

Course title: Research Methodology and Thesis Writing				
Course code: NRE 173	No. of credits: 2	L-T-P: 14-14-0	Learning hours: 28	
Pre-requisite course code and title (if any):				
Department: Department of Natural Resources				
Course coordinator:		Course instructor: Dr Swarup Dutta		
Contact details:				
Course type: Core		Course offered in: Semester 1		
Course Description The emphasis throughout the course is on students developing individual hypotheses and then applying appropriate research methods to test those hypotheses. Students will select an area of interest and develop a research question and a hypothesis concerning how two concepts relate to each other. They will use tools as discussed in class and understand the appropriate methodology followed while conducting independent research. The final output of the course will be a proposal that briefly outlines (10 pages) background, introduction, methodology that could potentially serve as the main proposal for a Master's thesis. The grade will be heavily dependent on the quality of this proposal and thus literary review, writing skill and ability to coherently test a hypothesis. A PowerPoint presentation at the 7 th week mark will test how far the student has been able to achieve this goal.				
Course objectives				
1. Introducing the student to the fundamental concepts and terminology of research as they relate to the field of research;				
2. Prepare the student to write and propose research ideas and				
3. Develop students' skills in using library and web resources				
Course content				
SNo	Topic	L	T	P
1.	What is a Master's Thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sample proposals and what the thesis looked like upon completion Assignment: 3-4 research ideas (1/2-1 page)	2	1	
2.	Introduction: How to frame a statement of the problem as precisely as possible & discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What the Study is about; ▪ Major objectives of the Study; and ▪ Justification of the choice for your topic. Assignment: Based on selected idea write an introduction + hypothesis (1 page)	2	4	
3.	Background to the Study: How to provide background information in as much detail as appropriate, but as precisely as possible. Eg. A study on water pollution, the background information could include: When the pollution was discovered; Source (if known); Geographic location and extent of contamination; Number of people affected; etc. Impacts on environment and human health effects Assignment: Write a background for the research idea and hypothesis (1 /2 pages)	2	3	
4.	Literature Review:	2	2	

	<p>What are the components of a good literary review? How to selectively discuss the literature pertaining to study, with 2 critical components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Previous studies related are examined and analyzed; ▪ Gaps left behind by such studies, which you seek to bridge in your study. <p>Assignment: Distinguish between Background and Introduction sections (3 pages each)</p>			
5.	<p>Methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All methods used in collecting your data (e.g. structured survey, elite interviews, aggregate data, focus group, etc.), with a justification for each method used; ▪ If questionnaires, general contents and how it will be administered and how to appendix for the report; ▪ Sample studied by addressing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What is the total population from which the sample will be selected? (ii) How to select the final sample to make it representative? <p>Assignment: Write the methodology section to include all possible analysis to be used (2 page)</p>	4	3	
6.	<p>Pitfalls: What are the likely pitfalls one may encounter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case studies <p>Assignment: 1 page list</p>	2	1	
Total		14	14	
<p>Evaluation criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class participation: 20% ▪ 1 PowerPoint/presentation: 20% ▪ 1 paper: 60% (10% each assignment) 				
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should be able to identify a research problem stated in a study and define it. 2. Students should be able to distinguish a purpose statement, a research question or hypothesis, and a research objective 3. Students should be familiar with the steps involved in identifying and selecting a good instrument to use in a study 				
<p>Pedagogical approach</p>				
<p>Materials Required text</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strunk W. and White E.B. (1999) <i>The Elements of Style</i>, Longman; 4th Edition. <p>Suggested readings</p> <p>Case studies Websites</p> <p>Journals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. International Journal of Social Research Methodology 2. Journal of Mixed Methods Research 				

Additional information (if any)
Student responsibilities The students are expected to submit assignments in time and come prepared with readings when provided.

Course Reviewers