

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, Spring 2024
Hybrid Online course with pool sessions in the AF Center from 1-4 PM
Monday afternoons

Faculty

Name: Dr. Tom Wood assisted by Dr. Esther Peters
Office hours: By Appointment
Office location: 434 Enterprise Hall
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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 provided prior to the start of the class. You must be comfortable swimming with your head underwater, able to swim 400 meters without stopping and be able to tread water for 10 minutes. You will be required to pass a basic swim and float evaluation at the start of the course to continue with SCUBA training.

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. Successful completion of this class provides you with Referral Diver Certification.

After the course is completed, 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 in graduate school.

Course Delivery Method

This hybrid course will be delivered online and in the pool using 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.

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 be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download 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. It is important to plan to attend every session. Missing sessions may result in not passing required skills for Referral Diver Certification.

- 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. We have limited pool time, and “make up” sessions are not available.

- 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 ensure 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. Demonstrate proficiency in SCUBA skills required for Scuba Schools International Open Water SCUBA certification.
6. Explain concepts about the aquatic environment including an introduction to 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. Attendance is extremely important, please do not take the course if you have any conflicts with course meeting times.

- **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 on a student’s schedule each week 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 SSI chapter and reviews on time and participate to their fullest extent each pool 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 snorkeling 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/>

SCUBA Spring 2024 course schedule.

All Monday afternoon dates 1:00-4:00 PM in the Aquatic Fitness Center except for the first day (Jan 22) and last day (May 5) when we meet in 418 Enterprise Hall. We will also meet one weekend day at Coral Edge Adventures (Jan 20) to allow you to purchase snorkeling equipment. If you are not able to make it on Sat afternoon, let Dr. Wood know so we can work on other arrangements. The schedule is subject to change depending on construction and restrictions in the Aquatic Fitness Center that may be announced during the semester. If that occurs, you will be informed via email of any changes.

Jan 22. 1:00 Meet in 418 Enterprise Hall with your laptop, swimsuit and towel. We will introduce the course materials for you and have you register with Scuba Schools International (SSI). At 2:30 we will walk to the Aquatic Fitness Center, change in the locker rooms and do the swim and float evaluation (untimed 400 meter continuous swim and 10 minute float). We will discuss timing for a visit to Coral Edge Adventures (sponsoring dive shop) on the weekend of Jan 20 to purchase mask, booties, fins, snorkel, wetsuit and weightbelt.

Jan 20. **Saturday.** We will meet at 1:00 at Coral Edge Adventures (just north of Manassas Battlefield) to review required snorkeling equipment you need to purchase for the course. Please do not purchase equipment prior to our review of equipment on this date. You will need to purchase snorkeling equipment for use in the pool on Jan 29.

Jan 29. 1:00-4:00. Competition Pool, meet by the diving boards. Bring your snorkeling equipment; mask, snorkel, booties, fins, wetsuit and weightbelt to the pool. Dress in the locker rooms and meet on the deck by 1:15. We will also fit you to Buoyancy Compensation Devices (BCD's) this day. **Complete SSI online Snorkeling course before class.**

Feb 5. 1:00-4:00. Recreation Pool, meet by the entrance to the pool walk-in ramp. Introductory skills including breathing on SCUBA, mask clearing and regulator removal and replacement. **Complete SSI online Open Water Course chapter 1.**

Feb 12 – Feb 26. Competition pool. Learning basic skills required for SCUBA diving in the diving well (deep section of the pool). **Complete SSI online Open Water Course Ch 2-6 by Feb 26.**

March 4. Spring Break, no pool or class this week.

March 11 – April 29. Competition Pool. Learning basic skills and testing and practicing skills to prepare for skill examination required for Referral Diver Certification.

May 5. 1:00-4:00 418 Enterprise Hall. Final Exam required for Referral Diver Certification.

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.

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](#)

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

