

1-1-2014

## Inquiry-Based Geology Field Course for In-Service Educators

David Harwood  
*University of Nebraska*

Kyle Thompson  
*University of Nebraska*

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### Recommended Citation

Harwood, David and Thompson, Kyle (2014) "Inquiry-Based Geology Field Course for In-Service Educators," *University of Wyoming National Park Service Research Center Annual Report*: Vol. 37 , Article 18.

Available at: [http://repository.uwyo.edu/uwnpsrc\\_reports/vol37/iss1/18](http://repository.uwyo.edu/uwnpsrc_reports/vol37/iss1/18)

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# INQUIRY-BASED GEOLOGY FIELD COURSE FOR IN-SERVICE EDUCATORS

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**DAVID HARWOOD ◆ KYLE THOMPSON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EARTH AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES AND**  
**CENTER FOR MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA ◆ LINCOLN, NB**



**Figure 1.** Eight educators in western Nebraska on their way to Wyoming to explore the geological history of the Rocky Mountains and new teaching methods of scientific inquiry.

## ◆ CLASS OVERVIEW

Eight in-service teachers and two instructors engaged in an inquiry-based geology field course from June 14 to 29, 2014 through Wyoming, South Dakota, and Nebraska. This team of learners spent three days in mid-June working in the Grand Teton National Park area. The UW-NPS facilities provide an excellent opportunity for participants to discover the natural history of the Teton Range, as well as close-out a few projects while sitting in a real chair, at a real table, a welcome change from our usual campground setting.

## ◆ COURSE BACKGROUND

The 3-credit graduate course at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, *Methods in Field-based Geoscience Instruction* - GEOS 898, is a 16-day, inquiry-based field course offered for in-service teachers and pre-service education students to expose them to inquiry-based learning. This course comprises a science immersion and discovery experience in Wyoming, Nebraska and South Dakota. The primary aim of this course is to improve educators' ability to teach using scientific inquiry, to gain knowledge and an understanding of the geosciences, and to demonstrate effective teaching methods that can integrate geoscience into K-12 learning environments. This field course offers an opportunity to discover the

geological history of the Rocky Mountains and experience and discuss inquiry-based scientific methods. The group built upon their growing geological knowledge to investigate the geological evolution of the Teton Range. The spirit of the 2014 course was captured in a short video that aired as part of the Nebraska public television program “Nebraska Stories.” Please find this program at: <http://video.netnebraska.org/video/2365367432/>



**Figure 2.** A mirror-calm setting at the UW-NPS Research Center’s boat ramp welcomed our group.