

NRES 389/589: Methods in Social Science

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-1:45pm

Fall 2021 Syllabus

Course Instructor

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Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-1:30, Thursdays 3:00-4:00, Fridays 9:00-10:00

For a brief conversation with the door open, stop by TNR 235. For a more private conversation, schedule a Zoom meeting by email and use this link: <https://wisconsin-edu.zoom.us/j/8645902475>

Course Catalog Description

Connect natural resources with people using a variety of problem analysis skills.

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide students in the human dimensions of natural resource management with an introduction to social science research methods. The growing need for understanding the role of individuals, communities, and society in shaping the natural environment has led to a greater emphasis on natural resource social science and providing training in the research methods to support these efforts. It is an exciting time to enter this arena as many research and community initiatives are combining the efforts of natural and social scientists to achieve better conservation outcomes, promote sustainable behaviors, and increase awareness and understanding of the complex environmental challenges facing our society.

Learning Objectives

Developing your research skills is a continuous process that is enhanced by each opportunity to expand the tools available to you by building your understanding of the methods that drive this work. It is important to know that many of our natural resource social science challenges cannot be addressed solely by applying one set of research tools, but rather it is common that researchers apply the best set of methods -- often using a mixed methods approach -- to assist them in achieving their research objectives. Over the course of the semester students will cultivate a number of professional skills based on the following objectives:

1. To understand the role of human dimensions research in natural resource management.
2. To understand the common phases of developing both theory-driven research and program evaluation.
3. To conceptually model the relationship between social variables and understand the types of research methods available to explore these relationships.
4. To develop a basic understanding of analysis tools and techniques available for quantitative and qualitative data sets.

Course Resources

Text rental: O'Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project (3rd ed)*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Canvas: Selected articles and chapters. Lecture PowerPoints posted at the instructor's discretion.

Learning Assessments

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>
Attendance and Participation	30
CITI Human Subjects Training (> 80%)	15
Reading Questions (RQs) (10 required)	20
Research Proposal	
Research Questions	5
Annotated Bibliography	10
Methods Description	5
Survey or Interview Questions	5
Literature Presentation and Feedback	10
In-class Exercises	14
Exams	36
<i>Total</i>	<i>150</i>

Graduate students in NRES 589 will complete an additional project in consultation with the professor.

All submissions should be submitted through Canvas unless otherwise specified. Professionally presented papers are clear and cohesive, have been checked for spelling and grammatical errors, and are submitted by the deadline to earn full credit. Late reading questions will only be accepted for two days after they are due and will earn up to half credit. Other assignments will be accepted late with the following deductions: first week = -10% of possible points, second week and after = -20% of possible points.

Course grade calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Total Points Earned}}{150} \times 100 = \text{percentage}$$

Grading Scale

93-100% = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	60-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	<59 = F
87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+	

Participation Expectations

In order to help you gain as much as possible from the course, I will create an environment that is conducive to learning. Therefore, students will be active course participants, arrive on time, be prepared for each class by completing assignments by the designated dates, be dressed appropriately for going outdoors when necessary, and refrain from cell phone use during class. Please turn phones off or set to silent. Use of electronic devices will not be permitted during exams or other assessments except for any planned online assessments. Use of electronic devices for cheating or other academic misconduct is covered in the University Handbook and follows the same procedures for academic misconduct that occurs without the use of technology.

PowerPoint notes may or may not be posted at the instructor's discretion. Students are expected to take notes in class. Computers and tablets may be used for note taking with permission from the instructor but are not to be used for social media, web surfing or other activities that are not related to the class during class times. Lecture and discussion classes are tobacco free environments. Please wait to use tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco (chew) until outside of class.

COVID-19 Prevention Policies and Practices

All students are required to comply with current UWSP COVID-19 safety policies. These measures are based on mutual respect and concern for our community. Let's work together to have a successful, healthy semester!

Face Coverings

At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory in all buildings, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to discuss accommodations in classes. Please note that unless everyone is wearing a face covering, in-person classes cannot take place. This is university policy and not up to the discretion of individual instructors. Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in formal withdrawal from the course.

Other Guidance

- Please monitor your own health each day using this [screening tool](#). If you are not feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to class; email your instructor and contact Student Health Service (715-346-4646). As with any type of absence, students are expected to communicate their need to be absent and complete the course requirements as outlined in the syllabus.
- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from others whenever possible.
- Do not congregate in large groups before or after class.
- Wash your hands or use appropriate hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching your face.
- Please maintain these same healthy practices outside the classroom.

UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. More information on expectations and your rights and responsibilities as a student can be found on the Dean of Students page at <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos>.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (the Library). You can also find more information here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/datc>.

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Tentative Schedule for Fall 2021

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
1	9/2	Introduction		
2	9/7	Being smart consumers	C: Girl Scout impact studies	Reading Questions (RQs1)
	9/9	Asking good questions	O'Leary Ch 3	RQs 2 In-class exercise
3	9/14	Finding and using literature	O'Leary Ch 6	RQs 3
	9/16	Finding and using literature	C: McGregor	In-class exercise
4	9/21	Finding and using literature	C: HDNRM Faculty research	Social science news article
	9/23	Social science variables	C: Ewert, Mitten, & Overholt	RQs 4 Research Questions
5	9/28	Research/Eval designs	O'Leary Ch 8	RQs 5
	9/30	Research/Eval designs	C: Henderson, Bialeschki & Browne	RQs 6
6	10/5	<i>Work on Research Project—no class</i>		Annotated Bibliography
	10/7	Research Ethics	C: TBD	RQs 7
7	10/12	Exam 1		
	10/14	<i>CITI Training—no class</i>		
8	10/19	Sampling	O'Leary Ch 11	CITI Training RQs 8
	10/21	Questionnaires & Surveys	O'Leary pp 224-238 C: Patten	RQs 9
9	10/26	Questionnaires & Surveys		In-class exercise
	10/28	Observation 	O'Leary pp 250-260	RQs 10 In-class exercise
10	11/2	Interviews & Focus Groups	O'Leary pp 239-250	RQs 11
	11/4	Interviews & Focus Groups		In-class exercise
11	11/9	<i>Work on Research Project—no class</i>		Methods Description Survey or Interview Questions
	11/11	Exam 2		
12	11/16	Quantitative Data Analysis	O'Leary Ch 14	RQs 12
	11/18	Quantitative Data Analysis		
13	11/23	<i>Work on Literature Presentation—no class</i>		
	11/25	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>		
14	11/30	Quantitative Data Analysis		In-class exercise
	12/2	Qualitative Data Analysis	O'Leary Ch 15 C: Saldana & Omasta	RQs 13
15	12/7	Qualitative Data Analysis		In-class exercise
	12/9	Wrap Up		Literature Presentation and Feedback
Finals		Exam 3		