

REL 2071: RELIGION AND SUSTAINABILITY SUMMER A 2021

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OVERVIEW

This course examines the relationship between religion and sustainability and explores how the world's different religious traditions address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Topics include social and environmental justice, sustainable consumption and sustainable agriculture. Case studies highlight multiple religious perspectives, especially in Latin America and South Asia.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand and learn to effectively communicate the concept of sustainability, the practical issues it involves, and the interdisciplinary nature of its concerns, with particular attention to humanistic dimensions;
2. Students will learn how religion relates to core aspects of sustainability, including its ecological, social, and economic dimensions;
3. Students will learn how diverse cultures, religious traditions, and local communities address problems of sustainability;
4. Students will be able to evaluate the role and effectiveness of a broad range of methods, theories, perspectives, and frameworks relating to humanistic and religious approaches to sustainability;
5. Students will work collaboratively and in multidisciplinary teams on class projects;
6. Students will learn to approach concrete problems, including the case studies addressed in course readings and discussions, in a holistic manner that benefits from interdisciplinary knowledge, systems thinking, and broad stakeholder engagement.

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be entirely online asynchronous, thus, you must be self-directed and proactive assignments and expectations. This is a standard, 3 credit hour course with the same work obligations as an in-person, online synchronous, or full semester course, so you must work at an accelerated pace due to the abbreviated nature of Summer A. You are expected to check our Canvas site daily in order to meet course expectation and complete your assignments. **Please note, extensions will only be granted for the Short Essays in extraordinary circumstances. All other assignments submitted after the due date will receive a zero without proper, written, prior documentation.**

GENERAL EDUCATION DESCRIPTION

HUMANITIES DESCRIPTION

This course fulfills the Humanities (H) General Education Objective by providing instruction in the key themes, principles, terminology, and theories of Religious Studies. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought, especially pertaining to religion and sustainability. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

WRITING REQUIREMENT

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. This course carries 2000 words that count towards the University Writing Requirement. You must turn in all written work counting towards the 2000 words in order to receive credit for those words. The writing course grade assigned by the instructor has two components: the writing component and a course grade. **To receive writing credit a student must satisfactorily complete all the assigned written work and receive a minimum grade of C (2.0) for the course.** It is possible to fail to meet the writing requirement and still earn a minimum grade of C in a class, so students should review their degree audit after receiving their grade to verify receipt of credit for the writing component.

The writing requirement for this course will be fulfilled by the two essays. Through writing students will learn to organize their arguments with an appropriate thesis statement, detailed outline, adequate and relevant support for arguments, and clear and correct writing style. In writing assignments, students demonstrate skills in framing arguments, developing plans (outlines), identifying appropriate and accurate support for arguments, and introducing and concluding papers in persuasive and clear ways.

Students will receive feedback from the instructor on the final papers, including comments and suggestions on both content and writing, within 2 weeks of submitting papers. This feedback will address content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics. I will provide specific guidelines for individual assignments closer to the time each is due.

In addition to the feedback from the instructor and the peer review, I encourage you to seek help from the university's Writing Studio (www.writing.ufl.edu), which offers support for writing in all fields and can be very helpful both in developing your first drafts and in polishing those drafts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Short Essays—(19% each, 38% total). Students will submit two, 1000 word essays over the course of the semester. Feedback in the form of a grade and corrections will be provided within one week of receipt of assignment. Additional guidelines will be posted to Canvas.

- a. Questions will draw from Modules 1-3. Your response should directly address the assigned readings without outside research. **Due Sunday, May 30th at 11:59pm.**

- b. Questions will draw from Modules 4 & 5. Your response should directly address the assigned readings without outside research. **Due Sunday, June 13th at 11:59pm.**

Quizzes—(27%). There will be seven quizzes over the course of the semester. With the exception of the syllabus quiz, each quiz will correspond with the listed module. All module quizzes may include any and all material from each module, including readings, lectures, and videos. The quizzes are composed of 10 multiple choice and True/False questions and you have a 15 minutes to complete them. The syllabus quiz is 15 points, while each module quiz is worth 20 points. You may earn a maximum of 135 points for the quizzes.

Group Presentation—(23%). After add/drop, students will be randomly assigned into groups of 4-6 students (dependent upon final number of enrolled in the course). Each group will create a Voicethread presentation on one of the available readings listed on the schedule **(20%)**. **The group presentation will be due by 9:35am on the day the reading is assigned.** In order to encourage an equitable division of labor, each group member will complete an anonymous peer review **(3% upon completion—may affect individual presentation grades)**.

Discussion Posts—(12%). Each module has two discussion posts which students will respond to by Monday and Thursday at 11:59pm. Students are to post an original response to the prompt in 200-300 words in a thoughtful and articulate manner, following standard academic writing guidelines. Students are then required to comment on a classmate's post within 24 hours of the original due date (Tuesday and Friday at 11:59pm). Students should engage their peers in good faith, demonstrating effort by furthering the conversation. **Simply agreeing or disagreeing with your classmates with a sentence or two will not warrant full credit.** Students may earn up to 5 points per discussion (3.5 per original post, 1.5 per peer response).

***Please note, late submissions will not be accepted and extensions will not be granted for Quizzes, Group Presentations, or Discussion Posts.**

GRADE SCALE

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>GPA points</u>
A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.67
B+	87-90	3.33
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	64-66	1.0
D-	60-63	0.67
E	0-59	0

POLICIES AND RULES

Policy on Late Assignments: Students may receive an extension on Short Essays only in extraordinary circumstances or with prior, written documentation. Whenever possible, requests should be submitted prior to the due date. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down a full letter grade for **each half day late (B+ to C+)**. **If the assignment is not submitted within 48 hours of the original due date it is an automatic zero.** Late submissions for quizzes, discussion posts, and the group presentation project will not be accepted without written documentation.

Please note, late work that involves technical difficulties with online submissions must be accompanied by a ticket number from UF Help Desk. If you have a problem accessing materials or submitting assignments, contact UF Help Desk immediately before contacting the instructor. If your ticket number indicates that you waited until the last minute to submit an assignment, an extension will not be granted.

Submitting Assignments: All assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas and screened for plagiarism through Turnitin.

Communication Guidelines: Students are encouraged to contact the instructor ufl.edu email for questions, clarifications, requests and assistance, academic or otherwise. **Do not contact the instructor via Canvas message or respond to assignment comments on Canvas.** If you would like to respond to a comment on an assignment, you must contact the instructor via ufl.edu email.

Please remember that your correspondences represent you and the way you regard your academic progress; all correspondences are to be written in a respectful, professional manner. Thus, written correspondences to the instructor or fellow classmates are official correspondences and should be approached with a degree of formality, not composed as you might structure text messages or chats. All emails must include a subject, polite greeting, direct and clear body, and a polite salutation; the instructor will request revision of correspondences that do not adhere to this format.

Additionally, students will be advised to “SEE SYLLABUS” for questions that students can answer easily by looking in the syllabus (quiz dates, for example). During the week the instructor requests 24 hours to reply to student emails (48 hours on weekends). *****In emergency situations that require immediate attention, please add ‘URGENT’ to the subject line of your message.*****

Academic Honesty: All work submitted must be completed without unauthorized assistance, collaboration, or deliberate misrepresentations. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else's material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her/them proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action. **I operate under a zero tolerance policy and any instance of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course;** in such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean. All UF students are expected to abide by the Student Conduct Code, which can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php> (Links to an external site.). If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code

as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. These can be found at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students who need classroom accommodations or other reasonable modifications to satisfy course criteria must register with the Disability Resource Center of the Dean of Students Office, who will work with you and the instructor to make appropriate arrangements. You can contact the Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565 or <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>.

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Writing Studio: If you want to improve your writing, the Writing Studio is a free service for current UF graduate and undergraduate students providing you with the opportunity to work one-on-one with a consultant to help you become a more effective writer. Appointments may be scheduled online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/schedule-an-appointment/>.

Health and Counseling: Health and counseling services are available for students in the event personal problems threaten to hinder academic performance. You can contact UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>; 352-392-1575, 301 Peabody Hall; Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 352-392-1171; Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 352-392-1161; and the University Police Department: 352-392-1111. For assistance with professional development and resume writing, you can consult the Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 352-392-1601.

SCHEDULE

Module 1: Introducing Sustainability

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	5/10	White, "The Historic Roots of our Ecological Crisis" Leopold, "The Land Ethic"
T	5/11	Excerpts from <i>The Bruntland Report</i> <i>World Scientists Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice</i>
W	5/12	Jenkins, "Sustainability Theory" Syllabus Quiz due at 11:59pm.
R	5/13	Kaza, "Why Environmental Humanities?" Hayhoe, "The most important thing you can do about climate change"

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
F	5/14	Brown, “The end times are here and I’m at Target” <i>The Ecological Footprint Calculator</i> Module 1 Quiz due at 11:59pm.

Module 2: The Academic Study of Religion (and Sustainability)

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	5/17	McCutcheon, “What is the Academic Study of Religion?” Religion for Breakfast, “The Academic Study of Religion Explained”
T	5/18	Bauman et al., “Introduction” —“Religion: What is it, who gets to decide, and why does it matter?”
W	5/19	Jenkins, “Whose Religion? Which Ecology?”
R	5/20	Gardner, “Invoking the Spirit”
F	5/21	Pew Research Center, “Religion and Views on Climate and Energy Issues” Arbuckle & Konisky, “The Role of Religion in Environmental Attitudes” Module 2 Quiz due at 11:59pm.

Module 3: Jewish, Muslim, and Non-Abrahamic Responses

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	5/24	Vogel, “How Green is Judaism?”
T	5/25	Grossman, “‘Green Islam’: Islamic Environmentalism in Indonesia” Zviadade, “The Unbearable Lightness of Being Muslim”
W	5/26	Ceruti, “Sacred Ice Melting Away”
R	5/27	<i>Aluna</i>
F	5/28	Callicott, “Ecological Insights in East Asian Buddhism” Module 3 Quiz due at 11:59pm. Short Essay 1 due Sunday, May 30 at 11:59pm.

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	5/31	Memorial Day: No Assignments
T	6/1	USCCB, <i>The Columbia River Watershed</i> — <i>Caring for the Common Good</i>

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
W	6/2	Gustafson, "A Comparative Interlude: Some Religious and Theological Reflections"
R	6/3	Lamb, Lowe, Meyaard-Schaap, "Renewing Evangelical Engagement on Climate Change"
F	6/4	Sanders, "Wilderness as a Sabbath for the Land" Module 4 Quiz due at 11:59pm.

Module 4: Christian Responses

Module 5: Food and Consumption

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	6/7	Salonen, "Living and Dealing with Food in an Affluent Society"
T	6/8	Zeller, "Quasi-religious American Foodways" Glass, "Meat: To Eat it or Not"
W	6/9	Zuzworsky, "From the Marketplace to the Dinner Plate"
R	6/10	Guha, "How Much Should a Person Consume?"
F	6/11	Nash, "On the Subversive Virtue: Frugality" Module 5 Quiz due at 11:59pm. Short Essay 2 due Sunday, June 13 at 11:59pm.

Module 6: Alternative Lifeways

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
M	6/14	Kothari, "Eco-Swaraj vs. Global Eco-Catastrophe" Lang, "Integrating Southern Perspectives"
T	6/15	Veciana, "Synergies between Degrowth and the Global Ecovillage Network" Picavea, "Collaboration and changing beliefs are two keys for a degrowth economy"
W	6/16	Caraway, "The Spiritual Dimensions of the Permaculture Movement in Cuba"
R	6/17	Berry, "A Native Hill" <i>Counterpunch</i> , "An Interview with Wes Jackson"
F	6/18	de Frece and Poole, "Constructing Livelihoods in Rural Mexico: <i>Milpa</i> in Mayan Culture" Module 6 Quiz due at 11:59pm.