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REL-3161 SPIRITUALITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Dept. of Religious Studies, Florida International University

Dr. Thomas Pliske PhD, Lecturer Emeritus, Dept. of Earth and Environment
Fall, 2019 or Spring, 2020

SYLLABUS FOR GLOBAL LEARNING PROPOSAL

This course meets requirements for the Study of Spirituality and the Indigenous Studies Certificate Programs.

This course is a discipline-specific GL-course that will meet your global learning graduation requirement.

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COURSE SYLLABUS, TEXT REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

Course Description

Nearly every spiritual tradition has creation myths that place humans in a cosmic relationship with greater Nature. Flowing from these myths there is usually also a framework for practical day-to-day encounters between humans and Nature and between different human groups or tribes that carries the essence of the spiritual origins. In the remote past when these traditions developed, the theater of action was local, and the greater Nature was most likely a local or regional environment, e.g. a desert, tropical rainforest, prairies or the ocean, and spirituality was the being who had dominion over the realm of Nature. Human populations were small and widely scattered in the vastness of surrounding landscapes. Their physical impacts on environment were not much greater than any other animal of comparable size and population.

Today, almost eight billion humans occupy nearly every part of the global environment. We have developed technologies that on one hand produce many short-term benefits while on the other, catastrophic impacts not only on local environments and resources but also on the fabric of planetary atmosphere, soils, oceans, fresh water and biodiversity. We have global economy and communication but neither a true global identity nor ethic of responsibility. Science and technology have replaced the spiritual bonds to the earth and to the gods and to one another that comforted and inspired our ancestors.

This course explores both the inner and outer dimensions of our collective and personal

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identity in universal Nature, drawing on the diverse *experience* and wisdom of spiritual traditions, Indigenous, East and West. One of our tasks is to take into account the more familiar study of the physical aspect of Nature (mountains, oceans, insects, birds, plants and stars: the grist of science) and then ask if scientific-technological truth and spiritual truth are cut from the same cloth and can coexist in harmony. One possible perspective is that the outer forms of Nature are an all-encompassing metaphor for what takes place within. In the language of the *Emerald Tablet*, which Isaac Newton found so fascinating, “*That which is below is like that which is above...*”.

If these apparently disparate perspectives can be brought together to work for personal harmony, harmony within the human family, can we take a step higher to embrace the broader natural and universal environment that we share and which sustains us? How would such a consciousness transform our relationship with Nature? How would it transform our understanding of science and technology? How do our spiritual *experiences* from whatever sources they come, give us clues to the answers to these questions? What sort of language can we use to communicate them?

Sustainability is a frame of mind and action, a *dharma* that many environmental scientists, philosophers, educators and economists are embracing as a step in the right direction toward this multi-tiered harmony. It includes humanity acting collectively as stewards of the Earth through preservation, conservation, knowing the difference between desire and necessity, consideration for future generations and an ethic that expands beyond the narrowness of self, tribe, nation, and even of species. Yet, in a universe that is evolving, the question arises of what is being sustained, the reasons for sustaining things and, perhaps most importantly, in whose place are we the stewards?

Spirituality and sustainability are two sides of the same coin in that both need to be recognized and practiced to have true value and bear fruit. In our course, we will encourage not only the knowing of these two complementary aspects of our connection with Nature but also the actions necessary to reveal and strengthen their presences in our lives. Many of the discussion questions posed for each unit of study have much broader concern than the topics where they first appear and are themes that pervade everything we consider during the term. From the wide menu of approaches presented in class it is my challenge to each student to identify and pursue the path with which she or he feels most comfortable and empowered. Each weekly session will begin with a ritual, drawn from diverse cultural backgrounds and focusing on our inner connections to Nature.

There is no intellectual agenda other than a willingness to explore, often into the unfamiliar and even the unknown. I prod you with Walt Whitman's exhortation,

*Away, O Soul! Hoist instantly the anchor
Cut the hawsers - haul out - shake out every sail
Sail forth, steer for the deep waters only.*

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Date **Tentative Topics, Presenters, viewings and readings**

Session 1:

INTRODUCTION: opening ritual, course organization, components of class activities and evaluation; Nature as a spiritual and material experience

Discussion Questions:

What is spirituality?

Are there differences between spirituality and religion?

Through which windows does spirituality enter our experience?

What are the modes of human consciousness?

What characterizes someone living a spiritual life? Examples?

What is your current understanding of sustainability?

What is being sustained and why?

What are the most essential things we receive from universe/Nature?

Viewing: *The Journey of the Universe* (in class)

Reading:

R.W. Emerson, *Nature* (C/H)

Swimme, B.T. and M.E. Tucker, *The Journey of the Universe*

Pliske, T.E. *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise* (excerpts)

Sessions 2 - 3

Opening ritual, science and technology as a dominant 21st. century paradigm for universal Truth; evolution as a biological and spiritual law: Darwin and Wallace, continuity in evolution, the egregious life of A.W. Wallace in the post-Darwin years; integral ecological thought in relation to evolution, human origin and spiritual purpose; St. Francis of Assisi, Thomas Berry's ecology; the role of technology and AI in relation to understanding ourselves and Nature.

Discussion Questions:

What are the roots of modern scientific empiricism and materialism?

Are there limits to objective scientific enquiry? If so where do they lie?

What, if any, are the limits of technological development and AI?

Can all human experience eventually be embraced by scientific epistemology?

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What are the ethics implicit in the scientific paradigm?

Are there interfaces between science and spirituality, between mind and heart?

Is there such a thing as spiritualized science?

What do think/feel about Sri Chinmoy's and Sri Aurobindo's criticism of contemporary science?

Guest lecturer: TBA (Science and religion)

Guest Lecturer: TBA (Greek and Roman roots of scientific materialism)

Reading:

Pliske, T.E. *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise* (excerpts)

Berry, Thomas. *The Great Work* (excerpts)

Darwin, C. excerpts from *Origin of Species* (C/HO)

Wallace, A.R. excerpts from *The World of Life* (C/HO)

Sessions 4-6:

Project outlines/topics due at the beginning of class in Session 4

Opening ritual, Indigenous spiritual traditions; nature-centered spirituality; indigenous languages, myths and sacred places; indigenous peoples' role as caretakers and links to the inner life of local/ regional environments; the ecological of Native Americans, Costa Rica, Hawaii and Australia.

Discussion questions:

What is the "seven generations principle"?

What are some points of contact between Native American culture and contemporary U.S. urban culture?

What are the indigenous spiritual view of nature have in common with other traditions, e.g. Judeo-Christian and Islamic?

How can indigenous cultures contribute to expanding our relationship with universal nature?

How might a fruitful relationship with local indigenous people affect our impact on local environment?

What barriers currently exist between indigenous tribal cultures and the more powerful national governments where they live?

Would it be helpful to support pan-indigenous organizations?

What are the first steps to initiate a rapprochement between indigenous and Western/industrial societies?

Are there mutual lessons to be learned by our acceptance of indigenous cultures. If so, what are they?

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What is the purpose of a “vision quest” experience? Is there a counterpart in Western nature appreciation?

Readings:

1. **Berry, Thomas, *The Great Work***
2. **Campbell, Joseph *The Power of Myth***
3. **LaDuke, Winona *Recovering the Sacred.***
4. TBA (C/HO)

Viewing:

1. *Seasons of the Navajo*
2. *Women of the Earth*

Guest Presenter: Prof. Dennis Wiedman, FIU Dept. of Global and Sociocultural Studies

Session 7:

Opening ritual, Ecological organization and laws, environmental science and ethics, deep ecology, sustainability and stewardship, global integral ecology, biodiversity loss, the Earth Charter and the UN sustainable development goals and millennium goals; movement toward an environmental *Dharma*? Evolution in spite of “human nature”, environmental justice.

Readings:

1. E.O. Wilson – excerpts from *Futures of Life* and *Biophilia* (C/HO)
2. *The Earth Charter* (C/HO)
3. Articles by Lynn White and David G.ordin (C/HO)
4. Arne Naess in *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century* (excerpts) (C/HO)
5. **Pliske, *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise.***

Discussion questions:

What is meant by sustainability from a scientific perspective? From a spiritual perspective?

What kinds of ethics are generated from the scientific perspective? From the spiritual perspective?

Are Arne Naess (and most indigenous peoples) justified in insisting that the physical aspects of Nature (mountains, oceans, rivers, landscapes, soils, stars) have consciousness and thus ethical consideration?

Why is the conception of sustainability an environmental dharma?

Sessions 8-10:

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Opening ritual, Nature and the Vedic-Buddhist and Chinese spiritual traditions; soul evolution in relation to biological evolution, death, reincarnation and *karma* on a personal and planetary scale; the concept of *Dharma* as a guide for manifesting sustainable activities; levels of consciousness above and below the mind and their intersection in the human psyche. Spirituality and natural healing (Ayurveda and Chinese Traditional Medicine)

Deadline for both short papers to Turnitin.com : TBA

Discussion Questions:

How can the Vedic and Buddhist understandings of death change your understanding of yourself and your place in Nature?

How does the phenomenon of reincarnation change your view of yourself, Nature and sustainability?

What is the role of karma in individual and collective evolution?

Are there positive aspects to karma? If so, what are they?

How does an intrinsic spiritual basis change your ideas about the nature of medical practice and treatment?

How do you feel about the apparent chasm between free will and humans as instruments of a higher Power?

Readings:

1. **Sri Aurobindo, *Reincarnation and Karma (= The Problem of Rebirth)***
2. Sri Chinmoy, *Death and Reincarnation* (C/HO)
3. Philip Kapleau, *To Cherish and Live* (C/HO)
4. Lao Tse, *Tao Te Ching* (C/HO)
5. Article by David Crow on Ayurvedic medicine (C/HO)
6. **Pliske, T.F. *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise***
7. **Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth***

Viewing:

Healing and the mind: The Mystery of Chi

Feng Shui, The Chinese Art of Design and Placement

Guest Presenter Vedya Drishti Pliske (Ayurvedic medicine)

Sessions 11-12:

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Opening ritual, The Judeo-Christian-Islamic perspectives: The Creation according to St. Francis of Assisi, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry; implications for economic development, business, social justice and the role of environmental education in elementary school through university, service sharing.

Questions

1. *What distinguishes St. Francis from other medieval Christian luminaries?*
2. *What similarities does Canticle of the Creatures have with other perspectives we have discussed?*
3. *Why was Teilhard de Chardin's view on humankind, science and nature so troublesome to ecclesiastical authorities?*
4. *How would our academic community have reacted if Thomas Berry were on the FIU faculty, writing and teaching?*
5. *What is the relationship of Laudato Si' to St. Francis' Canticle?*
6. *How does current Pope Francis envision the duties of 21st. Century Catholic-Christian practitioners?*
7. *What does Thomas Berry mean by extractive economics?*
8. *What changes do you think Thomas Berry would want to make in the FIU general curriculum?*

Readings

1. **Swimme and Tucker, *The Universe Story* (review)**
2. **Berry, Thomas, *The Great Work***
3. Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (C/HO)
4. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (C/HO)

Guest presenter: Prof. Elisabetta Ferrero, St Thomas University Dept. of Global Studies.

Sessions 13-17

Opening ritual, Student Presentations, service sharing.

All projects with a written component due to Turnitin midnight (date)
Reflective paper due to Turnitin midnight (date)

Note: the schedule of topics and presenters will almost certainly change once we get started. Stay tuned.

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Guest presenters will likely include but not be limited to Profs. Whitney Bauman (FIU Religious Studies Dept.), Dennis Wiedman (FIU Dept. of Global and Sociocultural Studies, Global Indigenous Forum), Elisabetta Ferrero (St. Thomas Univ, Dept. of Global and Cultural Studies, Center for Ethics), Veda Drishti Pliske (Ayurvedic medical practitioner) and Iqbal Akhtar (FIU Religious Studies Dept.)

Texts, Course Policies and Activities

Required Texts:

1. Sri Aurobindo. 1988. *Rebirth and Karma (or, The Problem of Rebirth)*. Lotus Press. ISBN: 0-941524-63-9 pb
2. LaDuke, Winona. 2005. *Recovering the Sacred*. Haymarket Books. ISBN: 978-1-55846-627-6 pb
3. Swimme, B. and M. Tucker. 2014. *Journey of the Universe*. Yale Univ. Press. ISBN: 978-0300209-433 pb
4. Campbell, Joseph. 1988. *The Power of Myth*. Anchor Books. ISBN: 978-0-385-41886-8 pb
5. Pliske, T.E. 2019. *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise*. Pacem in Terris Press. MS in press.
6. Berry, Thomas. 1999. *The Great Work*. Three Rivers Press. ISBN: 978-0-609-80499-5 pb

Highly Recommended Texts:

1. Sri Chinmoy. 1974. *Yoga and the Spiritual Life: The Journey of India's Soul*. Aum Publ. ISBN: 978-0-88497-040-8 pb
2. Lao Tse, *Tao Te Ching*, Star ed. 2008. Tarcher Cornerstone Publ. ISBN: 978-1-58542-618-8 pb
3. Louv, Richard. 2006. *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficient Disorder* Algonquin Books. ISBN: 978-1-56512-522-3 pb
4. Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre. 2008. *The Phenomenon of Man*. Harper & Row Modern Classics. ISBN: 978-0-06163-265-5 pb
5. Pope Francis. 2015. *Evangelii Gaudium 'On Care for Our Common Home*. Sunday Visitor Press. ISBN: 978-1-56122-389-1 pb
6. *Deep Ecology for the 21st. Century*, G. Sessions, ed. 1995. Shambhala Press. ISBN: 978-1-57062-049-0. pb
7. Carr, Nicholas. 2010. *The Shallows – What the internet is doing to our brains*. W. W. Norton. ISBN: 978-0-393-33975-8 pb

Material provided on Canvas or handed out in class: abbrev. C/HO

There will be a series of short topical readings provided in advance of class. These will bear directly on the upcoming discussion and should be read before the session meeting.

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Course objectives

Two elements common to virtually all creation traditions are the spiritual origin of humanity and a wider spiritual kinship of humans with one another, the earth and universal Nature. This course explores the world's great spiritual traditions: Indigenous, Eastern (Vedic India, Buddhism, Taoism) and Western (Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Greco-Roman). By seeking out the diverse roots and threads of our contemporary concepts of sustainability and stewardship we hope to appreciate how spirituality relates to science and how our individual and collective lives affect the transformation of our relationship to the Earth and Nature into one of greater harmony, happiness and justice. An important subjective concern is how each of us can use what we learn to expand, deepen and manifest our intrinsic connection with wider Nature. Individual projects, reading, service learning, short writing assignments, ritual, journals, group discussions and field experiences are all part of our work together.

Global Learning Outcomes

1. *Global Awareness:* Students will be able to demonstrate their sense of empathy with diverse concepts of environmental stewardship and sustainability arising from the world's great spiritual traditions: East, West and indigenous.
2. *Global Learning:* Students will be able to articulate for themselves and others how the planetary environment is a global concern for both human and non-human life.
3. *Global Engagement:* Students will be able to put their ethics into action in order to promote positive change.

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Important Web Resources

United Nations Environmental Program: www.unep.org

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable development goals

United Nations Millennium Development Goals: www.who.int/topics/millennium_development-goals/about

Earth Charter: www.earthcharter.org

U.N Indigenous Peoples Resolutions/Programs:

www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples

FIU Global Indigenous Forum: <http://indigenous.fiu.edu>

FIU Office of Sustainability (service opportunities): <https://gogreen.fiu.edu>

Indigenous Environmental Network: www.ienearth.org

Meditation instruction: www.srichinmoycentre.org

Sri Aurobindo programs: www.aurosociety.org

Auroville: www.auroville.org

World Peace Run: www.peacerun.org

International Day of Happiness: www.dayofhappiness.net

International Parliament of Religions: www.parliamentofreligions.org

Laudato Si' (Pope Francis): www.laudatosi.com

Thomas Berry: www.thomasberry.org

Suggested Strategy for Readings:

It will make our sessions more productive and certainly more interesting if you can get a start on reading all the assigned texts at the very beginning. The ideas in the six books are interconnected at various levels, and I think you will appreciate this as you dig in. For those of you who are seriously motivated and want to know more about the spiritual connections we have to universal Nature, the “recommended” books are a good investment. As I put together the reading selections, nearly all the recommended books were on the primary list at one time or another, but not wanting to have you buy 20 books, I had to make a choice. You will be getting snippets from the recommended titles at various times during the course, but putting the entirety of the collection in your library will not be a mistake.

Swimmer and Tucker's book, *Journey of the Universe* is a kaleidoscopic roller-coaster ride from the beginning to the present. What you make of this phenomenon is fodder for discussion and papers. Campbell's *The Power of Myth* gives valuable insight into all of the topics we discuss and you can consult it for ideas at any time. His ideas are perhaps most particularly relevant to our discussions of indigenous peoples, and he is one of the few writers to integrate all aspects of the human experience, especially in his bridging of the matter-spirit interface. The chapters in my manuscript on Indian Vedic spirituality, *A Himalayan Hope and a Himalayan Promise* have relevance for many of the sessions (e.g. Evolution, Reincarnation/Karma, epistemology, Environment, etc.) and should be read prior to those meetings. The *Tao Te Ching (recommended)* is mystical and practical at the same time. Use your intuition to divine the meaning and guide your discussion enquiries. Some students find that Sri Aurobindo's *Rebirth and Karma* (alternate title: *The Problem of Rebirth*) is tough trekking, and believe it or not, the English vocabulary and style are his own, not translation from his native Bengali. His

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style is surprisingly conversational, despite how it looks on the page, and reading it aloud takes advantage of this quality and makes him much easier to comprehend. Compare his writing to the poetics of Sri Chinmoy. Many examples of Sri Chinmoy's and Sri Aurobindo's writing are given in my manuscript. Winona LaDuke's **Recovering the Sacred** comprises vignettes of several contemporary Native American activists and will give clear insight into the quality of indigenous spirituality and culture. Thomas Berry's controversial **The Great Work** will make you rethink what we are doing in academia, business/economics and social justice. For a time, he was a scholar in residence at our sister University, St. Thomas, where he created quite a stir. One of our invited presenters will be Prof. Elisabetta Ferrero who was his student. Write down your questions and save them for her visit.

Communication:

Sometimes I need to get in touch with you about schedule changes or other matters. **Please check your FIU email account regularly** for messages. This is the most reliable way I can contact everyone in class as Canvas has periodic ups and downs. Thanks.

Electronic devices:

Phones off/silent mode and put away during class; laptops and iPads/notebooks with lids down/closed unless you are taking notes about our class. Violation can result in your being counted absent for the entire session.

Class activities and evaluation

1. Attendance and Participation in class discussion, pod panel leadership **30%**

A significant part of what we do together is to discuss the many topics that are embedded in the course theme: Spirituality and Sustainability. If you are absent, you will miss a great deal and a part of it will be denied your insight. Everyone is allowed two unexcused absence (two sessions per week format) or **one absence (one session a week format)**. After that, absences will affect your grade. If life-karma deals you a severe blow (illness, traumatic family crisis, natural catastrophe, etc.), get in touch with me personally and provide me written documentation. Obligations for family holidays, other courses and organizations are not reasons for an excused absence.

A sign-in sheet will be available at the start of each class. It is your responsibility to sign it.

We will divide into small groups of four or five students whose duty it will be to join me in the session panels to direct the discussion of readings for the dates designated on the syllabus. Using the discussion questions for the session, and adding additional questions of your own, the

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panelists will help guide the rest of us in the salient points brought up in the readings for that day's meeting. Each panel member will need to be thoroughly prepared and will need to communicate outside class to develop strategy.

You will not get full credit for just showing up, sitting down and taking up space. We need your input, whether you agree with the directions of discussions or not. No one has a pocketful of right answers to the topics we will discuss, so please be brave and keep your hand up. Symphonies are not performed well when some instruments choose not to play.....

The small groups will serve as peer-review writing teams for assigned papers. More about this under "Papers".

2. Service Requirement 15%

You will offer nine hours of environmental service during the term. Several options are available on campus. Some of the options are clearly local and other have a distinctly global outreach (e.g. the Climate Reality Project, the Earth Charter). However, the approach is "Think globally, but act locally." All positive actions that have good effects at the community level ultimately send ripples throughout the world community.

- a. Work as a volunteer with the students and faculty of the *FIU Global Indigenous Forum*. They have many projects and events that can use our help.
- b. Connect with environmental action groups on or off campus, e.g. *The Climate Reality Project* and help them with their programs.
- c. Participate in the FIU Ecosystem Presentations, the Agroecology Program's organic garden or local beach and park clean-up events. These events are posted on the FIU Sustainability website on the Go Green link.
- d. Volunteer at a local elementary or secondary school (perhaps one you have attended personally) to introduce the *Earth Charter* to faculty as a curriculum option for their classes.
- e. Center for the Study of Spirituality. We're working on this one. Please stay tuned.

If you work with any of these groups, you will need to submit a voucher for your service that has your name, activities, date and hours worked. In addition, you will write a short description of what you learned and/or what further steps you could take based on your service.

The paper will be a **minimum of 600 words, but more is OK**). The description will be shared with other students in our service-sharing session.

If you worked with the GIF at FIU, the Climate Reality Project or the Earth Charter, the product of your service may be in the form of curriculum material that you had a hand in developing.

If some of you want to organize a service event of your own, go for it. Just let me know what

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you are planning beforehand to be sure it fits in with our course objectives.

We will devote some class time to a service-sharing-stories session in the last three weeks of the course.

3. Individual Project and class presentation.

25%

Each of you in the SS class will carry out a personal project of your own choosing and design which embodies some aspect of Spirituality and Sustainability that has personal importance to you. Part of this project will be to make a presentation of approximately 20 minutes to the class during the last two weeks of the course.

To accommodate a diverse creative capacity, feel free to choose a medium that suits you, e.g.

A. Wilderness experience: Spend 24 hours, including one night by yourself in a wilderness setting without electronic devices (They can be there but must be switched off except for a true emergency) alcohol or other distractions. This is based on the vision of initiation rites of many indigenous peoples in which the mind is quietly meditative and receptive, and the seeker makes contact with inner beings of Nature, receiving guidance for service and role in the tribe or community. I strongly recommend Everglades National Park as the best local venue because there is 24-7 security and designated wilderness camping areas.

Keep a journal of your experience (can be the same one in which you record your spiritual practice). The journal will be the basis of your presentation to the class at the end of the course.

B. Literary project: Essay, poetry, short story/drama

C. Musical composition/performance

D. Dance

E. Painting, sculpture

F. AV presentation: film or documentary

I will need a one-page written statement about your project by the date on the syllabus (end of week 5). Some projects may have a writing requirement as well as an exhibition or performance. I will discuss this with each of you individually.

4 Papers (two shorter essays, minimum 2000 words + one long reflective paper, minimum 3000 words).

30%

Each of you will be writing three papers during the course. Two of these will be based on topics growing out of assigned readings and discussion questions. The scope of these two papers

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need not be confined to one particular source but should reach “outside the box” to develop a view that has depth and scope. These two papers will have a due date at about the tenth week of the course. Papers that do not meet the minimum length requirements will not receive full credit.

The third, reflective paper will be a personal essay on your own understanding of the interaction of spirituality and sustainability. This paper will be due at Session #13, one week before the course ends.

Late papers will be substantially penalized.

5. Handwritten Personal Journal 0%

One of the goals of the course is for each of you to begin or strengthen an existing spiritual practice or global engagement activity (e.g. the Global Indigenous Forum, the Earth Charter) that suits you and to keep a journal that reflects your experiences. Things you write by hand have a potency that electronically written words do not. Electronic files get lost, corrupted, deleted, but for some of you your journal/diary will endure throughout your life. I will want to confirm that you have kept a journal and have made regular entries.

Submitting and formatting Papers:

You will submit your papers to *Turnitin.com*. Most of you are familiar with this process from other classes, but for the new students we will discuss it during the first week of class. Please be aware that papers cannot be submitted past the deadline, so last minute efforts can prove fatal if your watch is even one second different from *Turnitin*. A similarity index of greater than 5% is unacceptable. (One of the causes of high SIs is failing to use quotation marks.)

Please follow the general guidelines for papers.

1. Please use **double spacing throughout**, except for quotations.
2. For quotations, please bracket the citation in quotation marks and indent 5 spaces from the body of the text. Also, please use **single-spacing for quotes**.
3. As far as style goes, use whatever style (Chicago, MLA, etc.) suits you, but please be consistent.
4. Although the deadlines for the shorter papers is near the end of the course, if you can submit earlier there may be time for you to revise the paper if necessary and still meet the deadline.
5. Include an alphabetical references cited page, including web resources, at the end of your paper. This page does not count toward minimum length requirements.

Peer Writing Review/proofreading

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Your small discussion group will also serve as a peer writing review panel for your papers. Please circulate your paper drafts with one another for feedback. This is something that almost all writers do before arriving at a final version. Sometimes a change of perspective gives new life and strength to what you write. Also, it catches mechanical writing errors (grammar, sentence structure, etc.) that improve the clarity of your essay.

You will receive the detailed instructions for peer review and evaluation and a list of topics for the two shorter papers at the first class meeting.

Even before you give the draft to your friends for comment, try reading it aloud to yourself. If it makes sense to you, it will probably make sense to other readers as well.

After you have done all of the above, give the paper a final proofreading to make sure it meets your approval. Then check to see that it meets the minimum word requirement and submit to Turnitin.

Plagiarism policy

REL-3161 adheres strictly to the plagiarism policies of the university. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct, and, more important, it is an insult to your own inner being. We discuss some deep and personal issues, and substituting someone else's solutions and views for your own is an obstacle to your personal growth. The FIU policy states,

.....the deliberate use and appropriation of another's works without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for the ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism.

Some examples of plagiarism are,

1. Term papers acquired online or from other sources;
2. Copying of original material without attribution;
3. Use of other student's work;
4. Copying and pasting *verbatim*, information from internet sources, without quotation marks and proper citation.

If you have any questions about this policy, please consult with me personally.

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the CAS Dean of Students for academic misconduct.

Grading Scale

**A/96-100 A-/90-95 B+/87-89 B/83-86 B-/80-82 C+/76-79 C/70-75 D/60-69
F/less than 60**

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