

**Wilderness & Civilization Field Studies**  
**NRSM 273 Spring 2016**  
**1 credit, Traditional Grade**  
**Missouri River Breaks National Monument**  
**April 21-24, 2016**

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***Course Format and Philosophy***

NRSM 273 is an experiential course designed to connect you with the history, ecology, politics and culture of the Missouri River region. The Missouri River field trip will introduce us to a range of speakers—managers, agency employees, ecologists, conservation activists, and others. We will gather information, not just about the issues and people we meet along the river, but also about the ecology and human history of the Missouri River National Monument and the Monument's current threats and opportunities.

The assignments for this 1 credit course require that you draw up on your observation and reflection skills developed in the fall semester. We expect that your field journal be used to record your observations in a creative and personal way. Your journal should also be a place where you reflect on your learning, share your discoveries, and make connections to your personal life. Specific course requirements are described below.

***Course Requirements***

This field course is mandatory for students wishing to receive a Wilderness Studies minor in the Wilderness and Civilization Program.

***Evaluation***

Participation—discussion group, etiquette on trip	50%
Observation Component (2 field journal entries)	20%
Reflection Paper	20%
Environmental Education Lesson	10%

### ***Participation Component (50% of grade)***

1. To continue conversations begun during the fall field trips and delve further into the complexities presented on the Missouri trip in a way that we may not be able to given time constraints or the presence of a speaker.
2. In group discussions and conversations, to make connections between what we experience on the fieldtrips and what you learned in your other Wilderness and Civilization courses.

### ***Observation Component: 2 Field Notes (20% of grade)***

*Due May 2, 2016*

The goal of the observation component is to offer a thorough description of the place. By simply reading your field notes the reader should be able to imagine the area in detail: its history, weather, habitat, etc. Use your Plants of the Rocky Mountains as a resource for this section, as well as notes on how to take a Field Note from the fall semester (see syllabus for NRSM 273 Fall semester 2015). Take note of what is around you and describe the place rather than listing its characteristics. Good observations involve your own discoveries about the place. Your 2 field note entries must include all of the following:

- Date**
- Location** (include a map- any scale is appropriate)
- Views** (identify natural features; learn the mountains and mountain ranges, rivers, valleys, etc.)
- Elevation**
- Weather conditions**
- Geology**
- Birds/wildlife** (what do you see, hear, find evidence of)
- Plants** (consider the dominant tree, shrub, and ground layer species, and use Plants of the Rocky Mountains to identify new plants)
- Habitat type** (both macro **and** micro: consider type-forest, grassland, meadow, alpine, riparian; moisture levels slope, etc.)
- Drawings and leaf specimens**
- History** (consider native uses of the area, modern human uses and impact, and natural disturbance)
- Ownership** (is this state, private, federal or another kind of land)

## ***Reflection/Analysis Component (20% of grade)***

*Due May 2, 2016*

In the reflection/analysis component you are asked to make connections, ask questions, and think critically about what you have seen and heard. You might consider how land ownership effects management, what your speakers agenda/perspective is, how you would manage the place, what kind of impact the trip had on you personally, and how the trip connects to your personal life. You do not need to report *information* that you learned here, but rather focus on your own thoughts, ideas, and reflections.

This reflection section is also a place to consider what you've learned in the Wilderness and Civilization program, to make connections between courses, and to relate all of these experiences to your own life, your dreams, frustrations, and practices. The journal is a place to specifically focus on wilderness, your experience of it, and how your learning connects to your life. Use it to *reflect* on the wild and your experience of it; work on ideas from readings, speakers or discussions, explore joys and fears, and push yourself on topics that frustrate or inspire you.

You are required to write a minimum of one 8 1/2 x 11 inch sized sheet of paper per reflection period (if your journal is smaller, estimate a comparable number of pages). If you have any questions about your journal, want to talk about how it's going, or have writer's block, then please see Natalie.

*This section will be evaluated based on creativity, originality, critical analysis, and ability to form meaningful connections.*

*Reflection and analysis is required for all field trips.*

## ***Missouri River Environmental Education Lesson (10%)***

You will be required to design and lead a 5 minute environmental education lesson on the Missouri River trip. This lesson needs to relate to the natural or cultural history of the Missouri River. The format of the lesson is up to you. The Wilderness Institute has resources on the Missouri River that might be helpful to you.

Possible topics include: aspects of the Lewis and Clark journey, cottonwoods and storms, cottonwood ecosystems and floods, sagebrush, geology of the white cliffs area, geology of the badlands area, Native American history, early trapper history, ethnobotany, beaver ecology, Canada geese, white pelicans, big horn sheep, pallid sturgeon, steamboat history, early white settlement, the Big Open, meadowlarks, the Wild and Scenic River designation, National Monument designation, wilderness study areas and their status, the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, dams and agricultural irrigation, and much more.

**You will need to be prepared to give your lesson at any time during the trip; research and other preparation must therefore be done while in Missoula.** Please feel free to ask for ideas regarding sources of information and presentation/teaching methods. The leaders on the Missouri River will evaluate your presentation based on clarity, creativity, and accuracy of information.

***Schedule of Events:***

***Thursday, April 21***

**TBA** Leave University of Montana campus and drive to Coal Banks MT in (near Fort Benton, MT). Camp at Coal Banks.

***Friday, April 22***

**7am** run the shuttle for the vehicles

**12pm** Put in on the river and paddle to Eagle Creek

Camp at Eagle Creek

Opportunity to hike while at Eagle Creek

6pm **dinner**

***Saturday, April 23***

8 am Breakfast, independent journaling time

9am Begin paddling towards Slaughter River (21 river miles) Stop

at Hole in the Wall

Stop at Dark Butte

Potentially help with BLM monitoring project (watering trees)

6pm Camp at Slaughter River and **dinner**

***Sunday, April 24***

8am-breakfast, journaling

9am-paddle towards Judith Landing (3 hours/12 river miles) to Judith Landing take-out with more BLM tree watering.

1pm-take-out at Judith Landing

2pm-return to Missoula with a short stop at the Fort Benton interpretive center