

NRES 389: Methods in Social Science
Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45 on Zoom
Spring 2021 Syllabus

Course Instructor

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Zoom Office Hours: Tuesdays 9-10, Thursdays 2-3, other times by appointment

<https://uwsp.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>

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

Students are expected to participate in all class meetings synchronously. When logged into a Zoom session, students should be fully present and able to contribute to the conversation verbally or through the chat function at any time. Camera use will be required during certain Zoom sessions, unless the student makes prior arrangements with the instructor. Respectful language, images shared, and online behavior are required at all times. During a Zoom discussion session, students may be asked to write, draw, measure, engage in physical activities, watch a video, use instructional apps, observe nature outside or through a window, etc. Having access to a pen and paper during class will be helpful.

Privacy and Intellectual Property

Lectures and recordings of class meetings are posted to Canvas for students in this course only. You are not permitted to share them with individuals not currently registered for NRES 389.

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 Spring 2021

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
1	1/25	Introduction		
	1/27	Being smart consumers	C: Girl Scout impact studies	Reading Questions (RQs1)
2	2/1	Social science in the news	News article	Article post and presentation
	2/3	Asking good questions	O'Leary Ch 3	RQs 2 In-class exercise
3	2/8	Finding and using literature	O'Leary Ch 6	RQs 3
	2/10	Finding and using literature	C: McGregor	In-class exercise
4	2/15	Finding and using literature	C: HDNRM Faculty research	
	2/17	Social science variables	C: Ewert, Mitten, & Overholt	Research Questions RQs 4
5	2/22	<i>Research Project work day</i>		Annotated Bibliography
	2/24	Research/Eval designs	O'Leary Ch 8	RQs 5
6	3/1	Research/Eval designs	C: Henderson, Bialeschki & Browne	RQs 6
	3/3	Exam 1		
7	3/8	Research Ethics	C: TBD	RQs 7
	3/10	<i>CITI Training work day</i>		
8	3/15	Sampling	O'Leary Ch 11	CITI Training RQs 8
	3/17	Observation	O'Leary pp 250-260	RQs 9 In-class exercise
SPRING BREAK				
9	3/29	Questionnaires & Surveys	O'Leary pp 224-238 C: Patten	RQs 10
	3/31	Questionnaires & Surveys		In-class exercise
10	4/5	Interviews & Focus Groups	O'Leary pp 239-250	RQs 11
	4/7	Interviews & Focus Groups		In-class exercise
	4/9	Attend CNR Undergraduate Research Symposium		

11	4/12	<i>Research Project work day</i>		Methods Description Survey or Interview Questions
	4/14	Exam 2		
12	4/19	Quantitative Data Analysis	O'Leary Ch 14	RQs 12
	4/21	Quantitative Data Analysis		
13	4/26	Quantitative Data Analysis		In-class exercise
	4/28	Qualitative Data Analysis	O'Leary Ch 15 C: Saldana & Omasta	RQs 13
14	5/3	Qualitative Data Analysis		In-class exercise
	5/5	Literature Presentations		Literature Presentation and Feedback
15	5/10	Literature Presentations		Literature Presentation and Feedback
	5/12	Course Wrap-Up		
Finals		Exam 3		