Detailed description of the properties including the management goals for properties under consideration will be presented by CEO in second week of semester.

CAPSTONE TEAM:
The Firm presently has six forestry consultants on staff. Two teams will be formed.

PROJECT SITE RECONNAISSANCE:

We will make a site reconnaissance of the property on January 26th. Everyone must participate in the recon trip. It likely will require a full day commitment.

PROJECT WORK PLAN:

Each team must develop a written project work plan that includes the following components and meets specific criteria.

- Statement of project scope and objectives.
- Preliminary description of the property and its associated timber and associated natural resources, complemented by maps and photographs.
- Timeline of tasks and activities necessary to complete the project from start to finish, following a weekly schedule, including both field and office work.
- Travel plan - details for dates of travel to the project site to complete fieldwork (vehicles, drivers, team members involved in a specific trip)
- Budget - identifies all anticipated costs to be covered in the conduct and completion of the project.
- Team member responsibilities - responsibilities assigned to each team member must be clearly delineated and equitably distributed. Despite the workload distribution decided upon by the team, all team members must be familiar with all facets and components of their project and be prepared to answer questions related to all components of the project.
- Format - the project work plan must be typed and have a professional appearance, adhering to the following:
  - Paper cover/title page and table of contents, with all pages affixed by a single staple in the upper left corner.
  - Main text must be single-spaced using font size 12.
  - Components should be ordered in a logical sequence, and the hierarchy of headings must be logical and consistent.
  - All effort should be expended to present a product that exhibits a professional appearance in addition to quality content.
- PowerPoint presentation - the project work plan must be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation to be used for oral presentation of the plan, adhering to the following:
- Incorporate effective text, graphics, and visuals in a clear, concise, logical, and professional format and manner.
- Use high quality images that are in crisp focus with high resolution.
- Choose backgrounds, colors, font sizes and styles carefully and prudently.
- All elements of all slides must be effectively readable from all positions in the presentation room.

**CAPSTONE MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

The ultimate responsibility of each team is to create a written management plan of professional caliber that includes the following components and fulfills specific criteria.

- Statement of project scope and objectives.
- Description of the property and its associated timber and associated natural resources, complemented by maps and photographs.
- Multi-resource inventory, analysis, assessment and evaluation to aid in team decision-making, to fulfill resource management objectives, and to support the ultimate silvicultural prescriptions and long-term management recommendations included in the plan, including at a minimum, the following:
  - Timber inventory, supported by valid statistical analyses.
  - Assessment of specific non-timber resources that conform with project objectives (wildlife, recreation, water, etc.).
  - Assessment of site condition and potential productivity (topography, soils, site index, etc.).
  - Assessment of potential environmental constraints and issues (threatened and endangered species, archeological, visual, etc.).
- Silvicultural prescriptions and multi-resource management recommendations, with a focus on long-term output of timber revenue, including and supported by the following:
  - Forest growth projections.
  - Economic and financial analyses.
  - Adherence to applicable laws, legal statutes, and/or constraints identified by the team, CEO, Board and client.
  - Best management practices (BMPs) to uphold and ensure ecological integrity and resource sustainability.
- Related considerations:
  - Potential social, community, and/or adjoining land-owner considerations and implications.
  - Potential ethical issues and implications.
- Format - the final management plan must be typed and have a professional appearance, adhering to the following:
  - Clear plastic front cover, plastic back cover, and plastic spiral binding.
Title page, table of contents, sufficient text, references, and supportive data, tables, graphics, and images that effectively support the team’s work, conclusions, and recommendations.

Main text must be single-spaced using font size 12.

Components should be ordered in a logical sequence, and the hierarchy of headings must be logical and consistent.

All effort should be expended to present a product that exhibits a professional appearance in addition to quality content.

- PowerPoint presentation - the management plan must be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation to be used for oral presentation of the plan, adhering to the following:
  - Incorporate effective text, graphics and visuals in a clear, concise, logical, and professional format and manner.
  - Use high quality images that are in crisp focus with high resolution.
  - Choose backgrounds, colors, font sizes and styles carefully and prudently.
  - All elements of all slides must be effectively readable from all positions in the presentation room.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

- Project Work Plans - to be presented to the Firm using PowerPoint on second week of February during our regular lab session.
  - Prior to this presentation, team must have conducted some preliminary fieldwork, consulted with members of the Board of Directors in their individual areas of expertise, and gained approval of the written work plan and their PowerPoint from the CEO.
  - All consultants from all teams must be present for these presentations.
  - Presentations should run 25-30 minutes in duration, to be followed by a question and answer session of 10-20 minutes.
  - Consider this as a professional corporate presentation and assume proper decorum accordingly. Appropriate dress for the presenting team is “business casual.” If you are uncertain about what this entails, investigate it further at the following website:
    - http://humanresources.about.com/od/workrelationships/a/dress_code.htm
  - Project Work Plan Revision - Based on feedback and insights gained during the oral presentation, teams must make necessary corrections, revisions, and clarifications as necessary to their work plans by next week and secure final approval of the CEO before proceeding with further fieldwork.

- Preliminary Presentation of Management Plan - to be delivered to the Firm, the client, and other invited NREM faculty on first or second week of April during a regular lab session.
  - Prior to this, the team must have concluded all of its work, sufficiently consulted with the Board of Directors and gain their individual approval of the component of the plan applicable to their area of expertise, and gained approval of the CEO for both the written plan and the accompanying PowerPoint.
  - All consultants from all teams must be present for these presentations.
o Presentations should run 30-40 minutes in duration, to be followed by a question and answer session of 20-30 minutes.

o Consider this as a professional corporate presentation and assume proper decorum accordingly. Appropriate dress for the presenting team is “business formal.” If you are uncertain about what this entails, investigate it further at the following website:

o humanresources.about.com/od/workrelationships/a/dress_formal.htm

o Management Plan Revision - Based on feedback and insights gained during the oral presentation, teams must make necessary corrections, revisions, and clarifications as necessary to their management plans by next week and secure final approval of the CEO before proceeding with their final presentation to the DASNR leadership team, the Board of Directors, and the client.

- **Final Presentation of Management Plan** - to be delivered to the DASNR leadership team, the Board of Directors, and the client on May 2nd during a regular lecture or lab session, or another date to be determined.

  o Prior to this, the team must have made all necessary corrections, revisions, and clarifications as necessary to their management plans and secure final approval of the CEO for both the written plan and the accompanying PowerPoint.

  o Only the consultants from the team making a specific presentation are required to be in attendance for their team presentation to DASNR.

  o Presentations should run 25-30 minutes in duration, to be followed by a question and answer session of 15-20 minutes.

  o Consider this as a professional corporate presentation and assume proper decorum accordingly. Appropriate dress for the presenting team is “business formal.”

- **Four copies of the final written management plan in final bound form must be submitted to the CEO no later than April 30th prior to the scheduled date of the final oral presentation to the DASNR leadership team on May 2nd.**

**PROFESSIONAL & EDITORIAL GUIDELINES:**

Elements that contribute to high quality, professionally written and orally presented reports include:

- Communicate at the expected level of understanding of the audience, but be sure to present a report of professional integrity using professional terminology and concepts, and being careful to define and explain such as appropriate. In part, you may need to educate the audience to an extent.

- Create a logical organization and flow of sections or chapters of the report, and ensure a logical flow and transition between sections.

- Be thorough and give appropriate and logical attention to detail. Be concise and to the point, but also be careful about being too brief, leaving the reader confused, wondering, or simply “hanging.” Avoid extraneous writing that does not contribute to a clear and definitive statement.

- Be certain that your conclusions and recommendations are supported by accurate, reliable and valid data, facts and information.
• Support your findings and recommendations with properly cited professional and scientific sources of information, avoiding unsubstantiated and assumed information. Do not rely on hearsay or anecdotal information. Credit must be given where credit is due.

• Quality grammar and composition is an absolute must! Use the spelling and grammar check tool on your computer, but proof-read your writing closely, regardless. You may have correctly spelled words that truly are the wrong words for the context of your writing! Pay special attention to properly spelling the names of all plant and animal species mentioned in the report, presenting such with proper scientific and common name nomenclature and format.

• Clear and concise readability is essential. The report must read smoothly and fluidly. Though all team members will contribute written components to the report, recognize that not everyone’s writing style will be the same. Hence, it is critical that the final report is edited to ensure a consistent and fluid writing style throughout.

• Be prudent with the use of professional jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms, being sure to provide sufficient explanation and definitions of such as needed.

• Overall neatness, organization, appearance and presentation in a professional manner are essential!

EQUITABILITY IN THE TEAM EFFORT:
All team members must have a meaningful and equitable role in the overall conduct of their team's work effort, in particular:

• Conducting fieldwork, data analysis, and research necessary to develop the work plan and complete the management plan.

• Preparing the written work plan and management plan, and creating their accompanying PowerPoints in draft and in final form.

• Effectively delivering all oral presentations and participating in the dialogue and questions afterwards.

• Covering their fair share of the team’s financial expenses associated the project beyond the resources budgeted to each team by NREM.

STUDENT EXPENSES & TEAM BUDGETS FOR PROJECT-RELATED EXPENSES:
In lieu of the cost of a textbook, students are expected to cover certain of their own project expenses, including costs for food associated with travel to conduct fieldwork, office supplies, etc. It is assumed that the total of such expenses will be less than the cost of a typical university textbook.

Each student team will start the semester with a budget allocation utilizing NREM Department funds and be reimbursed for valid expenditures following standard university protocol, as follows:

• $300 for fuel costs associated with pre-approved student travel in their personal vehicles for the purpose of conducting fieldwork.

• $150 for printing of four copies of the final management plan, including one report for the client, one for the CEO, one for the DASNR leadership team, and one for the department archive.

Protocol for documenting travel & reimbursement for fuel purchases:
• Teams must inform the instructor in advance, in writing (by e-mail), of any pending travel to their project site, providing the dates of travel, the number of personal vehicles to be used, and the team members going on the trip; and teams must secure CEO approval for the travel.

• A travel log must be kept for each vehicle used for project fieldwork. The form is included as the last page of the syllabus packet. Copies of the form are available from the CEO.

• Teams must pay for, accurately account for, and document all fuel expenses for the purpose of conducting fieldwork, including travel to and from the project site, and vicinity travel during the fieldwork. To accomplish this, vehicle fuel tanks must be filled ("topped off") prior to leaving Stillwater, and the vehicle odometer reading must be recorded at the time on the travel log sheet. The cost for fuel to fill the tank at the start of the trip is not reimbursable. Upon returning to Stillwater, the fuel tank should be filled ("topped off") again and the odometer reading recorded. All fuel expenses incurred during the course of the trip after the initial fill ("top off") at the start of the trip, and including the final refill ("top-off") in Stillwater at the end of the trip, qualify for reimbursement from budgeted funds.

• Official store receipts must be retained and submitted to document all expenses for reimbursement for fuel expense. Such receipts must be list the fuel expense only, and not include other expenses (such as food, etc.). Ideally, it would be best to "pay at the pump" and obtain a receipt at the pump. Without a receipt, there absolutely can be no reimbursement.

• A reimbursement form for fuel expenses created by the Firm's Financial Officer, Mrs. Mitchell, is included at the end of this syllabus packet. If more than one team member purchases fuel for the same vehicle during the course of a single trip, then each team member must submit their own form for reimbursement, and forms must be filled out accurately and completely. Copies of the form are available from Mrs. Butler.

• Upon completion of a trip, teams must submit their travel log(s), completed reimbursement forms, and receipts as a full team submission to the CEO for review and verification. The CEO must approve the log and forms before the team proceeds further to Mrs. Butler for processing.

• Teams that exceed their budget allocation of $300 for fuel expense will be responsible for covering additional expenses out of their own pockets.

Protocol for payment for printing of the final report:

• Teams must secure a cost estimate from a local business in advance, for the printing of four copies of the final management plan, and present it to the instructor. After receiving instructor authorization, the team shall arrange for the printing job.

• Teams must notify the instructor when their print job for four copies is completed, and indicate the final cost.

• The instructor will arrange for final payment of the print job not to exceed $150.

• Teams that exceed their budget allocation of $150 for report printing will be responsible for covering additional expenses out of their own pockets.
EVALUATION & GRADING:

Students will be evaluated according to the following point distribution. See next section for further description of evaluation criteria.

Overall quality of the work plan (written & oral)........................... 10 points
Overall quality of final management plan (written & oral)............. 50 points
Team evaluation by CEO, Board of Directors & Client.................. 20 points
Individual student evaluation by CEO & Board of Directors........ 10 points
Individual student evaluation by team peers........................................ 10 points
Total Possible ........................................................................ 100 points

The team whose management plan is deemed the overall "best" by the DASNR leadership team will earn a bonus of five (5) points.

COURSE GRADES:
Final course grades will be assigned based on total points earned:
A = 90-100 points (90-100%; superior; top-notch)
B = 80-89 points (80-89%; acceptable & on-track)
C = 70-79 points (70-79%; borderline; marginally acceptable)
D = 60-69 points (60-69%; grounds for demotion)
F = 0-59 points (below 60%; failure; grounds for termination)

TEAM & STUDENT EVALUATIONS:

1. Team evaluation by the CEO, Board of Directors and Client - An assessment of quality of the team's exhibited effectiveness at working in a unified way to involve all team members in a fair, reasonable and equitable way; define and fulfill project objectives; conduct all facets of the project in the field and in the office; meet deadlines; utilize available resources; integrate knowledge across the forestry curriculum; and demonstrate creativity, resourcefulness, and professionalism in preparing and delivering the management plan (oral and written).

2. Individual student evaluation by the CEO and Board of Directors - An assessment of each student's functional role and positive contribution to all facets of their team's project, including effective and equitable participation in fieldwork, covering costs, oral presentations, and preparing the management plan. In addition, each student will be assessed regarding their attendance, level of functional participation, positive contribution, and professional demeanor in all scheduled course activities.

3. Individual student evaluation by team peers - An assessment of each student's functional role and positive contribution to all facets of their team by their fellow team members, including effective and equitable participation in team meetings, fieldwork, oral presentations, bearing an equitable share of costs associated with completing the project, and preparing and delivering the final management plan and oral reports. Team members should consider such things as cooperative spirit, willingness to assume responsibility, effective contribution and leadership as a "team-player", and fair distribution of effort and project-related obligations (including financial obligations if the NREM budget is exceeded) as they evaluate each other. Please understand that "peer review" is prevalent throughout the professional world.
POLICY REGARDING ATTENDANCE & PROFESSIONAL PROTOCOL:

1. **Attendance at all course activities scheduled by the CEO is mandatory**, in the same sense that attendance at a staff meeting called by your supervisor in the work-place is mandatory.

2. **Periodic "progress check" meetings** with individual teams and the instructor will be scheduled during regular lecture and lab times, on a need basis.

3. **Unacceptable behavior**: Tardiness is not acceptable, nor is texting or checking messages on an electronic device, napping, doing homework for another class, talking out of turn, being disrespectful to others, or any other behavior that is deemed to not contribute directly and positively to any activity conducted or directed by the CEO. Obviously, these things surely would not be acceptable at a work-place staff meeting, presentation, or similar activity in the professional work-place.

4. **Ethics & respect**: All members of the Firm need to be cognizant of the importance of conducting everything that we do with the utmost high standard of ethics, responsibility, and respect. *Adopt this as a way of being, and life will be good.*

POLICY ON DROPPING THE COURSE & INCOMPLETE GRADES:

1. **No drops will be given after the second week of classes.** A critical professional element of the capstone experience is for student teams to do the best possible job within the constraints of available resources and time, and to be committed to an organizational responsibility. Team members in any context that drop-out or quit while their teams are otherwise well invested into their project or endeavor ultimately leave their teams with reduced resources and an unanticipated disadvantage in meeting their responsibility to their client and their organization’s CEO.

2. **No "Incomplete" (I) grades will be assigned for this course.** Teams that do not complete their project, present their final oral report to their client, and/or submit four acceptable final copies of their written management plan by the fore-mentioned deadlines will receive a grade of "F" for the course, much as a professional who fails to meet a project deadline could well face the prospect of getting "fired" at that very point.

USE OF NREM EQUIPMENT & TOOLS FOR FIELDWORK:

1. Teams may use various tools in the Forestry equipment cache for use in their fieldwork to the extent that they are available. Please recognize that certain equipment will be used this semester in the Forest Measurements course on a regular basis.

2. Teams must arrange to borrow equipment through Dr. Lynch, and not Dr. Kuzmic or any other NREM staffer. It is imperative that you approach Dr. Lynch well enough in advance with a written request rather than waiting until the day that you plan to depart campus and head to the field.

3. Teams are expected to treat borrowed equipment as if it is their own. It must be stored, transported, and used properly, and returned promptly, in proper working order, clean, and undamaged.

4. Teams will be Bursar-billed the replacement cost for lost equipment and the repair of broken equipment due to misuse or neglect.
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<tr>
<th>WEEK #</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC / ACTIVITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Lecture: No class</td>
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<td>Lab: Discuss:</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Lecture: Course description</td>
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<td>Recon Trip (Tentative on January 26th)</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Lecture: Individual team progress update meetings with the CEO.</td>
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<td>Lecture: No class; teams work independently on project work plans.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Lecture: Individual team progress update meetings with the CEO.</td>
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<td>Lecture: No class; teams prepare for oral presentation of project work plans at lab this afternoon.</td>
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<td>Lab: DEADLINE: Teams present project work plans to the Firm</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Lecture: Individual team progress update meetings with the CEO.</td>
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<td>Lecture: DEADLINE: Teams submit revision of project work plans.</td>
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<td>Lab: No lab; teams work independently on projects.</td>
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9
Lecture No class; teams work independently on projects.
Lecture No class; teams work independently on projects.
Lab No lab; teams work independently on projects.

** ** SPRING BREAK - March 19 - 23 ** **

10
Lecture Individual team progress update meetings with the CEO.
Lecture No class; teams work independently on projects.
Lab No lab; teams work independently on projects.

11
Lecture Individual team progress update meetings with the CEO.
Lecture No class; teams work independently on projects.
Lab **DEADLINE: Draft of written management plan and accompanying PowerPoint due by 2:30pm.** Review with CEO during lab time.

12
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lab **DEADLINE: Draft of revised written management plan and accompanying PowerPoint due by 2:30pm.** Review with CEO during lab time.

13
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lab **DEADLINE: Teams present management plans to Firm. (Exact date, subject to change and will be provided later)**

14
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lecture No class; teams work independently on projects.
Lab No lab; teams work independently on projects.

15
Lecture **DEADLINE: Draft of revised written management plan and accompanying PowerPoint due by 9:30am.**
Lecture Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.
Lab Individual team feedback meetings with the CEO.

**DEADLINE: Revised written management plan must be approved by the CEO and taken to a commercial print shop by noon on Friday of this week. Earlier is better!**
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>April 30</strong>&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td><strong>DEADLINE:</strong> Four final printed and bound copies of the management plan due no later than 3:00pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td><strong>DEADLINE:</strong> Both teams present management plan to DASNR leadership team, the Board of Directors and the client. Students complete peer evaluations.</td>
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*Dates are tentative and subject to change*