

HEADWATERS REGIONAL STUDIES (HWTR)

Western Colorado University sits near the headwaters of the major rivers of the American Southwest and the lower Midwest—the South Platte and Arkansas Rivers that are part of the great Mississippi-Missouri Basin, the Rio Grande, and the central tributaries of the Colorado River. Surrounded by the geographically, ecologically, and culturally diverse “learning laboratories” of the Headwaters region, Western is uniquely situated for using “place” as a medium for integrated learning. These two Headwaters classes are designed to help students develop cross-disciplinary relationships with the qualities of the region that attract many students to the University.

Headwaters Courses

HWTR 100. First Year Seminar. (1 Credit)

An introduction to Western’s interactive educational experience and the diverse learning environments of the Gunnison Valley. Through a multidisciplinary study of the Headwaters region, this course provides students with skills for success in higher education and access to resources in the campus community. A discussion-based seminar, course may include regular convocations, community service projects, workshops, and field experiences. Academic themes include an introduction to the liberal arts, community sustainability, and the social, natural, and cultural surroundings of the region. First year students are required to attend Orientation and are expected to enroll in the first year seminar.

HWTR 200. This Is The Headwaters. (1 Credit)

A fall offering that gives students a broad cross-disciplinary overview of the Headwaters Region surrounding the College, with some field trips out into the region and an opportunity to look into some of the issues impacting the region.

HWTR 398. Headwaters Conference. (1 Credit)

An annual two-day gathering on campus each fall, bringing together writers and scholars, local community leaders and activists, artists, government officials, and other interested citizens from the colleges and communities of the Headwaters Region to consider challenges and opportunities confronting the region. Students attend and participate in the conference and write a paper about the experience in the context of their own lives and future plans. Students attend and participate in the conference, complete applied research projects throughout the month following the conference, and write a paper about the experience in the context of their own lives and future plans. Student may take the course four times for additional credit. Prerequisite: junior standing or instructor permission.