



IDH2930-
UNCOMMON
READS:

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS



Mondays 11:45-12:35

Little Hall 119



Meet Your Instructor:

Racheal Croucher

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Office Hours: Farrior 1023, [by appointment](#)

About Me: I grew up in a small Tribal PNW town and moved to Florida in 2023. I have visited 49 states. I have a love for shelling, hiking, biking, and basically anything outdoors. I was a first-gen college student. My favorite animal is a whale shark, my favorite food is jambalaya, and my favorite color is anywhere between green and blue.

Required Materials: Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Course Description

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer is a profound exploration of the interconnectedness between humans and the natural world, blending Indigenous wisdom with scientific knowledge. In this class you'll have the chance to reflect critically on key themes: Reciprocity in nature, environmental stewardship, and cultural identity and heritage; we will have open dialogues on these topics, provide opportunities for student-lead discussion, and participate in local environmental projects.

Explore Kimmerer's blend of Indigenous wisdom, ecological insights, and personal stories while reflecting on our own values, beliefs, and relationship with the natural world around us!

Course Objectives

1. Read with intention of understanding and reflecting personally.
2. Write and discuss ideas, thoughts, reflections with your peers relating to personal and the wider human experience.
3. Gain a deeper understanding of the following themes from Kimmerer:
 - **Reciprocity and Relationship with Nature**
 - **Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom**
 - **Environmental Stewardship**
 - **Cultural Identity and Heritage**
 - **Personal Growth and Nature**

Class Structure and Flow

This class is all about reading and having great conversations. Each week, we'll read a section of *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, sometimes with a short additional reading or material. You'll come to class having read the material and written a brief reflection to help spark the discussion. Be sure to include at least one question or thought you're curious about. During class, we'll dive into the reading together—there won't be any lectures from me, though I might share a story or two now and then.

Occasionally, there may be creative assignments to complete outside of class. Depending on the class size, students will have the chance to lead whole days or parts of the

discussion. But for the most part, the conversations will be shared by all of us. Everyone is expected to come to class ready to participate each week—not just listen.

Sometimes, our discussions may get personal, and that’s okay. We’ll approach these conversations with openness and a willingness to listen and learn from each other. The goal is to create a space where everyone feels comfortable sharing, asking questions, and having fun while learning together.

Attendance Policies

Since this is a discussion-based class, attendance is vital and assumed. Except for emergencies, absences must be cleared with the instructor before class. Students will be permitted one absence over the course of the semester. A second absence will lower your total by ½ a letter grade, and a third or fourth absence by an additional full letter grade each. Students cannot receive credit for the class if there are more than four absences.

Assignments and Grading

Component	Points Possible	Percent of Final Grade
Attendance and Participation	250	25%
Weekly Reflections	300	30%
Review Essay	200	20%
Final Project	250	25%
Total	1000	100%

Grading Scale

A	94-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-93%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	E	59% or below

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards your Honors Completion Requirements. (Exception: Honors Quest I and II sections require a C). Once

you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Completion module to earn Honors Milestone / Completion credit.

Academic Honesty

As a University of Florida student, you are expected to neither commit nor assist another in committing an academic honesty violation: For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/>

A note about AI relating to academic honesty:

Truthfully, there is not much room for academic dishonesty in this course as it is quite discussion based. In this class, you are permitted to use resources to help summarize your thoughts or *edit* your papers/reflections for you but you must do the reading and the writing on your own. For example- you are permitted to read the chapter and write your thoughts out and then ask ChatGPT to fine tune your reflection. You *may not* copy/paste the chapter into ChatGPT and ask for a summary or reflective questions. I don't want to see the same question repeated over and over because everyone plugged the chapter into ChatGPT to get reflection questions. And if you do use tools like ChatGPT, here's a tip: use a prompt like "Hi Chat GPT, it's me again. Can you read this reflection of my reading and give me 5+ discussion prompts to include in my discussion? Thanks boo! [Insert reflection]". Then select one or two of the points that you have the most interest in. This way, we're not all asking "what is the deeper meaning of XYZ". All UF policy related to Academic Policy still apply and to follow this, **please cite when and how you've used ChatGPT** or other AI resources to supplement your work. In this class, creative uses of AI is allowed and encouraged!

Campus Resources

- 1. Services for Students with Disabilities:** The University of Florida provides high-quality services to students with disabilities, and we encourage you to take advantage of them. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>). 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.

2. **Counseling Resources:** Resources available on-campus for students include the following:
 - a. [UF Counseling and Wellness Center](#), 301 Peabody Hall and 3190 Radio Rd. 352-392-1575, personal or group, online or in-person counseling.
 - b. U Matter We Care, umatter.ufl.edu; 352-294-2273, overall wellness, counseling, victim reporting services, and resource hub.
 - c. Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, career.ufl.edu, 352-392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.
3. **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.
4. **Writing assistance:** the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a writing studio, located in Turlington Hall, which offers individual tutoring and assistance with writing. For more information and to make appointments, see <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
5. **Honors Program:** 201 Walker Hall, 352-392-1519
Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu
Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/ufhonorsadvising>

Important Dates

Jan. 13th - First day of class

Jan. 20th- MLK Jr. Day, all UF offices closed

Mar. 15-22- Spring Break, no classes

April 23– Last day of class

May 7 – Grades visible

Course Schedule

This schedule is tentative and subject to change

Date	Description	Assignment Due
Jan. 13	Introductions and Expectations	Pg 385-end (5pgs)
<i>MLK Jan 20</i>	No Class	
Jan. 27	Planting Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: Kimmerer pg 1-59 (60pgs) Weekly Reflection 1
Feb. 3	Tending Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 60-97 (37pgs) Weekly Reflection 2
Feb. 10	Tending Sweetgrass Engage: TBD	Read: pg 98-120 (22pgs) Weekly Reflection 3
Feb. 17	Picking Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 121-155 (34pgs) Weekly Reflection 4
Feb. 24	Picking Sweetgrass Engage: Community project TBD	Read: pg 156-174 (18pgs) Weekly Reflection 5
Mar. 3	Picking Sweetgrass Engage: Community project TBD	Read: pg 175-201 (16pgs) Weekly Reflection 6
Mar. 10	Braiding Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 202-240 (38pgs) Weekly Reflection 7
<i>Spring Break 15-22</i>	No Class	
Mar. 24	Braiding Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 241-276 (35pgs) Weekly Reflection 8
Mar. 31	Braiding Sweetgrass Engage: TBD	Read: pg 277-302 (25pgs) Weekly Reflection 9
April 7	Burning Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 303-340 (37pgs) Weekly Reflection 10
April 14	Burning Sweetgrass Discuss: TBD	Read: pg 341- 373 (32pgs) Weekly Reflection 11
April 21	Burning Sweetgrass Engage: Project sharing	Read: pg 374-385 (11pgs)

Assignment Descriptions

Attendance and Participation: There are 13 class days that students are expected to attend. See attendance policy above. Participation in class will be rated on the number and quality of questions and answers in class along with participation in service projects during class time. Students will have a chance to self-rate their participation which will be taken into consideration for the overall participation grade. Attendance and participation will be worth 250 total points.

Weekly Reflections: There are 11 weekly reflections, and the lowest reflection grade will be dropped. The weekly reflections will be the basis for our discussion points and questions

and should be thorough enough to lead the discussion each week. There will be 10 *graded* reflections at 30 points each for 300 total points.

Final Project: The Final Project is 25% of your final grade and thus must require the effort of 25% of this class. Because of the flexible format of the final, the grading rubric will vary from project to project. Your project concept proposal (~1pg write-up) must be submitted to the instructor by March 24th for approval. The final project is worth 250 points.

The final project is a chance for you to demonstrate your learning in this class and incorporate the themes into a project. The only requirement is that it must encompass the spirit of the class. You have full creative freedom to create a project that suits you.

Some ideas include:

- An art (poetry, collage, story etc.) project that incorporates your learning from the readings/discussions.
- A presentation highlighting how you've incorporated themes from the class into a research project/volunteer opportunity/daily wellness rituals etc.
- A written comparison of this book with other readings/media from outside this class.