

Psychology of Sustainability
PSY 4930 Sect 23FD – Spring 2019
Tu Periods 2/3, 8:30-10:25/Thu Period 3, 9:35-10:25
Anderson Hall Room 34

“We look backward to our parents and forward to our children and through their children to a future we will never see, but about which we must care.” Carl Jung

Instructor

Ron Chandler, Ph.D

Contact: ronchandler@ufl.edu, 352.215.8400

Office Hours: Tu/Thu 11am-1pm and Wed 10am-1pm, McCarty, Bldg. C, Room 532

Course Description

The Psychology of Sustainability course is designed to provide the experience of employing psychology towards developing an understanding of why we do and do not act sustainably.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

There are no prerequisites for this course and no prior knowledge in psychology, sustainability, or environmental science is required. This course is designed for anyone no matter your degree emphasis or status (undergraduate or graduate).

Purpose of Course

In this course “sustainability” is approached holistically, meaning that every aspect of the human experience—cultural, emotional, biophysical, ecological, economic, and geographical—is considered to be inextricably linked and simultaneously of equal importance. Any effort to create a sustainable society must begin by understanding the thinking and emotions that are motivating behaviors at the individual level and how these behaviors affect culture and society.

Working from the premise that every sustainability problem is first and foremost a social problem, the psychology of sustainability course emphasizes the necessity of psychological science leading any effort to create a sustainable society. This is accomplished by “translating” psychological theories into layman’s terms and employing these theories in real-world, practical situations first at the individual level, and then at the group and university community level.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course you will have encountered and explored a number of psychological concepts and principals, and attained the ability to:

- More fully employ critical thinking.
- Better understand your thought processes, emotional experiences, and intentions for action in the context of sustainability.
- Assess a situation from a psychological perspective, and frame this situation in social and ecological context.
- More clearly recognize personal meaning and values as well as those of others.

- Develop holistic solutions to social-ecological problems.
- Appreciate more fully the importance of disciplines and areas of study different than your own.

Course Readings

- There is one text book required for this course: *The Psychology of Sustainability: Understanding the Relationship Between Self and Earth* (Chandler, 2017)

The textbook for this course—the first-ever textbook on the psychology of sustainability—must be ordered through the publisher’s web portal linked below; you cannot obtain this textbook through the UF Libraries. Please each of you ***let me know when you have obtained your book*** and if you have an problems with the process. GOOD NEWS: 100% of all proceeds from book sales go to saving Asian elephants and the indigenous people sharing their habitat!

To purchase the PSY 4930 textbook, please follow this link:

<https://store.cognella.com/82666-1A-001>

- Students will be required to read analysis of theories papers, and articles from peer-reviewed journals and popular press. Reading citations for each week are also provided in the course schedule below and these represent the full conversation for that week. Your instructor will assign just one or two of the articles cited for each week.

Course Assignments and Grade Values

Your total grade is comprised of a number components (described below). All components are important and interconnected. Please see Course Schedule below to learn when assignments are due. Also, be sure to refer to the CANVAS course page for documents presenting detailed instructions for the midterm and final projects.

Attendance: 120 Total Points

Attendance in class is mandatory as it is not only a significant part of our overall grade but also essential to your group’s success. Attendance is a separate grade (5 points) for Tuesday class meetings and is you’re the same as your Individual Statement of Understanding (ISU; 5 points) described below. In other words attendance is worth 10 points each week. Obviously if you do not attend group meetings (Thursdays) you will lose the points allotted for your ISU as well as group work. Unless you have an excused absence, individual work cannot be submitted to your group for partial credit and you will not receive any credit for your group’s work.

Individual Work: Individual Statement of Understanding (ISU) 60 Points (5 points each)

In most weeks you will be responsible for writing a **one page, single-spaced paper** in which you explain how you would employ what you learned through the discussion on Tuesday, from journal articles and papers, and other resources in the context of human dignity and its relationship to holistic sustainability. Your Individual Statement of

Understanding (ISU) is also your attendance grade for group work class meetings, a significant part of your weekly grade, and is an important contribution to your group's paper (see instructions below) and grade.

Important: You must bring your ISU with you as a hardcopy as well as post this to your group's Google Docs page. The hardcopy version of your ISU serves as an attendance record as well as allows us to understand your perspective about the topic(s) for the week and to see your contribution to the group's paper. You must post your ISU to your group's Google Docs page **before** you meet with your group.

Group Work: Application in Context (AiC) 120 Points (10 points each)

If you do not already have one, you will need to establish a Google Docs account. In preparation for group work you will post your ISU for the week in Google Docs so that you can work with your group to collectively develop your Application in Context (AiC) paper. As stated above, you must also bring your ISU to class in hardcopy form; do not submit this to the Teaching Team electronically. Printer malfunctions are not an excuse; points will be deducted for ISUs submitted to your Teaching Team electronically.

At the beginning of each group meeting and while the other members read along and take notes, each group member will read aloud her/his ISU. Once everyone has read/heard all members' ISUs the group will employ "collective cognition" and create a **two-page, single-spaced** AiC. The group's AiC is a synthesis, not a cut-and-paste collage of ISUs, but a document that as comprehensively and intelligibly as possible represents the group's understanding what you have learned through lectures, journal articles and papers, and other resources in the context of human dignity and its relationship to holistic sustainability.

Important 1: Your group's AiC will be submitted to your instructor *and* TAs via **email not CANVAS** messaging **before** you leave class.

Important 2: All group members' ISUs must be appended to the group's AiC or you will not receive credit for your individual work (ISU).

Midterm Project: "Thoughts on Four Questions" 100 Total Points

For your midterm project "Thoughts on Four Questions" you will explore and respond in narrative form to each of the four questions provided in the previous section. I say "explore and respond" as a reminder to not simply answer these questions, but to share and analyze what thoughts came to mind about experiences that were recalled when you read each question. This begins your research and the development of your narrative.

The first two questions are obviously about the past, so it is likely not difficult to see how to approach these reflexively (considering past events and decisions made towards understanding cause and effect). It may not be as intuitively obvious that questions three and four must also be considered reflexively as well as prospectively. Recall that writing an honest, representative, comprehensive, and authentic self-history narrative is profoundly important for understanding who we are—why we are thinking, feeling, and acting as we are—in the present, and the relationship of who we are now to who we want to be in the future.

Important: Detailed instructions regarding coding procedures and developing your paper will be discussed in class. Therefore it is essential that you attend class during the workshop session.

Final Project: “You as a Sustainability Psychologist” 100 Points

This is your chance to practice Sustainability Psychology, that is to use the psychology of sustainability to resolve an aspect of the Comprehensive Problem and to educate the class about how to employ what you have learned towards creating New Normal: a sustainable human ecology. Recall from our discussions and your work with Five Facets of Sustainability that Human Dignity is the central facet, and that any action taken to create a sustainable human ecology that does not also work to improve individual as well as societal experience of dignity ultimately will not be sustainable.

For your final project your group will develop a presentation that explains how you would apply psychological theories, concepts, and examples (e.g., stories) that you have read and heard towards creating and maintaining a sustainable human ecology (recall from the definition that New Normal is ever-evolving), and *why* your application of those theories and concepts would be effective.

To prevent overlap and redundancy, I will assign each group one or two theories or concepts from what we have covered thus far in the semester. However, you are free to select the setting and situation to which you will apply those theories and concepts. Be creative and select a real-world problem that you are passionate about.

Important: I do not want you to select a global scale problem, for example Climate Change or war, but some aspect of a global scale problem. Use the Fresnel Lens Effect as a guide, think about the comprehensive problem, and all the problems (lenses) that comprise it. Ask yourself and the group, “Through what lens do I/we want to enter the comprehensive problem?”

General example: Remember the story of how I changed Conservation Initiative for the Asian Elephant from a Western wildlife conservation model to a human-centered conservation model and that this change resulted in a dramatic increase in our effectiveness at saving elephants. Why? We now first address the needs of the people sharing habitat with the elephants, and in so doing improved their situation (dignity), and consequently have received their cooperation and commitment to save the elephants.

Important: Begin sharing ideas for your final project with your group now! If you start early, this project will be meaningful and a lot of fun, but if you procrastinate it will be stressful and not likely successful. We will draw numbers to determine group presentation order a few weeks before you will present.

Your presentation will be evaluated equally (20 pts ea.) in the following areas:

- Contribution of all group members (via peer evaluations).
- Application of theories and concepts.

- Explanation as to why your approach could work.
- Staying with the **time limit of 15 - 20 min.**
- Quality of presentation.

Course Schedule

Each week during this course will have one day (single period) devoted to a lecture introducing a few psychological theories and the implications of these in the context of sustainability, and another day (double period) for individuals to share their understanding of these theories in context of sustainability, as well as to work within a group to develop a consensus of understanding or “group synthesis” paper.

Important: You will not be responsible for reading and reporting on all articles listed for each week. Your instructor might also require or recommend other articles on weekly topics. These articles will be posted in the CANVAS Assignments page for the related assignment.

Just a few weeks into this course the student will notice the interrelatedness of the psychological theories being discussed in the context of sustainability. For example one can hardly discuss Attachment Theory and Social Value Orientation, in isolation of for example of Environmental Identity and vice versa.

Schedule

Days & Dates	Topics & Assignments	Readings
Tu 8 th Jan	Discussion and Group Work: Introduction to the Psychology of Sustainability	Chapter 1 including feature article.
Th 11 th	Discussion: In the Beginning	Chapter 2 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 15 th	Group Work: In the Beginning	Chapter 2 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Th 17 th	Discussion: Lifespan Development - Who We are and Who We Can Be	Chapter 3 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 22 nd	Group Work: Lifespan Development - Who We are and Who We Can Be	Chapter 3 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.

Th 24 th	Discussion: Human Ecology	Chapter 4 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 29 th	Group Work: Human Ecology	Chapter 4 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Th 31 st	Discussion: Ecology of Understanding	Chapter 5 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 5 th Feb	Group Work: Ecology of Understanding	Chapter 5 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Th 7 th	Discussion: Green Fear & Green Courage	Chapter 6 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 12 th	Group Work: Green Fear & Green Courage	Chapter 6 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Th 14 th	Discussion: I am the Paradigm Shift Theory	Chapter 7 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Tu 19 th	Group Work: I am the Paradigm Shift Theory	Chapter 7 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Th 21 st	Discussion: Developing a Reflexive Experience & Initial Coding for Midterm Project	Refer to CANVAS for instructions and required readings.
Tu 26 th	Group Work: Developing a Reflexive Experience & Initial Coding for Midterm Project	Refer to CANVAS for instructions and required readings.
Th 28 th	Midterm Project Q/A and Planning	Great opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of how to analyze your narrative and what your midterm project should be.

2nd – 10th Mar	Spring Break!	
Tu 12 th Mar	Midterm Project Workshop	This will be a lab-like meeting devoted to addressing any last minute problems and questions, and for ensuring a great project paper.
Thu 14 th	Discussion: An Act of Kindness	Chapter 8 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Mon 18th	Midterm Project "Thoughts on Four Questions" Due on or before midnight today.	
Tu 19 th	Group Work: Discussion: An Act of Kindness	Chapter 8 including feature article. Also see CANVAS for additional readings.
Thu 21 st	Introduction to the Final Project <i>and</i> Discussion: Social Capital and Participatory Action Research:	Refer to CANVAS for required readings and instructions.
Tu 26 th	Group Work: Social Capital and Participatory Action Research	Refer to CANVAS for required readings and instructions.
Th 28 th	Discussion: Analyzing 5-Facets of Sustainability in Context of Human Dignity	Chapter 9 including two feature articles. See CANVAS for specific instructions and additional readings.
Tu 2 nd Apr	Group Work: Analyzing 5-Facets of Sustainability in Context of Human Dignity	Chapter 9 including two feature articles. See CANVAS for specific instructions and additional readings..
Thu 4 th	Discussion: Special Problem 5 Facets v. 6 Facets as the Model for Holistic Sustainability	Chapter 9 including two feature articles. See CANVAS for specific instructions and additional readings.

Tu 9 th	Group Work: Discuss & Defend 5 Facets v. 6 Facets Choice	Chapter 9 including two feature articles. See CANVAS for specific instructions and additional readings.
Thu 11 th	Final Project Workshop	Excellent opportunity to address any final questions.
Sun 14th	Final Projects Complete Final Drafts of Presentations are Due Today by Midnight	
Tu 16th	Human Dignity & Sustainability: Two Presentations	
Thu 18th	Human Dignity & Sustainability: One Presentation	
Tu 23rd	Human Dignity & Sustainability: Two Presentations	
Th-Fri 25 th -26 th	Reading Days	
27 th Apr -3 rd May	No Final Exam	

Evaluation of Grades, Grading Policy, and Grading Methods

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Total Points	Percent of Grade
Class Participation and Attendance	150	30
Group Reports	150	30
Thoughts on Four Questions Narrative	100	20
Human Dignity & Sustainability Group Presentation	100	20
Total =	500	100

Grading Policy

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
470-500	94-100	A	4.00
450-467.5	90-93.5	A-	3.74
435-447.5	87-89.5	B+	3.58
420-432.5	84-86.5	B	3.46
400-417.5	80-83.5	B-	3.74
385-397.5	77-79.5	C+	3.18
370-382.5	74-76.5	C	3.06
350-367.5	70-73.5	C-	2.94
335-347.5	67-69.5	D+	2.78
320-332.5	64-66.5	D	2.66
300-317.5	60-63.5	D-	2.54
0-297.5	0-59.5	E	2.38

Grading Methods

There are four general components of your total grade: Attendance, quality of your group report, midterm project, and final project. Refer to Evaluation of Grades table on the previous page for exact points per component. A detailed rubric will be provided in your course CANVAS page however following are general grading method guidelines.

Attendance and Participation: For full credit you are expected not only be present in class but contribute to conversation with thoughtful comments and questions.

Group Report: Your group report will be assessed equally in three areas: 1. Quality of ISUs, 2. Quality of synthesis of members' individual perspectives, and 3. Overall quality of paper especially intelligibility and length (>1<3pages).

Midterm and Final Projects: Your midterm and final projects will be assessed in three areas: Opening material 15%, main body 75%, and closing material 10%. Each of these areas are described in detail in your course CANVAS page and will also be reviewed with you by your instructor in class.

Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Students are required to attend all classes unless absence is excused. Excused absences include illness, family emergency, or personal/family tragedy. More than 3 unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one letter grade on you final grade. It is important to remember that not only can an absence negatively affect your grade it can also impact your group's grade. In the case of an excused absence a student may submit their individual paper as well as midterm project late for grade consideration. There will be no make-up permitted for the final project.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no materials or supply fees for this course.

Course Technology

At least one student in each group will need a laptop computer and access to UF web/email during group work days so that the group's report can be emailed to the instructor and TA(s) before the end of class.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.