

**DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES-IIHS
HIMACHAL PRADESH UNIVERSITY
(NAAC Accredited 'A' Grade University)
Summer Hill, Shimla- 171005**



REGULATIONS AND SYLLABUS
Course Work of Ph.D in Rural Development (Interdisciplinary)
(To be implemented from 2025 – 26 onwards)

Annexure 'B'
[CBCS]

Approved by PG Board of Studies (School of Development Studies) in its meeting held on
7th May 2026

Approved by Faculty of Environment, Development and Sustainability Studies in its meeting held
on **14th May 2026**

SCHEME AND COURSES OF READING FOR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT (INTER-DISCIPLINARY)

The following detailed syllabus, under Choice Based Credit System for Course Work for PhD in Rural Development (Inter-disciplinary) to be offered by the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies was prepared by the Department Council. The PG BoS reviewed the same and after making some changes approved and recommended this syllabus on 7th May 2026. The Faculty of Environment, Development and Sustainability Studies accorded its approval to this syllabus on 14th May 2026. The scheme is placed before the Academic Council/ Executive Council for approval for implementation from 2025-26 onwards.

Course Work for Ph.D. in Rural Development (Inter-disciplinary)

There shall be three courses of study and one Thesis.

The Course work is: (i) in addition to the thesis which every PhD student is required to complete under the supervision of a thesis supervisor allotted for the purpose, (ii) is compulsory for all students who are admitted to the Ph.D programme.

NOTE: Students who have already completed their M. Phil Degree are exempt from course work as per HP University Ordinance 16.5 (c). However, they will have to complete the RPE-PhD Discipline Specific Course titled: Research Publication and Ethics if during their M.Phil they have not studied such a course.

Table 1: Courses with Codes, Credits, Contact Hours and Marks Scheme for Ph.D. in Rural Development (Inter-disciplinary)

Courses Code	Nature of Course	Course Name	Credits	Theory Contact Hours (L-5 Hrs/Tutorial-1 Hrs)		Marks Scheme
				Lecture Hrs.	Tutorial (Seminar/Assignment /GD) Credits	
PDRDC11	DSC	Research Methodology for Rural Development	5	4	1	100
PDRDC12	DSC	Advanced Rural Development	5	4	1	100
RPE-PhD	DSC	Research and Publication Ethics	2	1	1	50
Grand Total			12	9	3	250

EXPLANATORY NOTE:

I. In Reference to Table 1 the following points A) and B) are relevant:

A). COURSE CODE DESCRIPTIONS: codes for the course are explained as follows:

- i. Discipline Specific Core Courses (DSC), e.g., PDRDC11

- ii. **Here:** In **PDRDC**: **PD** denotes Ph.D (Doctor of Philosophy); **R** denotes Rural, **D** denotes Development, **C** denotes Compulsory Course. Similarly, **11** represent 1st Semester 1st Course.
- iii. The student is required to complete the coursework within six months of admission to the PhD Programme.

B). THIS COURSE WORK IS:

- i. Compulsory for all students who are admitted to the PhD programme after post-graduation (in the subjects considered eligible for the admission to Ph.D. in Rural Development) based on entrance test/JRF/any other scholarship as permitted by Himachal Pradesh University, without M. Phil. (in the subjects considered eligible for the admission to Ph.D. in Rural Development (Interdisciplinary Studies)). This is in accordance with the provisions of Clause 16.5 (c) of the Ordinance of this University.
- ii. Not applicable to students who have successfully completed M. Phil in the subjects considered eligible for the admission to Ph.D. in Rural Development (Interdisciplinary Studies). However, such students will have to complete the RPE-PhD Discipline Specific Course titled: Research Publication and Ethics, if their M.Phil coursework did not include such a course.
- iii. In addition to the thesis which every PhD student is required to complete under the supervision of a thesis supervisor allotted for the purpose.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

- i. Number of seats, eligibility, basis of admission, age limit, reservation, fee structure, scheme of examination and qualifying marks will be as per the University rules as prescribed in the Himachal Pradesh University Ordinance and Handbook of Information from time to time.
- ii. In case of any ambiguity or conflict in provisions, the HP University Ordinance/Guidelines adopted by this University shall always prevail.

III. DURATION

As per HP University Ordinance/Rule

IV. SCHEME OF COURSES

Three Discipline Specific Core (DSC) Courses constitute the course work for Ph.D. Programme in Rural Development (Inter-disciplinary).

Table 2: Type & Number of Courses to be completed

Courses	Number	Remark
Discipline Specific Core Courses (DSC)	03	Course work is to be completed within time period as specified in the HP University PhD Ordinance.
Total Number of Courses	03	

Discipline Specific Core Compulsory Courses (03 Core Courses)

- i. The syllabi for DSC course code PDRDC-11, course code PDRDC-12 are specified in five units and course code RPE-PhD is specified in six units.
- ii. **Instructions to the paper setter:**
 - a. Instructions to the paper setter for RPE-PhD are given along with the syllabus.
 - b. Question papers for PDRDC-11, and PDRDC-12 shall consist of eleven questions in all. The first ten (10) questions of explanatory answers (1,2,3,.....10) of twelve (12) marks each will consists of one question from each unit, with internal choice provided, meaning there will be two (2) questions from each unit (5 X 2=10). The student will be required to attempt one question from each Unit. The eleventh (11th) question will consist of ten (10) short answer type question using roman numerals (i, ii,iii,.....x) each with five (5) marks covering all the units. The students will be required to attempt any eight (8) questions out of ten (10).
 - c. Duration of each DSC examination will be three (3) hours.

V. SCHEME OF EXAMINATION FOR COURSE WORK MARKS Allotted to each paper

- i. DSC papers (PDRDC11 and PDRDC12) shall be of 100 marks and qualifying marks in then two Courses shall be 50 per cent i.e., 50 marks in each paper.
- ii. DSC paper RPE-PhD shall be of 50 marks and qualifying marks in this course shall be 50 per cent i.e., 25 marks.

VI. PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Over the duration of study, students are expected to:

1. Acquire rigorous research skills, including research design, data collection, data analysis, and academic writing, enabling them to conduct high-quality, independent research in Rural Development.
2. Develop a deep understanding of key theories, concepts, and interdisciplinary perspectives relevant to Rural Development.
3. Gain the ability to critically analyze emerging challenges in rural society, economy, governance, environment, and development policies.
4. Generate original research outcomes that contribute to academic scholarship and policy debates in the field of Rural Development.
5. Integrate insights from multiple disciplines to create holistic, evidence-based solutions to rural development challenges.
6. Be exposed to global trends, best practices, and contemporary debates in Rural Development, enabling them to contextualize research at both national and international levels.
7. Apply research findings to practical field situations, policy formulation, and development interventions at grassroots levels.
8. Follow high standards of academic integrity, ethics, and professionalism throughout the research process.

9. Acquire the capability to present research findings clearly and effectively to academic, professional, and community audiences.
10. Be prepared to take leadership roles in academia, research institutions, development organizations, and government bodies working in the domain of Rural Development.

DSC Course Code: PDRDC11

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Credits: 5

Course Objectives:

- To develop advanced research competence in Rural Development
- To integrate AI, GIS, Big Data & Digital Survey Tools in research
- To strengthen skills in impact evaluation & evidence-based policy research
- To align research with SDGs, climate resilience & sustainability
- To promote ethical, plagiarism-free and publication-ready research

Module	Topic
I	PURPOSE, TYPES & RESEARCH DESIGN • Types of research: Basic, Applied, Action, Participatory Action Research (PAR) • Quantitative, Qualitative & Mixed-Methods Research • Exploratory, Descriptive, Experimental & Quasi-experimental designs • Longitudinal, Survey, Diagnostic, Correlational & Ethnographic designs • Interdisciplinary, Transdisciplinary & Evidence-based Research • Introduction to SDGs & Sustainability-focused Research
II	RESEARCH PROBLEM, HYPOTHESIS & VARIABLES • Research problem identification in rural context • Hypothesis formulation & testing • Concept, constructs & working definitions • Types of variables (independent, dependent, intervening, control) • Operational & constitutive definitions • Theory of Change (ToC) & Conceptual Framework
III	CASE STUDY METHODS • Meaning, nature & purpose of case study method • Historical development: Contribution of Goode & Hatt – Methods in Social Research • Types of case studies: Exploratory, Descriptive, Explanatory, Comparative, Embedded • Steps in conducting a case study: selection, unit of analysis, data collection, triangulation • Case study tools: interviews, observations, documents, digital archives • Validity, reliability, ethical issues & reflexivity in case studies • Applications in Rural Development: SHGs, FPOs, Panchayats, flagship schemes, livelihoods, climate change adaptation • Use of Digital & AI tools in case studies: audio–video documentation, NVivo, Atlas.ti
IV	METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION & TOOL DEVELOPMENT (a) Quantitative Methods • Structured, Semi-structured & Standardized questionnaires

	• Digital survey tools: Google Forms, KoboToolbox, ODK (CAPI/CATI) • Scaling: Likert, Thurstone • Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) & Validity (b) Qualitative Methods • Informal & In-depth interviews, IDI & KII • Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Case Study • Observation, Ethnography, Digital Ethnography • PRA/RRA tools (Transect walk, Social mapping, Seasonal calendar) • Thematic & Narrative analysis
V	PRA/RRA, MICRO-PLANNING, M&E & RESEARCH WRITING (a) PRA/RRA & Micro-Planning • Social & Resource Mapping • Matrix Ranking, Seasonal Analysis, Transect Walk • Livelihood, Gender & Climate Risk Mapping • Participatory GIS (PGIS) • Micro-Plan / GPDP preparation (b) Monitoring, Evaluation & Research Writing • Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) frameworks • Logical Framework Analysis (LFA), Outcome Mapping • Impact Evaluation of flagship schemes (MGNREGA, NRLM, PMFBY, DDU-GKY) • Proposal & research report writing & Open Science Framework • Referencing: APA 7th style

Suggested Reading

1. Kothari, C.R. & Garg, G. – Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques
2. Creswell, John W. & Creswell, J. D. – Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches
3. Ranjit Kumar – Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners
4. Alan Bryman – Social Research Methods
5. Sharan B. Merriam & Elizabeth J. Tisdell – Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation
6. Shubik, M. (1982) – Game Theory in Social Sciences, MIT Press, Cambridge
7. UNDP – Human Development Reports & SDG Framework- Various Reports
8. FAO – Digital Agriculture & Rural Transformation Reports
9. World Bank – Impact Evaluation in Development Programs
10. OECD – Evaluation of Rural Development Policies
11. ESRI / QGIS Documentation – GIS for Development Planning & Rural Mapping
12. UNESCO & ICSSR Reports – Research Ethics, Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
13. PRISMA Group – Systematic Review & Meta-Analysis Guidelines
14. Government of India (MoRD / NITI Aayog) – Guidelines on MGNREGA, NRLM, PMFBY, DDU-GKY & Rural Development Programmes

DSC Course Code: PDRDC12
ADVANCED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Credits: 5

Course Objectives:

- To understand classical, contemporary and critical theories of rural development
- To analyze governance, decentralization and participatory institutions in rural India
- To examine changing rural markets, consumer behaviour & digital economy
- To build capacity in rural HRM, organizational leadership and institution building
- To evaluate rural inequality, poverty, sustainability and SDG-based development strategies
- To integrate climate change, digital transformation and rural entrepreneurship into development planning

Module	Topics
1	THEORIES & MODELS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT • Growth vs development and sustainable livelihoods • Classical theories: Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, J.S. Mill • Modern theories: Rostow's Stages, Dependency theory (Marx), Structuralism • Gandhian & Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism • Amartya Sen's Capability Approach • Inclusive Growth, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), HDI & resilience-based models
II	RURAL GOVERNANCE & DECENTRALISATION • Evolution of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) • 73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendments • Devolution of 3Fs – Functions, Funds & Functionaries • Role of Gram Sabha, GPDP & participatory planning • E-Governance & Digital Panchayats • Social Audit, transparency & accountability • Role of SHGs, FPOs & CBOs in development
III	RURAL CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR & EMERGING TRENDS • Rural vs urban consumer behaviour • Behavioural theories: Maslow, Herzberg, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) • Attitude, perception, motivation & SBCC / BCC approaches • Digital India, ONDC, CSCs, FinTech & Agri-tech platforms • Sustainable consumption & Circular Economy • Climate-smart rural markets & entrepreneurship
IV	RURAL HRM & ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR • Strategic HRM in rural development organizations • Recruitment, training & skill development (DDU-GKY, PMKVY) • Gender-inclusive HR practices • Classical, Neo-classical & Modern OB theories

	• Transformational & Participative Leadership • Social capital & institution-building in SHGs, NGOs & FPOs
V	RURAL SOCIETY, POVERTY & SUSTAINABILITY • Structure of rural society: caste, class, gender & power • Social change: modernization, globalization & digitalization • GESI – Gender Equality & Social Inclusion • Poverty measurement: MPI, HDI, SDG indicators • Role of schemes: MGNREGA, NRLM, PMFBY, DDU-GKY • Sustainable livelihood strategies: microfinance, skills, green jobs • Climate resilience, renewable energy & adaptation strategies

Suggested Reading

1. Amartya Sen – Development as Freedom
2. Frank Ellis – Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries
3. Michael Todaro & Stephen Smith – Economic Development
4. Robert Chambers – Rural Development: Putting the Last First
5. George Mathew – Panchayati Raj in India
6. UNDP – Human Development Reports / Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Reports
7. FAO – Digital Agriculture and Rural Transformation
8. World Bank / OECD – Rural Policy & Governance Reports
9. Government of India (MoRD & NITI Aayog) – MGNREGA, NRLM, PMFBY, SDG India Index Reports
10. Robbins & Judge / Armstrong – Organizational Behavior & HRM in Development Context

Course Code: RPE-PhD
(Common for all Ph.D. students of Himachal Pradesh University)

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION ETHICS

Credits: 2

Course Description

This course has a total of 6 units focusing on the basics of philosophy of science and ethic, research integrity, and publication ethics. Hands-on sessions are designed to identify research misconduct and predatory publications. Indexing and citation databases, open-access publications, research metrics (citations, h-index, Impact Factor, etc.), and plagiarism tools will be discussed in this course.

Course Objectives:

- Promote the importance of research integrity.
- Discuss the principles of publication ethics.
- Educate on identifying research misconduct and predatory publishing.
- Discuss indexing and citation databases.
- Provide information on open-access publications and research metrics.
- Introduce various plagiarism detection tools.

Evaluation

Continuous assessment will be conducted through tutorials, assignments, quizzes, and group discussions. At the end of the course, a final written examination of 50 Marks will be conducted.

1. Students who have at least 75% attendance in classes will be considered eligible for the final written examination.
2. The exam will be conducted for three-hour duration.

Note for Paper Setter

There will be 7 questions covering all the units. The first six questions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6) of 6 marks each will consist of one question from each unit, with internal choice provided, meaning there will be two questions from each unit. The 7th question will consist of 10 short answer type question using Roman numerals (i, ii, iii.... x) each with 2 marks. There will be at least one question for each unit, and students will be required to attempt any seven questions out of ten.

Module	Topics
1	PHILOSOPHY and ETHICS • Introduction to philosophy: definition, nature, scope, concepts, and branches. • Ethics: definition, moral philosophy, and the nature of moral judgments and reactions.
II	SCIENTIFIC CONDUCT • Ethics in science and research. • Intellectual honesty and research integrity. • Scientific misconduct: Falsification, Fabrication, and Plagiarism (FFP). • Redundant publications: duplicate and overlapping publications, salami slicing.

	• Selective reporting and data misrepresentation.
III	PUBLICATION ETHICS • Definition, introduction, and importance of publication ethics. • Best practices and standard-setting initiatives (COPE, WAME, etc.). • Conflicts of interest in research and publishing. • Types and causes of publication misconduct. • Violation of publication ethics, authorship, and contributorship. • Identification of publication misconduct, complaints, and appeals. • Predatory publishers and journals.
IV	OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING • Open-access publications and initiatives. • SHERPA/ROMEO: Online resource for publisher copyright & self-archiving policies. • Software tools to identify predatory publications (developed by SPPU). • Journal finder tools: JANE, Elsevier Journal Finder, Springer Journal Finder, etc.
V	PUBLICATION MISCONDUCT A. GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS • Subject-specific ethical issues, FFP, and authorship concerns. • Conflicts of interest in research publications. • Complaints and appeals: Case studies from India and abroad. B. SOFTWARE TOOLS • Use of plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin, Urkund, and open-source alternatives.
VI	DATABASES AND RESEARCH METRICS A. DATABASES • Indexing databases. • Citation databases: Web of Science, Scopus, etc. B. RESEARCH METRICS • Journal Impact Factor (Journal Citation Report), SNIP, SJR, IPP, Cite Score. • Researcher metrics: h-index, g-index, i10-index, and altmetrics.

Suggested Readings

1. Beall, J. (2012). Predatory publishers are corrupting open access. Nature, Vol. 489(7415), 179 <https://doi.org/10.1038/489179a>.
2. Bird, A. (2006). Philosophy of Science. Routledge.
3. Bretag, Tracey (2016). The Handbook of Academic Integrity. Springer.
4. Chaddah, P. (2018) Ethics in Competitive Research: Do not get scooped, do not get Plagiarized ISBN:978-9387480865.
5. Grudniewicz, Agnes, D. Moher, Kelly D. Cobey+32 authors (2019). Predatory journals: no definition, no defense. Nature, Vol. 576.
6. Indian National Science Academy (2019). Ethics in Science Education, Research and Governance (2019). ISBN:978-81-939482-1-7. <http://www.insaindia.res.in/pdf/EthicsBook.pdf>

7. Israel, Mark, Iain Hay (2006). Research Ethics for Social Scientists. London.
8. Lang, James M. (2013). Cheating Lessons. Learning from Academic Dishonesty. Harvard University Press.
9. MacIntyre, Alasdair (1967). A Short History of Ethics. London.
10. National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering and Institute of Medicine.
11. (2009). On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research. Third Edition. National Academies Press.
12. Resnik, D. B. (2011). What is ethics in research & why is it important. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 1-10.
<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm>
13. Whitley Jr., Bernard E. & Patricia Keith-Spiegel (2001), Academic Dishonesty. An Educator's Guide. Psychology Press.