

Natural Resources 478
Environmental Issues Investigation and Action
Course Syllabus, Spring 2024

Course instructor

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Coffee talk and Q&A: Mondays 1-2pm or Thursdays 11-12pm in TNR 237 or at <https://wisconsin-edu.zoom.us/j/5144985211>

Office hours (TNR 237):

Please call or email for an appointment

Course meetings

Class meetings will take place face-to-face on Mondays from 11-11:50am in TNR 254 and on Wednesdays from 1-2:50 in TNR 271. There is an all-day field trip (7am-5:30pm) on Wednesday, February 21, 2024.

Course description

Rationale and strategies for investigating environmental issues at local, state, regional, or national levels; select and implement actions to resolve issues through political, economic, legal, educational, and lifestyle avenues.

Instructional methods

This class is taught using a variety of instructional methods including discussions, presentations, field trips, and guest speakers.

Enduring understandings

The enduring understandings (long-term, professionally and personally relevant “big ideas”) include:

- Addressing environmental issues is a responsibility of all of ours – personally and professionally
- Environmental issues are set within living, interrelated human and natural systems which means they are complex and dynamic

Essential questions

Essential questions that we will explore during this course include:

- How do we define and describe environmental issues?
- What environmental issues exist in our communities?
- How do we develop strategies and take actions to address these issues?

Course goals

The goals for this course are to increase your environmental literacy, fostering:

- an increased awareness of the individual and social importance of environmental issues,
- the development of skills in investigating these issues,
- the ability to select and take meaningful actions to resolve environmental issues, and
- for educators to experience a model you can apply to your teaching

Course learning outcomes

Students will be able to/can...

- Investigate and analyze environmental issues
- Evaluate and justify action strategies used to resolve an environmental issue

- Develop and implement an action plan aimed at resolving an environmental issue
- Assess and describe their role in relation to environmental issues
- Describe strategies to teach environmental issues
- Describe the qualities of an environmental leader and relate those qualities to themselves

Learning assessments

Class participation and professionalism	10 points
Reading discussion involvement	10 points
Current environmental issue presentation	5 points
Capitol visit preparation, engagement, and reflection	5 points
Environmental leaders	10 points
Environmental issue investigation and action project	
Part I: Issue summary	15 points
Part II Developing an action plan	15 points
Part III: Reporting on action plan	15 points
Part IV: Sharing your story	15 points
 Total	 100 points

Unless indicated differently, all submissions should be typed and posted in Canvas by 11:59pm on the identified date. Professionally presented papers are clear and cohesive, have been checked for spelling and grammatical errors, are double-spaced, and are submitted by the deadline to earn full credit.

Grading scale

93-100% = A	87-89% = B+	80-82% = B-	73-76% = C	67-69% = D+	< 63% = F
90-92% = A-	83-86% = B	77-79% = C+	70-72% = C-	63-66% = D	

Course information and updates

Course information will be posted in Canvas and we will be using the text *Empowered: One Planet at a Time* (available for purchase at Schmeckle Reserve, the campus bookstore, or through [the Ice Age National Scenic Trail](#)). All readings listed in the course schedule are required and should be read prior to attending the specified class period. Readings will be discussed to varying degrees in class, but all provide background on which to build throughout the course.

The course library guide will be helpful in identifying and researching environmental issues:

<https://libraryguides.uwsp.edu/NRES478> The APA website should be used to aid in formatting papers for this course: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

Course policies

You are expected to attend all class meetings, including the field trip that is part of the course. Active participation in discussions and activities will enhance your own learning experience and that of your classmates. Failure to attend the field trip will result in a 15% reduction of your grade. For all class meetings, you should arrive on time, mentally and physically prepared to learn, having completed all readings and assignments. Texting, emailing, and engaging in other distracting behaviors during class is not allowed. If you need to miss a class for any reason, please email the instructor ahead of time and, if possible, provide appropriate documentation upon returning to class. Excessive unexcused absences will negatively affect your final grade, as will missing the conference.

Academic integrity

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. Keep in mind that submitting work that was generated by AI such as ChatGPT is considered academic misconduct unless you have been given permission to use such a tool and acknowledge it in your assignment. For more information, see <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>.

COVID-19 and other precautions

We will follow university guidance (which includes CDC guidance) regarding COVID-19 and other health-related issues. The [CDC website](#) provides guidance on isolation and precautions related to COVID. As needed, I will announce policy changes that affect you in this class. It is expected that everyone will respect the needs and preferences of classmates and instructors.

Care Team

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is committed to the safety and success of all students. The Office of the Dean of Students supports the campus community by reaching out and providing resources in areas where a student may be struggling or experiencing barriers to their success. Faculty and staff are asked to be proactive, supportive, and involved in facilitating the success of our students through early detection, reporting, and intervention. As your instructor, I may contact the Office of the Dean of Students if I sense you are in need of additional support which I may not be able to provide. You may also share a concern if you or another member of our campus community needs support, is distressed, or exhibits concerning behavior that is interfering with the academic or personal success or the safety of others, by reporting here:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx>.

Title IX

UW-Stevens Point is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and institutional policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In the event that you choose to disclose information about having survived sexual violence, including harassment, rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, and specify that this violence occurred while a student at UWSP, federal and state laws mandate that I, as your instructor, notify the Title IX Coordinator/Office of the Dean of Students.

Please see the information on the Dean of Students webpage for information on making confidential reports of misconduct or interpersonal violence, as well as campus and community resources available to students. Dean of Students: <https://www.uwsp.edu/DOS/sexualassault> Title IX page:

<https://www3.uwsp.edu/titleix/Pages/default.aspx>

Disability and accommodations

In accordance with federal law and UW System policies, UWSP strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you need accommodations for a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please visit with the [Disability Resource Center](#) to determine reasonable accommodations and notify faculty. After notification, please discuss your accommodations with me so that

they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **DRC contact info:** Disability.Resource.Center@uwsp.edu ; 715/346-3365; 108 Collins Classroom Center

FERPA

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) provides students with a right to protect, review, and correct their student records. Staff of the university with a clear *educational need to know* may also have to access to certain student records. Exceptions to the law include parental notification in cases of alcohol or drug use, and in case of a health or safety concern. FERPA also permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent, to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

Reporting incidents of bias/hate

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

If you have experienced a bias incident (an act of conduct, speech, or expression to which a bias motive is evident as a contributing factor regardless of whether the act is criminal) at UWSP, you have the right to report it: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx>.

You may also contact the Office of the Dean of Students directly at dos@uwsp.edu. Diversity and College Access is available for resources and support of all students: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dca/Pages/default.aspx>.

Clery Act

The US Department of Education requires universities to disclose and publish campus crime statistics, security information, and fire safety information annually. Statistics for the three previous calendar years and policy statements are released on or before October 1st in our Annual Security Report. Another requirement of the Clery Act is that the campus community must be given timely warnings of ongoing safety threats and immediate/emergency notifications. For more information about when and how these notices will be sent out, please see our [Jeanne Clery Act](#) page.

The **Drug Free Schools and Communities Act** (DFSCA) requires institutions of higher education to establish policies that address unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs. The DFSCA also requires the establishment of a drug and alcohol prevention program. The Center for Prevention lists information about alcohol and drugs, their effects, and the legal consequences if found in possession of these substances. [Center for Prevention – DFSCA](#)

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act. Each year students violate these laws and campus policies, putting themselves at risk of federal prosecution. For more information about what to expect if you are caught, or to take preventive measures to keep your computing device clean, visit our [copyright page](#).

Emergency procedures

- In the event of a medical emergency call 9-1-1 or use campus phone [list location in room or nearest your classroom]. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.
- In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure at [list primary location for shelter closest to classroom,]. Emergency management provides floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span structures (gyms, pools or large classrooms).
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet at [state logical location to meet 200 yards away from building]. Notify instructor or emergency response personnel of any missing individuals.
- Active Shooter – RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. If trapped, hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Call 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so. Follow instructions of emergency responders. · See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Procedures for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources-Principles of Professionalism

The College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point prepares students for success as professionals in many fields. As a professional, there are expectations of attainment of several personal characteristics. These include:

Integrity

Integrity refers to adherence to consistent moral and ethical principles. A person with integrity is honest and treats others fairly.

Collegiality

Collegiality is a cooperative relationship. By being collegial you are respecting our shared commitment to student education through cooperative interaction. This applies to all involved in the process: students, staff, faculty, administration and involved community members. You take collective responsibility for the work performed together, helping the group attain its goals.

Civility

Civility refers to politeness and courtesy in your interactions with others. Being civil requires that you consider the thoughts and conclusions of others and engage in thoughtful, constructive discussion to express your own thoughts and opinions.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity requires you to be aware that perspective and culture will control how communication is understood by others. While many values are shared, some are quite different. These differences in values should be both considered and respected.

Timeliness

Timeliness is the habit of performance of tasks and activities, planned in a way that allows you to meet deadlines. This increases workplace efficiency and demonstrates respect for others' time.

Respect for Property

Respect for property is the appreciation of the economic or personal value an item maintains. Maintaining this respect can both reduce costs (increase the operable life of supplies and equipment) as well as demonstrate respect for others' rights.

Communication

Professional norms in communication require that you demonstrate the value of your colleagues, students, professors or others. The use of appropriate tone and vocabulary is expected across all forms of communication, whether that communication takes place face to face, in writing or electronically.

Commitment to Quality

Quality is the ability to meet or exceed expectations. By having a commitment to quality, we intend to provide a learning environment that is conducive to learning. Intrinsic to this commitment to quality is defining expectation (committed to in a syllabus through learning outcomes), implementation (with quality control in place) and assessment (where meeting of learning outcomes is determined).

Commitment to Learning

Learning is a lifelong process. By being committed to learning you are providing a model for all to follow. This model is not only professor to student but involves all combinations of people within our university and broader community.

Online Academic Etiquette

We like to make some suggestions for good "digital citizenship" moving forward. First, please be aware that lectures (including your verbal questions, chats, etc.) are being recorded. If you don't want your video feed or image captured in a recording, then it is totally acceptable to keep your video feed "off". Verbal questions end up in a transcript. Chat-based statements also are recorded. Both will have your name associated with them and are part of the recorded lecture. This isn't that different from when you raise your hand to ask a question in class EXCEPT that there is now a recording associated with it. So, please take extra care to ask questions, answer questions, and use chats in a respectful way. Additionally, please keep in mind that your instructor's lectures are their intellectual property. In order to maintain a safe learning environment for everyone (so that students can ask questions freely and so that faculty can deliver material freely), it is critical that you DO NOT share Zoom links/passwords to lectures/discussion meetings OR Zoom recordings of the class with anyone outside of our class. Misuse of chats, sharing these links/passwords, or recordings will be considered a disruption of the classroom as a learning environment. Disruptions (even digital ones) could impact your grade in a negative way.

Adherence to this compact is required of the faculty and staff of the College of Natural Resources and of all students enrolled in College of Natural Resources courses.