

**Dr. Robin Rothfeder**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 - 2:15 pm**  
**TNR 271**

Office: TNR Room 180

Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10-11 am, or by appointment. I also have an open-door policy. If you stop by and my office is open, I will generally be available for a quick meeting.

Office Phone: 715-346-4091

E-mail: rrothfed@uwsp.edu (preferred method of contact)

---

## **I. Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to provide students in HDNRM with an introduction to social science research methods and their applications in natural resource management. These tools and skills are becoming increasingly important as the complex connections between humans and the environment become increasingly clear. It is an exciting time to enter this arena, as individuals, communities, businesses, and state and federal agencies work to improve conservation, advance sustainability and resilience, promote stewardship, and build awareness and understanding of complex social-ecological challenges and opportunities.

## **II. Teaching Philosophy and Approach**

My goal is to help you develop the knowledge, skills, and creativity required to address the sustainability challenges facing humanity, as well as creating and capitalizing on new opportunities. My teaching approach is to create a learning environment that is engaging, interactive, participatory, and hands-on. Every student will be responsible for a significant amount of the learning that takes place both inside and outside the classroom.

## **III. Learning Objectives**

Developing your research skills is an ongoing process of discovering, exploring, and refining a wide range of tools and methods. It is important for us to recognize that in natural resource social science most challenges cannot be addressed by applying just one type of research. More often, we will apply a 'mixed methods' approach, finding the best combination of different data and methods to achieve specific objectives in specific places. Over the course of this semester students will develop several social science research methods skills. By the end of the semester students will be able to:

1. Describe the role of human dimensions research in natural resource management;
2. Explain the purpose and function of different social science methods, including both theory-driven research and program evaluation;
3. Apply a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods to analyze social science variables and the relationships between them;
4. Compose a clear and complete research proposal targeted at a specific important issue in resource management; and
5. Communicate effectively about data, methods, and research results.

## IV. Course Materials

Textbook: *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*. Zina O’Leary, 2017 (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). SAGE Publications Inc.

Learning Platform: This course will use the online learning management software CANVAS. All assignments, discussions, instructor updates, non-textbook readings, and other course materials will be posted on the CANVAS platform.

## V. Assignments and Grading

### 1. Attendance and Participation (7.5%, 75 points total, with possible deductions up to 30%)

Because this course focuses on interactive work and discussion during class time, **class attendance is mandatory** except with prior agreement. Your final grade will be reduced by 10 points for each unexcused absence. Full credit will require consistent and enthusiastic participation in all class activities.

### 2. CANVAS Reading Discussions (10%, 100 points total)\*

To encourage timely and in-depth engagement with assigned material, there will be 10 online reading discussions during this semester, worth 10 points each. For every discussion, each student will be required to submit at least 1 detailed question about the readings and at least 1 detailed response to another student’s question; or, to make 2 or more posts in response to questions posed by the instructor. All posts will be due by 12:00 pm on Thursday for the week of the assigned readings.

### 3. In-Class Activities (15%, 150 points total)\*

This course will include a wide range of in-class activities that require you to practice and demonstrate the research tools and skills we discuss. There will be a total of 10 activities worth 15 points each. Activities will take place during class time and will be due by Friday (5 pm) the week they are assigned. Many activities will take place in the computer lab in CPS 105; please carefully note the course schedule to ensure that you are in the correct room on the correct day.

### 4. Case Study (7.5%, 75 points)

To help our class further explore complex topics in social science research, you will be assigned a case study to analyze and present for the rest of class, in groups of 3-4. These case studies will be based upon excellent examples of different research practices and methods in our field. Specific assignment instructions will be provided in the first month of class, as well as forming project teams.

### 5. CITI Training (7.5%, 75 points)

To gain further knowledge and experience in social science research, you will complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program for Human Subjects Research.

### 6. Research Proposal (25%, 250 points total)

This course will include a semester-long project, requiring you to compose a clear and complete research proposal targeted at a specific important issue in resource management that includes a human subjects component. In Part 1 of this project, you will specify a social science research question, review existing relevant literature, and produce a relationship map. In Part 2, you will detail methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. For the final deliverable, you will update, expand, and combine Parts 1 and 2, as well as completing the first 3 sections of the UWSP Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, which would be required to conduct this research.

### 7. Exams (20%, 200 points total)

The course will include a midterm and a final exam worth 100 points (10%) each, which will test your understanding of readings, lectures, and applied research tools and skills.

*\*The lowest score from both the reading discussion and in-class activity assignments will be dropped.*

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Points</b>
Thursdays, 12:00 pm	Reading Discussion (10 points each)	100
Fridays, 5 pm	In-class Activities (15 points each)	150
Sept. 27, 11:59 pm	Research Proposal Part 1: Question, Literature, Map	50
Oct. 18, 11:59 pm	CITI Training	75
Oct. 24, in class	Midterm Exam	100
Nov. 15, 11:59 pm	Research Proposal Part 2: Method and Methodology	50
See Schedule, in class	Case Study Presentations (group assignment)	150
Dec. 15, 11:59 pm	Final Research Proposal (including IRB sections 1-3)	150
Dec. 17, 8-10 am	Final Exam	100
Weekly	Course Participation	75
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,000</b>

## **VI. Course Policies**

### **1. Grading Scale**

92.6% or higher = A	72.6 – 77.5% = C
90.0 – 92.5% = A-	70.0 – 72.5% = C-
87.6 – 89.9% = B+	67.6 – 69.9% = D+
82.6 – 87.5% = B	62.6 – 67.5% = D
80.0 – 82.5% = B-	60.0 – 62.5% = D-
77.6 – 79.9% = C+	Less than 60% = F

### **2. Late Assignments**

To receive full credit, assignments must be submitted by the stated deadline. Assignments turned in after the deadline will be considered late and will be subject to a 10% per-day late penalty, including weekends. Deductions will be capped after one week, meaning that even very late assignment will be worth up to 30% of the total available points.

### **3. Academic Integrity**

All work (unless part of a group project) must be done independently. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero on the assignment. I encourage you to discuss any questions you may have about citation, paraphrasing, or related topics with me prior to turning in an assignment. In addition, assignments turned in through CANVAS will be linked to turnitin.com – a program that compares your work to other sources to check for originality. The UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities specifies the University policies regarding academic misconduct and disciplinary action available here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Academic-Misconduct.aspx>.

Please further note that free-riding will not be tolerated in group activities; no student will be allowed to share in the benefits of group work without completing their share of the workload. If there is a problem with the group dynamics, it is imperative that you call it to my attention at the earliest possible time. If your group would like to meet with me for assistance on a group project, I will make myself readily available. If evidence of a free-riding problem arises, we will attempt to address it at a group meeting. If the problem persists, the free-rider will be removed from the group by the instructor and will receive 0 points for the project.

#### **4. Other Course Policies**

- Unless otherwise noted (see schedule, below), the class will meet in TNR 271. However, many in-class activities will take place in the computer lab in CPS 105, and one will take place at Schmeckle Reserve. Students are responsible for keeping track of the location for each class period, as noted in the course schedule.
- Posting course materials onto course-sharing websites directly violates the instructor's copyright on his intellectual property; permission to do so is unequivocally denied.
- All written work is expected to be grammatically correct, neat, and well organized. Work that is sloppy, hard to read, does not follow the prescribed format, and/or contains many spelling and/or grammatical errors will receive a grade of zero points.
- Cell phones will be put into pockets/backpacks/bags or otherwise stowed away during lecture and discussion. Appearance of your cell phone during class will indicate your disinterest in the topic and will thus count as an absence, and you will lose attendance points when this occurs.

#### **5. Emergency Preparedness**

- In the event of a medical emergency, call 911 or use one of the red emergency telephones, which are located outside Room 151, outside Room 172, between Rooms 252 and 255, and between rooms 219 and 221 (across the hall). Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victims when instructed.
- In the event of a tornado warning, stay in the classroom. Lecture and discussion rooms in TNR both provide appropriate shelters.
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet at the northwest corner of parking lot E. Notify the instructor and/or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.
- Active Shooter – Run/Escapes, Hide, Fight. If trapped, hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of emergency responders.
- See the UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt) for details on all emergency response issues at UWSP.

#### **6. Accessibility Statement**

If you have a learning or physical challenge which requires classroom accommodation, please contact the UWSP Disability Services office with your documentation as early as possible in the semester:  
103 Student Services Center, (715) 346-3365; TTY (715) 346-3363;  
[www.uwsp.edu/special/disability/studentinfo.html](http://www.uwsp.edu/special/disability/studentinfo.html)

**\*\* THE SYLLABUS, ASSIGNMENTS, READINGS, GRADE WEIGHTS, AND COURSE SCHEDULE ARE ALL SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE INSTRUCTOR WILL NOTIFY THE STUDENTS AS SOON AS ANY SUCH CHANGES ARE MADE AND WILL PROVIDE UPDATED COURSE MATERIALS AS APPROPRIATE. \*\***

Date	Topic	Readings	In-Class Activity	Assignments
September 3	Introduction			
September 5	Consuming Research Wisely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science Isn't Broken</li> </ul>	Personal Inquiry – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 1 due 9/5 by noon</li> <li>CA 1 due 9/6 by 5 pm</li> </ul>
September 10	Methods Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary Chapter 8</li> </ul>	<i>Introduce Research Proposal Assignment</i>	
September 12	Terminology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick a HDNRM faculty research article</li> </ul>	Analyze faculty research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 2 due 9/12 by noon</li> <li>CA 2 due 9/13 by 5 pm</li> </ul>
September 17	Research Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary Chapter 3</li> </ul>	Research questions and relationship models	
September 19	Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary Chapter 6</li> </ul>	Literature search – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 3 due 9/19 by noon</li> <li>CA 3 due 9/20 by 5 pm</li> </ul>
September 24	Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary Chapter 11</li> </ul>		
September 26	Research Ethics, Human Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary Chapter 4</li> <li>Riddick and Russel</li> <li>Belmont Report</li> </ul>	<i>Introduce CITI Training Assignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 4 due 9/26 by noon</li> <li>Proposal Part 1 due 9/27 by 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
October 1	Questionnaires and Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary pp. 224-238</li> <li>Forest Service Chapter 5</li> </ul>	<i>Introduce Case Study Assignment, form teams</i>	
October 3	Questionnaires and Surveys		Survey exercise – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 5 due 10/3 by noon</li> <li>CA 4 due 10/4 by 5pm</li> </ul>
October 8	Interviews and Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary pp. 239-250</li> <li>Forest Service Chapter 6</li> </ul>		
October 10	Interviews and Focus Groups		Interview exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RD 6 due 10/10 by noon</li> <li>CA 5 due 10/11 by 5pm</li> </ul>
October 15	Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Leary pp. 250-260</li> </ul>		
October 17	Observation		Observation exercise – SCHMEECKLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CA 6 due 10/18 by 5 pm</li> </ul>
October 22	Exam Review, Work Day			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CITI due 10/22 by 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
October 24	Midterm Exam			

October 29	Quantitative Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O’Leary Chapter 14</li> <li>• Ewing and Park Chapter 7</li> </ul>		
October 31	Quantitative Analysis		Descriptive Stats, Visualization – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD 7 due 10/31 by noon</li> <li>• CA 7 due 11/1 by 5pm</li> </ul>
November 5	Quantitative Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ewing and Park Chapters 9-11</li> </ul>		
November 7	Quantitative Analysis		Inferential Statistics (comparisons, relationships) – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD 8 due 11/7 by noon</li> <li>• CA 8 due 11/8 by 5pm</li> </ul>
November 12	Qualitative Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O’Leary Chapter 15</li> <li>• Saldana and Omasta</li> </ul>		
November 14	Qualitative Analysis		Interview Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD 9 due 11/14 by noon</li> <li>• CA 9 due 11/15 by 5pm</li> <li>• Proposal Part 2 due 11/15 by 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
November 19	Population, Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O’Leary Chapter 13</li> <li>• Engaged Public Demography</li> </ul>		
November 21	Population, Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population Forecasts</li> </ul>	Future Population Projections – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD 10 due 11/21 by noon</li> <li>• CA 10 due 11/22 by 5pm</li> </ul>
November 26	Present Case Studies			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies due 11/26 by noon</li> </ul>
November 28	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>			
December 3	Present Case Studies			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies due 12/3 by noon</li> </ul>
December 5	Peer Reviews			
December 10	Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>		
December 12	Economic Development		Economic Analysis – LAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD 11 due 12/12 by noon</li> <li>• CA 11 due 12/13 by 5pm</li> <li>• Final Research Proposal due 12/15 by 11:59 pm</li> </ul>
December 17	Final Exam	Tuesday 12/17, 8-10 am, TNR 271		