

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. Leaders of the future with 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 sustainable decisions about future uses, studies and management of river systems around the world.

The ***River Studies and Leadership Certificate*** is designed for undergraduate 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. The Utah State University, Colorado Mesa University, University of Utah, University of Idaho and Prescott College each offer courses that fulfill the certificate requirements. Faculty from these five institutions collaborate with students to design and complete a personalized academic program that empowers them to address the real world challenges facing our nation's rivers. Each student's program is vetted by industry professionals, practitioners, and academics from both RMS and the partnered institutions.

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 a free one-year RMS membership, 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.), and are invited to attend either the RMS Symposium or the River Management Workshop (held on alternate years); conference registration fees are waived for RSLC students, and 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 annual RMS Symposium or publishing an article in the RMS Quarterly Journal.

The 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.

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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...

River Management Society: Risa Shimoda – executivedirector@river-management.org

Colorado Mesa University: Gigi Richard – grichard@coloradomesa.edu

Prescott College: Mathieu Brown – mbrown01@prescott.edu

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