(Un)Common Read: Why Good People Do Bad Environmental Things
IDH2930 - FALL 2024
Class #29306

Tuesdays, Period 2 (8:30-9:20AM)
Honors Village 114

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Faculty Instructor: Anna Peterson
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Peer Instructor: Natalie Triana
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Office Hours: Email to schedule appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Why can it feel so difficult to *always* do the "right" thing? How come so many people care about the environment, yet engage in environmentally harmful behavior? What strategies can institutions take to make it easier for us to live sustainably?

In this course, we will draw primarily upon Elizabeth R. DeSombre's book, *Why Good People Do Bad Environmental Things*, to explore how societal structures, incentives, habits, and social norms influence the decisions we make. We will discuss how people connect their values to their actions (or not), what motivates people to change (or not), and the roles that our institutions play in hindering/encouraging certain behaviors.

This course will be discussion-based and require active, informed participation from all students. For their final project, students will create a "behavior change campaign" on a social issue of their choice, applying the ideas from the course towards a strategy to changing human behavior for the better.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
As part of the learning entailed in this course:
- Students will be able to analyze, compare, and critique theories on how various factors (such as incentives, information, habits, and norms) impact human behavior toward the environment.
- Students will be able to independently design a campaign or initiative intended at changing human behavior by synthesizing and drawing from the information provided in course readings.
- Students will be able to discuss their opinions and perspectives in a group setting and will gain exposure to brainstorming ideas with others.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Why Good People Do Bad Environmental Things. By Elizabeth R. DeSombre. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018

Any other supplementary readings will be provided on Canvas or will be free and accessible online.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

This course has four categories of assessment:

(1) Class Participation: 10% of total grade
The participation grade will be based on active and informed engagement in class, alongside consistent attendance. For every two unexcused absences (see below for absence policy), a student's participation grade will drop by one letter grade.

(2) Canvas Discussion Posts: 50% of total grade
Students will make weekly Canvas Discussion posts of 150 words or more. They are due by 11:59pm on the Monday before class, and they will alternate weekly between "original posts" and "replies" to posts by your peers. Students will make an original post every other week, and at least one reply on off weeks. Further instructions and guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

(3) Final Project Presentation: 15% of total grade
Students will develop a behavior change campaign/initiative on a social issue of their choice (e.g. taking public transportation more often). They will use the ideas and theories discussed in class to create strategies for motivating people to change their habits, as well as examine the structures that might act as barriers towards changing behavior. Students will develop a 5-minute presentation on their campaign and present it to their peers during the last two classes. Slides will be due on November 11th at 11:59pm. Further instructions and guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

(4) Final Project (Written): 25% of total grade
Students will develop a behavior change campaign/initiative on a social issue of their choice. They will write a campaign proposal (2 pages minimum, double-spaced), where they will describe their initiative and relate their strategies to the class readings. This paper will be due on December 8th at 11:59pm. Further instructions and guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

- Students may submit an outline or draft of their paper for feedback up to 1 week before the deadline. If a student requests feedback less than a week before the deadline, I will try to provide it, but it is not guaranteed.

GRADING SCALE:
93-100 (A); 90-92 (A-); 87-89 (B+); 83-86 (B); 80-82 (B-); 77-79(C+);
73-76 (C); 70-72 (C-); 67-69 (D+); 63-66 (D); 60-62 (D-); 59-0 (E)

UF Grading Policy

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be accessed by clicking this link: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week	Date	Reading	Assignments Due
1	8/27	Introduction to the course (no reading)	"About Me" due 8/31, 11:59pm
2	9/3	Chapter 1: Understanding Environmental Behavior (Pgs. 1-15)	Canvas Discussion Post #1 due 9/2, 11:59pm
3	9/10	Chapter 2: Problem Characteristics (Pgs. 16-44)	Canvas Discussion Post #2 (Reply) due 9/9, 11:59pm
4	9/17	Supplemental Reading (TBD)	Canvas Discussion Post #3 due 9/16, 11:59pm
5	9/24	Chapter 3: Incentives (Pgs. 45-68)	Canvas Discussion Post #4 (Reply) due 9/23, 11:59pm
6	10/1	Chapter 4: Information (Pgs. 69-106)	Canvas Discussion Post #5 due 9/30, 11:59pm
7	10/8	Supplemental Reading (TBD)	Canvas Discussion Post #6 (Reply) due 10/7, 11:59pm
8	10/15	Chapter 5: Habits and Other Routine (Pgs. 107-130)	Canvas Discussion Post #7 due 10/14, 11:59pm
9	10/22	Chapter 6: Attitudes and Norms (Pgs. 131)	Canvas Discussion Post #8 (Reply) due 10/21, 11:59pm
10	10/29	Supplemental Reading (TBD)	Canvas Discussion Post #9 due 10/28, 11:59pm
11	11/5	Chapter 7: What to do about it (Pgs. 167-192)	Canvas Discussion Post #10 (Reply) due 11/4, 11:59pm
12	11/12	Final Project Presentations Day 1	Presentation Slides due 11/11, 11:59pm
13	11/19	Final Project Presentations Day 2	
14		THANKSGIVING BREAK	
15	12/3	Final Class and Reflection	Final Project due 12/8, 11:59pm

POLICIES, RULES, EXPECTATIONS, AND RESOURCES

1. Attendance and Participation: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, found in the online catalog at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

Please let me know about any planned absences (for religious holidays, athletic events, or other reasons) as soon as possible. For unplanned absences (due to illness or emergency), please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation (e.g, doctor's note).

2. Late Assignment Policy: Discussion posts and assignments submitted after the 11:59pm deadline will be penalized 1/2 letter grade per 24 hours late. Hence, if you submit an assignment between 12:00am and 11:59pm on the day after the deadline, the highest grade you will be able to receive on it would be a A-.

If you have an excused absence due to illness, you have a 48-hour grace period on Canvas posts. Contact the peer instructor if you have any other extenuating circumstances.

3. Honor Code: The honor code applies to this and all courses taken at UF: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment" (https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx).

The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines may result in judicial action and sanctions, as specified in the Student Conduct Code (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/).

4. Accommodation for Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

5. Counseling and Emergency Resources: Please let me know if you need support facing challenges that affect your academic performance. There are many resources available for students, and I will be glad to help you get the assistance you need in order to thrive at UF. Some resources include:

> **Health and Wellness**
> • *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website (https://umatter.ufl.edu/) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

• *Counseling and Wellness Center*: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website (https://counseling.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
• *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website (https://shcc.ufl.edu/).
• *University Police Department*: Visit UF Police Department website (https://police.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
• *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website: https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.
• *GatorWell Health Promotion Services:* For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website (https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources
• *E-learning technical support:* Contact the UF Computing Help Desk (http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
• *Career Connections Center:* Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services. https://career.ufl.edu
• *Library Support:* Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask8
• *Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/
• *Writing Studio:* 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio
• *Student Complaints On-Campus:* Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information: https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/.
• *On-Line Students Complaints:* View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process: https://distance.ufl.edu/state-authorization-status/#student-complaint.

6. Syllabus Change Policy
This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

7. Software Use: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

8. Privacy: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.