

REL 2071 RELIGION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Summer A

Instructor: Christopher Lomelín

Office: 017 Anderson Hall (Mailbox in 107 Anderson)

Email: lomelince@ufl.edu

Class Schedule: MTWRF 3 (11:00-12:15)

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

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. This class fulfills 2000 words of the University writing requirement.

Synchronous Zoom Meetings

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, UF has mandated all Summer courses transition online. In designing this course, I have made every attempt to replicate a discussion-oriented style of class. Each week we will have at least three synchronous (live) Zoom meetings at the original scheduled time for this course (Period 3, 11:00-12:15). Format for each day is listed here and the schedule below.

Live Meetings: 5/11, 5/13, 5/15, 5/18, 5/19, 5/20, 5/22, 5/26, 5/27, 5/29, 6/1, 6/3, 6/5, 6/8, 6/9, 6/10, 6/11, 6/12, 6/15, 6/16, 6/18, 6/19

You are expected to come prepared for group discussions by completing all readings, films, and assignments before class. Due to the abbreviated nature of Summer A, attendance is mandatory for all meetings. Points will be deducted after one unexcused absence, and after three unexcused absences you will not pass this course. You can join Zoom meetings from the “zoom conferences” link in our course Canvas site.

Each week will be different, so pay close attention to the schedule and Canvas announcements regarding any changes or updates to the schedule.

Required Readings

(Available under the Files Tab on Canvas links and in this document)

Arbuckle, Matthew B., and David M. Koninsky. "The Role of Religion in Environmental Attitudes." *Social Science Quarterly* 96.5 (2015): 1244-63.

Bauman, Whitney, Richard Bohannon, and Kevin J. O'Brien. *Grounding Religion : A Field Guide to the Study of Religion and Ecology*. Second edition. ed. Routledge, 2017.

- Brown, Hayes. "The End Times are here, and I'm at Target: On the Strange Experience of Living through the Only Accurate Doomsday Prediction." *The Outline* 2019.
- Brundtland, G. . *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*, 1987. Print. Paragraphs, 39-54.
- Callicott, J. B. "The New New (Buddhist?) Ecology." 2 Vol., 2008.
- Caraway, Rose T. "The Spiritual Dimensions of the Permaculture Movement in Cuba." 9 Vol. , 2018.
- Ceruti, Constanza. "Sacred Ice Melting Away: Lessons from the Impact of Climate Change on Andean Cultural Heritage." 2013.
- Chemnick, Jean. "When a Melting Glacier is seen as the Apocalypse." *E&E News* 2018.
- Crocker, David A., and Toby Linden. *Ethics of Consumption : The Good Life, Justice, and Global Stewardship*. Chapter 22.
- Gardner, Gary. "Invoking the Spirit: Engaging Religion and Spirituality in the Quest for a Sustainable World." 2003. Web. <<https://iefworld.org/dgard03.htm>>.
- Gillis, Chad. "Environmental Groups to Walk Around Lake Okeechobee to Raise Awareness about Florida's Waters."
- Guha, Ramachandra. "How Much should a Person Consume?" 28 Vol. Sage Publications Inc, 2003.
- Glass, Phillip, "Meat: To Eat it Or Not". *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review* Winter 1994.
- Gustafson, James M. *A Sense of the Divine: The Natural Environment from a Theocentric Perspective*. Chapter 3
- Jenkins, Willis. "Sustainability Theory." *Berkshire Encyclopedia of Sustainability: The Spirit of Sustainability* Ed. Ray C. Anderson. 1st ed. Berkshire Publishing Group, 2010. 380-384.
- . "Whose Religion? Which Ecology?" *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Ecology*. Eds. Willis Jenkins, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and John Grim. Routledge, 2016. 22-32.
- Jensen, Robert. "An Interview with Wes Jackson." 2003. Web. <<https://www.counterpunch.org/2003/07/10/an-interview-with-wes-jackson/>>.
- Kaza, Stephanie. "Why Environmental Humanities?" *Bittersweet Vine* (2005): 4-5.
- Koren, Marina. "The Pandemic is Turning the Natural World Upside Down: Widespread Social-Distancing Measures have Produced some Jarring Effects Across Land, Air, and Sea." *The Atlantic* 2020 Print.
- Kothari, Ashish. "Eco-Swaraj Vs. Global Eco-Catastrophe." 15 Vol. , 2018.
- Lamb, Rachel L., Benjamin S. Lowe, and Kyle Meyaard-Schaap. "Renewing Evangelical Engagement on Climate Change: The Birth and Growth of "Young Evangelicals for Climate Action"." *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 71 (2019): 50. *Gale Academic OneFile; Gale*.

- Lang, Miriam. "Integrating Southern Perspectives around Degrowth and Migration." Web. <<https://www.resilience.org/stories/2017-10-17/integrating-southern-perspectives-around-degrowth-and-migration/>>.
- McCutcheon, Russell. "What is the Academic Study of Religion?" Web. <<https://religion.ua.edu/links/the-students-desk/what-is-the-academic-study-of-religion/>>.
- Monbiot, George. "Airlines and Oil Giants are on the Brink. no Government should Offer them a Lifeline." *The Guardian* 2020
- Peña, Devon Gerardo. *Chicano Culture, Ecology, Politics: Subversive Kin*. Chapter 9.
- Pew Research Center. "Religion and Views on Climate and Energy Issues." 2015. Web. <<https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2015/10/22/religion-and-views-on-climate-and-energy-issues/>>.
- Picavea, Monica. "Collaboration and changing beliefs are two keys for a degrowth economy." Web. <<https://www.degrowth.info/en/2015/11/collaboration-and-changing-beliefs-are-two-keys-for-a-degrowth-economy/>>.
- Ripple, WJ, and et al. "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice." *BioScience* 67 (2017): 1026–1028.
- Salonen, Anna Sofia. "Living and Dealing with Food in an Affluent Society: A Case for the Study of Lived (Non)Religion." 9 Vol. , 2018.
- Sanders, Scott R. "Wilderness as a Sabbath for the Land." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 2.2 (2002): 157-68.
- Sophie, Zviadadze. "The Unbearable Lightness of being Muslim and Georgian: Religious Transformation and Questions of Identity among Adjara's Muslim Georgians." 7 Vol. Slavica on behalf of the Institute of Russian Studies at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, 2018.
- Taylor, Sarah McFarland. *Green Sisters: A Spiritual Ecology*. Chapter 6
- Tejeda-Moreno, Manny. "Indigenous and Pagan leaders heal the water."
- US Conference of Catholic Bishops. *The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good*. (2001)
- Veciana, Stella. "Synergies between Degrowth and the Global Ecovillage Network." Web. <<https://www.degrowth.info/en/2016/09/synergies-between-degrowth-and-the-global-ecovillage-network/>>.
- Vogel, David. "How Green is Judaism? Exploring Jewish Environmental Ethics." 11 Vol. Philosophical Documentation Center, 2001.
- Zeller, Benjamin E., et al. *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*. Chapter 15
- Zuzworsky, Rose. *From the Marketplace to the Dinner Plate: The Economy, Theology, and Factory Farming*. 29 Vol. Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.

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.

General Education Objectives

1. This course fulfills the Humanities (H) General Education Objective by providing instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of Religious Studies.
2. General Education Student Learning Outcomes for Humanities courses:
 - a. The course will teach students about the history, underlying theory, and methodologies used in Religious Studies. Both in a separate introductory section on Religious Studies and throughout discussions of other issues and cases, course readings, lectures, and discussions will emphasize the history, theory and methodologies of Religious Studies and their relevance for Sustainability Studies.
 - b. The course will provide students with background on the history, theory and methodologies used in Religious Studies, using case studies focused on sustainability to illustrate approaches and issues. Readings, class discussions, and writing assignments will focus on developing the skills by which students can identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape the ways people think about both religion and sustainability.
 - c. The class emphasizes clear and effective analysis, expressed both in class discussions and in written assignments. In reading, discussion, and writing, students will be taught and encouraged to approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives, including

diverse cultural and religious traditions as well as different theoretical frameworks within religious studies.

Course Requirements

Short Essays—(60%) (500 words minimum) that will contribute to this group assignment. Each essay will be worth 15% of your final grade.

1. Religion and Sustainability, due by 11:59pm Sunday, 5/24
2. Christian perspectives, due by 11:59pm Sunday, 5/31
3. Jewish, Muslim, and non-Abrahamic Perspectives, due by 11:59pm Sunday, 6/7
4. Food and Consumption, Due by 11:59pm Sunday, 6/14

Group Work and Presentation (20%) After add/drop, you will be randomly assigned into groups of 5-6 students. Each week you will discuss questions related to the readings. Discussions must be documented **throughout the semester**. I will give you the option of what platform you would like to use (slack, google docs, etc., or other more creative means) to document your work. You must submit this document by 11:00am every Friday (**12%**). **Each group will present on one of the available readings listed on the schedule or in the supplemental readings section of our canvas page (8%).**

Attendance and Participation (15%) Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UF has required that all summer courses be taught online. I will take attendance for every Zoom session, and after one unexcused absence you will lose points. Please pay close attention to the course schedule, as we will only meet on certain days. After each lecture you will be randomly assigned groups (different from your presentation groups) where you will discuss the materials of the day.

Syllabus Quiz—(5%) Students will demonstrate their familiarity with the course objectives, assignments, readings, requirements, policies, and rules based on a careful reading of this document.

Grading Scale: A: 100-94; A-: 93-90; B+: 89-87; B: 86-84; B-: 83-80; C+: 79-77; C: 76-74; C-: 73-70; D+: 69-67; D: 66-64; D-: 63-60; E: <60.

Consistent with university writing requirement standards, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, usage of standard written English, clarity, coherence, and organization.

Please note that a C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, General Education, university writing requirement or College Basic distribution credit. To achieve such credit you must achieve a C or better in this class. <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Policies and Rules

Attendance and Reading: Absence for reasons of illness, religious holiday, or official university business is excused. Please inform me as early as possible and provide appropriate

documentation. All students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to discuss the readings at every class meeting. You are allowed three unexcused absences. After the third unexcused absence your final grade will be reduced a full letter grade (A to B, A- to B-). Students with six or more unexcused absences will automatically fail the course.

Policy on Late Assignments: Due to the abbreviated nature of Summer A, no Assignments will be accepted after the due date unless written documentation is provided within 24 hours of the late assignment. This course moves fast, so it is essential that you keep up with all assignments.

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 via Canvas and email for questions, clarifications, requests and assistance, academic or otherwise. 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>. 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 feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at the end of the semester. Evaluations can be found at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Summary results of these evaluations can be found at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/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

If changes are made to the schedule, students will be informed in advance and will be responsible for completing the assignments/readings by the updated due date.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
Module 1: What is Sustainability? M 5/11	Overview	Monbiot, "Airlines and oil giants are..." Koren, "The Pandemic is Turning the..." Video 1: "David Graeber: Essential vs. bullsh** jobs" https://www.brut.media/us/news/david-graeber-essential-vs-bullsh-jobs-0b97598a-aeba-445e-87bc-b11ffb4c9609 Video 2: Personal Introduction Assignment: Introduction Video Class: Course Overview and lecture
T 5/12	Historical Definitions	Excerpts from <i>The Bruntland Report</i> <i>World Scientists' Warning to Humanity A Second Notice</i> Brown, "The end times are here..." Assignment: Syllabus Quiz

		Powerpoint 1: Sustainability or Sustainable Development?
W 5/13	Bruntland and Beyond	Jenkins, "Sustainability Theory" Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation
Th 5/14	Environmental Humanities	Kaza, "Why Environmental Humanities?" Assignment Video 3: Hayhoe, "The most important thing you can do to fight climate change: talk about it" https://www.ted.com/talks/katharine_hayhoe_the_most_important_thing_you_can_do_to_fight_climate_change_talk_about_it Powerpoint 2: "Why Environmental Humanities?"
F 5/15	Social Constraints	Go to Ecological Footprint Network to determine your personal footprint http://www.footprintcalculator.org Class: Zoom Lecture Group work reflection paper due by 11:00am
<u>Module 2: What is Religion?</u>		
M 5/18	How do we study Religion?	McCutcheon, "What is the Academic Study of Religion?" Class: Zoom Lecture
T 5/19	Defining Religion	Bauman et al., "Introduction" and "Religion: What is it, who gets to define it, and why does it matter?" Class: Zoom Lecture and Group Presentation
W 5/20	Religion and Ecology?	Jenkins, "Whose Religion? Which Ecology?" Class: Zoom Lecture and Group Presentation

Th 5/21	The Power of Religions	<p>Gardner, “Invoking the Spirit: Engaging Religion and Spirituality in the Quest for a Sustainable World.” http://iefworld.org/dgard03.htm Powerpoint 3: Vickie Machado, “Religion and Environmental Activism in Florida</p> <p>“Indigenous and Pagan leaders heal the water”</p> <p>“Environmental groups to walk around Lake Okeechobee to raise awareness about Florida's waters”</p>
F 5/22	A Force for Good or Bad?	<p>Pew Research Center, “Religion and Views on Climate and Energy Issues.” https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2015/10/22/religion-and-views-on-climate-and-energy-issues/</p> <p>Arbuckle & Koninsky, “The Role of Religion in Environmental Attitudes.” Class: Zoom lecture Group work reflection paper due by 11:00am</p>
First Short Essay Due by 11:59pm Sunday, 5/24		
<u>Module 3: Christian Responses</u>		
T 5/26	Catholic Responses	<p>Assignment: find a religious statement on climate change.</p> <p>USCCB, <i>The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good</i> Video 4: “Caring for the Common Good” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Kc1F2-EvJw Class: Zoom lecture</p>
W 5/27	Protestant Responses	<p>James Gustafson, “A Comparative Interlude: Some Religious and Theological Reflections.” Class: Zoom lecture</p>

Th 5/28	Evangelical Climate Action	Lamb, Lowe, and Meygaard-Schaap, "Renewing Evangelical Engagement on Climate Change" Video 5: "Interview with Ben Lowe" https://vimeo.com/407701620?activityReferer=1
F 5/29	Wilderness as Sabbath	Sanders, "Wilderness as Sabbath for the Land" Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation Group work reflection paper due by 11:00am

*****Second Short Essay Due by 11:59pm Sunday, 5/31*****

Module 4: Jewish, Muslim, and Non-Abrahamic Responses

M 6/1	Jewish Responses	Vogel, "How Green is Judaism? Exploring Jewish Environmental Ethics" Class: Zoom discussion and Group Presentation
Tu 6/2	Muslim Responses	Zviadadze, "The Unbearable Lightness of Being Muslim and Georgian" Powerpoint 4: "Islamic Environmental Ethics" Video 6: "An interview with Rich Tate"
W 6/3	Aluna	Film, <i>Aluna</i> Class: Zoom lecture
Th 6/4	Holy Sites	Jean Chemnick, "When a melting glacier is seen as the apocalypse" https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060104875 Ceruti, "Sacred Ice Melting Away: Lessons from the impact of climate change on Andean cultural heritage" Video 7: "An Interview with Daniel Spotswood" Powerpoint 5: "Qoyllur Rit'i"
F 6/5	Buddhist Ecology	Callicott, "The New New (Buddhist) Ecology" Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation

Group work reflection paper due by
11:00am

*****Third Short Essay Due by 11:59pm Sunday, 6/8*****

Module 5: Food and Consumption

M 6/8	Food and Affluence	Salonen, "Living and Dealing with Food in an Affluent Society—A Case for the Study of Lived (Non)Religion" Class: Zoom discussion Group Presentation
Tu 6/9	Alternative Foodways	Zeller, "Quasi-religious American Foodways" Phillip Glass, "Meat: To Eat it or Not" https://tricycle.org/magazine/meat-eat-it-or-not-philip-glass/ Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation
W 6/10	Industrial Alternatives	Rose Zuzworsky, "From the Marketplace to the Dinner Plate" Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation
Th 6/11	Consumption	Guha, "How Much Should a Person Consume?" Class: Zoom lecture
F 6/12	Frugality	Nash, "On the Subversive Virtue: Frugality" Class: Zoom lecture Group work reflection paper due by 11:00am

*****Final Short Essay Due by 11:59pm Sunday, 6/14*****

Module 6: Alternative Lifeways

M 6/15	Degrowth	Kothari, "Eco-Swaraj vs. Global Eco-Catastrophe" Lang, <u>Integrating Southern Perspectives</u> Video 8: "What is Degrowth?" https://www.degrowth.info/en/what-is-degrowth/ Class: Zoom Lecture
Tu 6/16	Intentional Communities	Veciana, <u>Synergies between Degrowth and the Global Ecovillage Network</u>

		Picavea, <u>Collaboration and changing beliefs are two keys for a degrowth economy</u> Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation
W 6/17	Permaculture	Caraway, “The Spiritual Dimensions of the Permaculture Movement in Cuba” Video 9: “An Interview with Patrick Hunt” Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentation
Th 6/18	Bioregionalism	Assignment, Take the bioregionalism quiz https://oly-wa.us/herbnwisdom/PDF/BioregionalQuiz.pdf TBA Wendell Berry reading <i>Counterpunch</i> , “An Interview with Wes Jackson Class: Zoom lecture
F 6/19	Bioregionalism	Devon G. Peña, “A Gold Mine, an Orchard, and an Eleventh Commandment” Taylor, “The Tractor is my Pulpit: Sacred Agriculture as Priestly Practice” Class: Zoom lecture and Group Presentations Group work reflection paper due by 11:00am