Forest and Natural Resource Management (FNRM) 3462/5462

Advanced Remote Sensing and Geospatial Analysis

Syllabus

Course Description

This course builds on the introductory remote sensing class, FNRM 3262/5262. It provides a detailed treatment of advanced remote sensing and geospatial theory and methods including Object-Based Image Analysis (OBIA), lidar processing and derivatives, advanced classification algorithms (including Random Forest, Neural Networks, Support Vector Machines), biophysics of remote sensing, measurements and sensors, data transforms, data fusion, multi-temporal analysis, and empirical modeling. In-class and independent lab activities will be used to apply the course topics to real-world problems. Prior coursework in Geographic Information Systems, remote sensing, and statistics is necessary. 3 credits

Lecture: 10:15 to 11:30am T,TH, 203 Green Hall, St. Paul Campus

Instructor: Dr. Joe Knight
Dept. of Forest Resources
301-E Green Hall
Phone: 612-625-5354
Email: jknight@umn.edu
Office hour: Thursday 1-2, or by appt.

Text: There is no required text for this course. Readings are provided.

Course Goals:
- Evaluation of remote sensing applications for natural resources management, environmental science, social science, and critical analysis of these technologies for the real world, including your own research needs.
- Gain essential experience defining a research problem, collecting relevant remotely sensed and ancillary data, and synthesizing your results.
- Develop skills in image processing and gain expertise with a variety of software packages used by professionals in the field.
- Synthesize research and present information in written (research paper and critiques), spoken (seminar presentation, discussions, and student-lead teaching), and visual format (poster presentation or media release).
**Grades and Workload**

This three-credit course will require, for the average University of Minnesota student, nine hours of academic work per week, averaged over the term. Since the course meets for 2.5 hours per week, you should expect to spend an additional 6.5 hours per week on average outside the classroom. Outside activities include assigned readings/videos, responses to assigned activities, peer review of journal articles and classmates’ work, remote sensing topic summaries, and class project activities.

Grades will be assigned by earned point values as described below. No “curve” will be applied. No extra credit opportunities will be available. Plus/minus course grades will be assigned. Any grading challenges you wish to be considered should be emailed to the instructor within one week of the posting date of the graded item. You must state what is to be reevaluated and include a specific rationale for why the grade is improper or incorrect. “I put a lot of time into this, and I think I deserve a better grade,” does not constitute an acceptable rationale.

**Course point break-down:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Reviews (2)</td>
<td>50 (25ea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Peer Reviews (2)</td>
<td>50 (25ea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remote Sensing Handouts (2)</td>
<td>50 (25ea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Proposal</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Short Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Proceedings Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Media Packet</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Research Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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**Letter Grades**

A -- achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B -- achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C -- achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D -- achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

S -- achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

F (or N) -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there
was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an Incomplete.

I -- (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

Incompletes (I) will be assigned only in extraordinary circumstances, such as prolonged illness, and will require a signed contract with the instructor. Such written agreement will not allow a period longer than six months from the end of the course to complete the course requirements. Students taking this course using S/N grading must complete all assignments and earn a cumulative grade of C- or higher to earn an S (Satisfactory); students earning a D+ or lower will receive a grade of N.

*Graduate vs. undergraduate workload*

Graduate students will be expected to do a greater amount of weekly reading, will be held to a higher standard in the quality and quantity of their responses to the readings, and will be expected to formulate and carry out a semester project related to their graduate research. Undergraduates will do projects that are smaller in scope and do not require originality.

**The Semester Project**

*Overview*

The main graded items in this course come from the semester project. The project should be a remote sensing focused project that has a core of image processing and/or image-focused geospatial analysis. Further topic guidelines will be provided in class. We will approach the project using several smaller milestones spaced throughout the semester so as to break the work into more manageable pieces. Students will build the project gradually using feedback from the instructor and peers.

*Project Milestones*

The project milestones are as follows:

- Proposal: A short one-page proposal describing the objectives, rationale, expected methods, and expected results of your project. This milestone is due early in the semester, so as to get students thinking about the project right away. Instructor feedback is provided, but no peer review of this milestone will occur.

- Short Paper: A 2-3-page paper in the style of a “letters” or “short communication” journal
article. This paper elaborates and refines your objectives and rationale, while including any results that are available. Instructor feedback and peer review are provided for this milestone.

- Proceedings Paper: A 5-page paper in the style of a conference proceedings article. This paper should contain near-final objectives, rationale, and methods, as well as available results. Instructor feedback and peer review are provided for this milestone.

- Media Packet: A set of three social media-related assignments in which you will create short text or graphical summaries of your project results.

- Research Paper: A 7-10-page paper in the style of a full journal article. This paper should contain final versions of all sections, full references, publication quality figures, and the addition of a discussion section.

Peer Reviews

Reviewing manuscripts is an important skill to develop in graduate school. The peer review process helps to maintain the quality of journal publications. You will collaborate with a small group throughout the semester to peer-review the different phases of your project papers. At two phases of the process, “short paper” and “proceedings paper,” each of you will review two other students' submissions. At minimum, use the provided rubric to guide your review; in addition, you may submit a "track changes" version of your peer review. We will use the same review guidelines for our journal article discussion sessions.

Classroom Conduct

All students at the University have the right to a civil, productive, and stimulating learning environment. In turn, instructors have a responsibility to nurture and maintain such an environment. Students who disrupt the educational process because of discourteous, threatening, harassing, or other aggressive behavior will be removed from class.

• Please arrive on time and stay the entire class period. If you must arrive late or leave early, please sit near the door and try to enter or exit quietly.

• Turn off or silence your electronic devices (e.g. cellphones, laptops) before class begins.

• If you use a computer during class, please refrain from using it for non-course-related activities, as this may distract other students.

• Avoid eating meals during class (drinks or light snacks are ok).
Absences and Late Policy

You are expected to be present for all class meetings. You are responsible for documenting the legitimacy of any absences. Legitimate absences include:

- illnesses certified by Boynton Health Service or your family physician
- emergencies caused by a death or serious illness in your immediate family
- participation in intercollegiate athletic events or other official University activities
- subpoenas, jury duty, military service, and religious observances

If you know that you will need to be absent on a particular day, let the instructor know beforehand. To submit a late assignment without penalty, you must provide documentation of your absence. Otherwise late assignments will be subject to a 25% penalty provided they are submitted within one week of the scheduled due date; late assignments will not be accepted after one week except in the case of a documented legitimate absence.

Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary, including your own prior work. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html). If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html. If you have further questions, please see the instructor.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability.
Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. The combination of this information will be used by Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations for a particular student in a particular course. For more information, please reference Disability Services: [http://ds.umn.edu/student-services.html](http://ds.umn.edu/student-services.html).

**Student Mental Health and Stress Management**

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: [http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu).

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: [http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html)

**Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action**

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: [http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html)