

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Physical Activity for Lifetime Wellness

RECR 161 (001): INTS 195 (001) - Basic Scuba Diving
2 Credits, Fall 2023

Hybrid Online course with pool sessions in the AF Center from 1-4 PM
Fridays

Zoom link: <https://gmu.zoom.us/j/9801737114?pwd=MmNlcGE5bXY1dkxUS0tpemx0eHNhUT09>

Faculty

Name: Dr. Tom Wood assisted by Dr. Esther Peters
Office hours: By Appointment
Office location: 434 Enterprise Hall
Email address: twood@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

There are some medical conditions that contraindicate scuba diving. For safety, students will be asked to complete a medical form to ensure they are safe for scuba diving activities. There are also fees associated with equipment purchase and rental, and fees associated with the certification agency that you will be given prior to the start of the class. You should be a comfortable swimmer and have the ability to tread water, you will have to pass a basic swim and float evaluation at the start of the course to continue.

University Catalog Course Description

Provides training toward certification as an open water SCUBA diver. Emphasizes snorkeling and SCUBA skills. Covers safe diving skills, the physics and physiology of diving, equipment care and maintenance, diving fitness, underwater navigation, record keeping, and other basic SCUBA knowledge. With successful completion of the course, students will qualify as a Referral Diver and be prepared for Open Water Certification by Scuba Schools International (SSI). Requires strong swimming skills, high comfort level under water and physical and mental conditioning compatible with SCUBA industry diving safety standards.

Course Overview

The SCUBA diving industry has established international standards for SCUBA diving. This course provides you the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to become a safe introductory level snorkeler and scuba diver. The longer course format over the semester provides you with extra time for skill development and is generally not available in other certification courses.

Students will have options for completing their Open Water SCUBA Certification at a quarry in Virginia or on a Caribbean trip, but this training is outside the requirements of this class. This course will also prepare you to start to pursue AAUS Scientific Diving training for those interested in pursuing marine research.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using [select either a synchronous or an asynchronous] format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on 21 August 9 am.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:

Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.

Participation:

Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

- Technical Competence:

Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

- Technical Issues:

Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

- Workload:

Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- Netiquette:

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

1. Explain physical gas laws associated with pressurized gases used in diving.

2. Describe the physiology of diving, emphasizing but not limited to nitrogen and oxygen under pressure.
3. Apply knowledge learned for safe recreational scuba dives.
4. Explain basic first aid and long-term treatment for recreational diving illness.
5. Use SCUBA skills and scientific knowledge for pursuit of Scientific Diver certification.
6. Explain concepts about the aquatic environment including an introduction to El Nino and reef ecology.

Professional Standards: Scuba Schools International (SSI)

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: Complete demonstration of skills required for Open Water SCUBA Certification learned in the pool and in preparation for Open Water Certification dives conducted after the course. Completion of written requirements for Open Water SCUBA Certification through classroom and self-instruction with SSI study materials. In the course, students can complete a Certification of Referral Diver with successful completion of classroom material, a skills test in the pool and completion of a written exam with a minimum score of 80%.

Required Texts

SSI online training materials for Open Water Diver www.divessi.com. We will show you how to gain access in class, no preparation is required prior to the first week. You will also use the Divers Alert Network website periodically during the course. www.diversalertnetwork.com

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time on the SSI website or Blackboard as required. Water skill development and assessment will take place at the Aquatic Fitness Center.

- **Assignments and Examinations**

Skill Assessment

SCUBA skills will be learned in the pool, and assessment of the skills will be done individually with the instructor. Students will practice skills throughout the semester and be tested on proficiency at the end of the term.

Multiple Choice Exams

Knowledge focused on the objectives of the course will be evaluated with the standard SSI Open Water Scuba exam (80% required for certification).

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance/Participation

- Online work can be done at the student's pace during the semester, we will have

occasional online zoom sessions as needed in a timeframe available to student's schedules (discussed during the first week of class). It is critically important to attend pool sessions as the skill development occurs in the pool and cannot be made up when missed.

- Students who attend every session, are on time each day, complete homework on time and participate to their fullest extent each day will do well in the course. You will need to schedule some time outside of class each week (~2 hours) to complete online SSI chapters, prepare for learning in water skills, and to prepare questions for review with the instructor.
- Students should come prepared for each class, with all personal equipment and enthusiasm for class activities. Students will need to have all snorkeling equipment for the first pool session (as indicated in the schedule below).
- **Course Performance Evaluation Weighting**
Attendance/Participation SCUBA skill demonstration (50%)
Timely completion of SSI chapters online during required weeks (30%)
SSI Open Water Final Exam (20%)
Total points: 100

- **Grading Policies**

A	= 90 – 100	B-	= 80 – 83	C-	= 70 – 73
B+	= 88 – 89	C+	= 78 – 79	D	= 60 – 69
B	= 84 – 87	C	= 74 – 77	F	= 0 – 59

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule – Subject to alteration with formative assessment of progress

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Friday Aug 25. 1:00 Online Zoom Session to introduce the course. Opening a SSI account and accessing the course. Understanding course fees, potential medical contraindications and swimming requirements to start SCUBA training. SSI form completion. See the Zoom link posted on the BlackBoard site.

Friday Sept 1. *Please bring your signed medical release form with you prior to this water activity.* Swim evaluation. Swim 400 yards without stopping and tread/float for 10 minutes in deep water. Please meet by the diving boards in the Aquatic Fitness Center with a bathing suit and towel, be ready to get into the water by 1:00. Fittings for BCD sizes.

SSI Online: Complete OWD chapter 1 for this day. Complete snorkeling module online.

Friday Sept 8. Introduction to snorkeling. Basic kicking skills and surface dives. You will need to have your own snorkeling gear by this date. Meet by the diving boards at 1:00.

SSI Online: Complete chapter 2 for this day.

Friday Sept 15. Intro to SCUBA in shallow water. Meet at the Recreation pool (shallow pool). Please be poolside at 1:00. Build up SCUBA gear and learn mask flooding and regulator removal and replacement. Breathing safely on SCUBA.

SSI Online: Work on chapter 3 for this day.

Friday Sept 22. Meet by the diving boards each night from here on out. First night in deeper water. SCUBA skills development.

SSI Online: Complete SSI Chapter 3 for this day

Friday Sept 29, Oct 6, 13, 20, 27, Nov 3. Skills development in the pool.

SSI Online: Complete SSI Chapters 4-6 by October 15. Reviews and additional readings may be assigned Oct 15- Nov 12 as needed.

Fri Nov 10, 17. SCUBA skills exam in the pool. These are our final pool sessions. There is no pool session during or after Thanksgiving break.

We will discuss Open Water certification options, although this is not a required component of the course.

Additional zoom sessions will be scheduled for reviewing SSI Open Water Diver online materials. We will schedule these as needed and consider everyone's schedules.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to

adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone

confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

Mason students now have FREE access to [TimelyCare](#) – a virtual mental health and well-being platform crafted specifically for college students!

With TimelyCare, Mason students will have access to a multitude of virtual mental health and well-being resources that are free and available 24/7. Find out more about the resources available online at [Timelycare.com/gmu](https://timelycare.com/gmu) or [Download the app](#)