

*River Management Society***River Studies and Leadership Certificate**

The River Management Society (RMS) is proud to be partnering with a select cohort of five universities and colleges to offer the ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate*** program. The completion of river-focused coursework and a river-related professional project is acknowledged by RMS by awarding a ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate***.

The ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate*** program was conceived with a vision that a new generation of young leaders is essential to create a brighter future for our nation's rivers. Rivers play a central role in shaping landscapes and creating biologically diverse and unique ecosystems; they also form the foundation of cultures, economies, and communities. Indeed, rivers connect us to nature, to our past, and to each other. Future leaders who possess an understanding of the fundamentals of river sciences, river-related policy and management, and river-based recreation and education will be best equipped to make decisions about future uses, studies and management of river systems around the world.

The ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate*** is suited to undergraduate and graduate students who have become inspired to join the next generation of river professionals with a foundation of knowledge, skills and experience in river-based science, policy, conservation, education, and recreation. Colorado Mesa University, Northern Arizona University, Prescott College, Sierra Nevada University, Virginia Commonwealth University, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, University of Utah, Western Carolina University, and Western Washington University offer courses that fulfill the certificate requirements. RSLC Advisors collaborate with students to design and complete a personalized academic program that empowers them to address real world challenges facing our nation's rivers.

As a part of the RSLC program, RMS offers students exciting opportunities for professional networking and collaboration. Students are encouraged to use RMS as a source for their river studies and professional networking. Each student receives an RMS student membership that can be renewed until they graduate, which includes a subscription to the *RMS Journal* and access to national and regional chapter events (e.g. chapter floats, river field trips & workshops, swiftwater rescue courses, etc.). They are invited to attend either the biennial River Management Symposium or comparable event supported by RMS for which registration fees are waived scholarships are available to help defer other expenses. Students are required to share aspects of their river studies with the RMS community by either presenting at the River Management Symposium or publishing an article in the *RMS Journal*, a quarterly publication.

Once an RSLC student's membership expires that student may 'renew' the membership for free at the Professional level, which affords additional member benefits.

Coursework required by the ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate Program*** is focused specifically on river systems, yet it is interdisciplinary in nature; students explore and study river systems in ways that integrate the life and earth sciences, policy and conservation, sociocultural and economic factors, as well as education and recreation. Ultimately, the RSLC adds valued focus to a student's degree and presents employment advantages through networking with the River Management Society.

*River Management Society*

## River Studies and Leadership Certificate

The River Studies and Leadership Certificate (RSLC) is an interdisciplinary program that combines learning about river science, geographic information systems (GIS), policy and river field experience with a chosen emphasis in one of three areas: river science, river-based policy, or river-based education, recreation and tourism. RSLC students demonstrate “real-world” application of their knowledge and skills through professional experience or an internship with a river project. The River Studies and Leadership Certificate program is structured as follows:

### **Core Courses (4 courses):**

Students must successfully complete approved\* courses in the following subjects:

- Geographic Information Systems (1 course)
- River Science (1 course)
- River Policy (1 course)
- Swiftwater Rescue (1 course)

### **Emphasis Courses (2 courses):**

Students must take at least two approved\* courses from ONE of the following emphasis areas:

- River Science
- River-based Policy and Management
- River-based Recreation, Education, and Tourism

### **Professional Experience Requirement**

In order to enable students to become effective leaders and river professionals, one of the requirements of the River Studies and Leadership Certificate is that “learning must be applied in a professional context”. This requirement may be met through a credit-earning internship, paid internship, paid professional experience, independent study or course-related professional experience. The experience must encompass a minimum of 90 hours of work (or 2 credit-hours) and will be reviewed and approved by the River Studies and Leadership Certificate Committee to certify the adequacy of the experience for the professional experience program requirement. Students with relevant, recent professional or internship experience may request that those experiences be used to fulfill this requirement.

### **Oral/Written Presentation Requirement**

Students are required to either present aspects of their work at an RMS Symposium or sponsored conference, or write an article for the RMS Journal about their experiences.

### **Notes:**

1. Many of the courses have prerequisites and students should plan accordingly.
2. Coursework may be taken at any of the participating universities.
3. Each student’s program must be approved by the River Studies and Leadership Certificate Representative at his/her home institution, in consultation with the RSLC Standing Committee.

## **Learning Outcomes**

- 1) Students will have a working knowledge of Geographical Information Systems with potential application to river systems.
- 2) Students will have a working knowledge of the basic physical and biological environment and processes of river systems.
- 3) Students will have a working knowledge of river safety and rescue, and basic river navigation and travel, including river-based Leave No Trace.
- 4) Students will choose an emphasis within river studies and take courses that support that specialization.
- 5) Students will acquire hands-on experience with river-related project(s) via an internship, professional employment or independent study.

\*The courses that are considered applicable to the RSLC have been identified at each institution by its members and the RSLC Standing Committee. Each course may only be counted toward fulfillment of one certificate requirement.

The Standing Committee membership includes...

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