



Series: Discovering Your Educational Community Resources

**In Our Own Backyard:
Destinations That Enrich the Curriculum –
Colorado National Monument and
The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park**

EDUO 9804 1 Semester Credit/Unit

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Syllabus

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide teachers with the opportunity to tour exhibits at two outstanding National Parks: The Colorado National Monument and The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. The enthusiasm for learning that teachers glean from visiting these community classrooms will transfer to their students at any level, be it GATE, Special Education, or general education K-12 students.

Course Objectives

1. Teachers will learn what educational programs and other opportunities are available for their students at two outstanding National Parks.
2. By participating in Ranger-led Programs at the selected National Parks, teachers will further their knowledge of local history, plants, animals and geology of the area, that can be taken back to the classroom and incorporated into the curriculum.
3. Teachers will gain the knowledge to plan and teach meaningful history and science lessons and supplemental activities for their grade level.
4. Teachers will be able to provide field trip information to parent and staff and plan meaningful fieldtrips that enrich the curriculum of grade level taught.
5. Teachers will learn about the new WebRanger program offered through the National

Park Service. (<http://www.nps.gov/webrangers>)

Course Requirements:

1. Participants in this class will tour, at their convenience, two National Parks. The two National Parks that are required for this course are the Colorado National Monument and The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.
2. Please be prepared to take notes on certain exhibits and during the ranger led programs.
3. After completing the visit to the National Park, the Passport Page should be stamped and/or signed, as well as dated by a park ranger or volunteer. Evidence, such as photographs, park stamps, a signature from a ranger, a brochure, and ticket, must be attached to the Passport Page as proof of a personal visit.
4. Complete the required guided reflections on each National Park visited. Coursework must be typed, double-spaced with 12 pt font. Each reflection should be at least one page in length. All four questions listed in the coursework are to be addressed for each site visited.
5. At the end of the course, you must complete the summary and evaluation sheet. This document must also be typed, double-spaced, with a 12 pt font.
6. The Passport Page (including documentation), two reflections, and the summary and evaluation should be created in a document that can be emailed to the course instructor.

Grading:

The Pass Port Page (including documentation), two thoughtfully written National Park reflections, and the Summary and Evaluation will be graded on the following rubric. Please note that work for a one-unit university graduate level course is a required 15 hours of “seat time”.

Exemplary: Met and Exceeds Expectations A+ to A-	Acceptable: Meets Expectations B+ to B-	Unacceptable: Needs improvement. Must be resubmitted.
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Reflective, thoughtful ideas relevant to the assignment are clearly stated.	Presents some relevant ideas and connections to the assignment.	Few relevant ideas connected to the assignment; some ideas are unclear.
Very well organized	Is generally well organized	Shows little organization
Reflective piece covers numerous facts and specific details of the learning experience.	Some facts and specific details of the learning experience are included.	Few or no facts or specific details of the learning experience are included.
Free of spelling and grammatical errors.	Writing contains a few spelling or grammatical errors.	Numerous spelling or grammatical errors. Writing is difficult to read.

Instructions for coursework submission:

Written Assignments

Your coursework should be created in a document that can be emailed directly to the instructor. Coursework should be typed, double-spaced with size 12 font. Reflection write-ups should be one or more pages in length and address every question in the coursework. Pictures and documents may be scanned and posted along with your Word or PDF file of written assignments. Label everything carefully with the assignment number and make sure that your name and email address are easy to locate.

Visit four sites and submit responses for EACH location.

IMPORTANT - Camera images can be very large files. Save the images in lower definition resolution in order to keep document file sizes down for emailing.

For assistance email jherz@dominicancaonline.com

EMAIL your completed documents to the instructor's email listed on the syllabus you are working from.

National Parks

Colorado National Monument

•**CONTACT INFORMATION:** 1750 Rimrock Drive, Fruita, Co – 970-858-3617 ext. 360 –
www.nps.gov/colm

•**LOCATED:**

Westbound on Highway I-70 towards Grand Junction, Exit 31 (Horizon Drive). Follow signs through Grand Junction to the east entrance. The visitor center and campground are 19 miles from the east entrance.

Eastbound on Highway I-70 take Exit 19 (Fruita). Turn south on Highway 340 to the west entrance, which is approximately three miles from Fruita. The visitor center and campground are four miles up from the west entrance.

•**VISITOR CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION:**

- May 24 – Labor Day** 9am – 6pm
- September – mid November** 9am – 5pm
- Mid November – early March** 9am – 4pm
- March – May 23** 9am – 5pm

•**COST:** \$10.00 per vehicle

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

•**CONTACT INFORMATION:** (970) 641-2337 – www.nps.gov/blca

•**LOCATED:** South Rim: 15 miles east of Montrose, via U.S. Highway 50 and CO Highway 347, park entrance will be on your left hand side.

•**HOURS OF OPERATION:** Summer 8am – 6pm and Winter 8:30am - 4pm

•**COST:** \$15.00 per vehicle

Expected Activities & Written Assignments

Please remember that your course work should be created in a document that can be posted online in the DROPBOX found on your Moodle course page.

PART ONE – Evidence of your visit (Attach to the Passport Page) – Complete for both parks

Pictures of Yourself

- In front of the entrance of the ranger station and/or park sign with its name visible or any other recognizable landmark.
- Examining visitor center displays or exploring the park
- With a ranger (if possible)

Documents

- Your entrance ticket to the National Park and/or pamphlets, brochures, or any other information obtained at the park (may be pictures or scans)
- Be sure to have a park ranger or volunteer stamp or sign the Passport page and date it.

PART TWO – Reflections and classroom connections

Colorado National Monument

To complete these reflections you will need to access the following information: Both visitor guides, which will be given to you when you pay your entrance fee, information learned at the visitors center, participating in a Ranger-Led program, completing at least two trail hikes OR completing the entire Junior Ranger Activity Guide (available at the visitors center, free).

After reading both visitor guides & touring the visitor center, complete these reflections.

- John Otto, is the heart and soul of the Colorado National Monument. He is a great example of perseverance for the students we teach. Write a letter to John Otto. In this letter discuss the qualities he had possessed to not only get the park established but also to be on his

own, in the wild for as long as he did, establishing many of the existing trails. Use this as an opportunity to ask him questions, comment on the work he completed, etc.

- Many sections of the Monument were built during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Program. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) under the expert guidance of Local Experienced Men (LEM) completed several projects throughout the park. Identify at least 3 projects completed by the CCC. Discuss the hardships faced by these brave young men, the benefit of the projects they completed, and any other information you learned during your visit.

- At the visitors' center, pick-up a flyer of the **Ranger-led Programs** scheduled for that day. Pick at least one program to attend (typically 30 minutes in length). What did you learn from participating in this program? Would this program be beneficial to your students? Why or why not?

- For this next reflection, you may either **hike two trials** found within the park (paying special attention to the informational signs found on the trail head and throughout the hike) or you can **complete the Junior Ranger Activity Guide** (which is available at the visitors center from a Ranger or volunteer).

- List at least three facts that you learned on the hike or by completing the guide.

- Would the information gained from this activity be applicable to the curriculum for your grade level? What state or common core standard(s) would be addressed?

- Describe a lesson/learning activity that could be developed from this experience.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

When you enter the park, be sure to get the two visitor guidebooks from the ranger station/pay station. This national park includes 13 Points/Views, you will need to travel to each one to complete this course. This will be an all day adventure. While at the visitor center, be sure to watch the video & pick up a Junior Ranger Activity Guide.

- This National Park was also established on the belief of one man who thought it should be shared with everyone. Reverend Mark Warner of Montrose, Colorado worked tirelessly getting the Black Canyon into the National Park System. Prior to Reverend Warner, several expeditions occurred by explorers wanting to learn more about the canyon and to also see if there was a way to use water from the Gunnison River for irrigation. Use information found throughout the National Park to give a brief description of each expedition (1853, 1883, 1900,

1901, 1916). You can access additional information at <http://www.nps.gov/blca/historyculture/people.htm> should you find it necessary. Who was involved in each expedition? What was the goal of the expedition? Was it successful? Why or why not?

- Pick up a Junior Ranger Activity Guide. As you travel to each point/view, complete the Junior Ranger Activity Guide. Describe three interesting facts that you learned/relearned while completing this activity. Would completing the Junior Ranger Activity Guide be beneficial to your students? Why or why not?

- At the visitors' center, pick-up a flyer of the **Ranger-led Programs** scheduled for that day. Pick at least one program to attend (typically 45 minutes in length). What did you learn from participating in this program? Would this program be beneficial to your students? Why or why not?

- The National Park Service has recently released their WebRanger program. Log-on to www.nps.gov/webrangers. Become a member and complete at least five activities. What activities did you complete? How would you rate them as an educator? Would this site be applicable to your grade level? Take time to review the teacher resource center. How would you rate this center? Overall, is this a useful site? Describe at least on lesson or activity that you can incorporate into your classroom from this site.

PART THREE – Process

- Are these parks suitable for a classroom field trip – Why or why not?

PART FOUR – Evaluation

- Summarize and evaluate your experience visiting and researching these National Parks regarding its value to you as an educator.

OPTIONAL

Do you have any suggestions that would improve this experience?

Would you recommend this class to other teachers? Why or why not?

