

# WIS4551: Diverse Perspectives in Conservation

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**3 credits**

## I. Course Information

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Spring 2026

Meeting Day/Time: Tuesday: Period 4-5 (10:40-12:35) & Thursday Period 4 (10:40-11:30)

Location: Tuesday- MAT 0105, Thursday- MCCB G108

### **Instructor(s)**

Nia Morales, Assistant Professor of Human Dimensions

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Office location: 316 Newins-Ziegler Hall

Office hours: Tuesday 1-2pm, Thursday 1-2pm, or by appointment

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### **Course Description**

As the population of the United States becomes increasingly diverse, the integration and participation of diverse communities is essential with respect to successful management and conservation of wildlife and natural resources. This course will examine current and historical factors that influence the interaction of marginalized communities such as indigenous and communities of color with the natural environment, including natural resource management decision-making structures.

### **Learning Objectives**

In this course students will:

- Critically examine the wildlife and natural resource conservation history of the United States and determine the worldview from which it stemmed as well as identify the groups whose voices have been marginalized or left out
- Assess the value of incorporating diverse perspectives or voices in wildlife and natural resource conservation
- Be able to recognize the barriers and opportunities to diversity, equity, and inclusion in wildlife and natural resource conservation
- Develop skills to work with diverse stakeholders in conservation issues
- Students will evaluate their own identities to critique the privilege and/or marginalization that they experience and its implications for how they engage in scientific and conservation spaces
- Develop competencies in recognizing and challenging social hierarchies such as racial and gender bias and discrimination

## II. Coursework & Schedule

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### 1. List of Graded Work

Assignment	Description	Requirements	Due Date	Points
Reflection posts	10 reflection post to prompts on Canvas (2-3 paragraph)	~ 2 paragraphs submitted to Canvas	See weekly schedule and Canvas	100
Discussion Leader	In a small group, you will kick off the week's discussion with a brief overview of the assigned readings and discussion prompts/questions	See Canvas for your assigned week(s)	See Canvas	20
Religion and Science	Perusall assignment	See Canvas	2/1	10
Term Paper Part 1	Choose topic for term paper. Write 1 page description of the issue and why you chose it. Topic must be approved by instructor (resubmissions due 2/25)		2/15	15
Science Misinformation Audit	Choose a conservation related issue that has been covered in the media. Assess the sources and credibility of the information presented.	See Canvas for assignment	3/15	40
Term Paper Part II	5-7 page paper on a topic of your choosing	See Canvas for rubric	4/27	100
Overall Class Participation	See rubric on pg. 6			15
			<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

## 2. Weekly Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assigned Work Due
<b>Week 1: Course Intro and defining diverse perspectives (1/13 &amp; 1/15)</b>		
Readings	Morrison and Steltzer 2021	Reflection Essay #1 due 1/18
Activities	Tuesday: Course intro and class activity Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 2: Worldview, Values, and Attitudes in Conservation (1/20 &amp; 1/22)</b>		
Readings	Kopnina 2012	Reflection Essay #2 due 1/25
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 3: Religion, Spirituality, and Conservation (1/27 &amp; 1/29)</b>		
Readings	White 1967 & SCB Guidelines document	Reflection Essay #3 due 2/1
Activities	Tuesday: Guest lecture- Dr. Ben Lowe Thursday: No class. Perusall Assignment in lieu of discussion	
<b>Week 4: History of Conservation in the US (2/3 &amp; 2/5)</b>		
Readings	Morales, N., Lee, J., Newberry, M., and Bailey, K. 2022. Redefining American Conservation for Equitable & Inclusive Social-Environmental Management. Ecological Applications 33(1).	Reflection Essay #4 due 2/8
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture and NAMWC Debate Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 5: Fortress Conservation (2/10 &amp; 2/12)</b>		
Readings	TBD	Reflection Essay #5 due 2/15  Term Paper Pt. 1 due 2/15
Activities	Tuesday: Guest Lecture- Jazmin Gonzales Tovar Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 6: Colonialism and International Conservation (2/17 &amp; 2/19)</b>		
Readings	None	Reflection Essay #6 due 2/22
Activities	Tuesday: Documentary Thursday: Discussion	
<b>Week 7: Indigenous issues in Conservation (2/24 &amp; 2/26)</b>		
Readings	TBD	Pt. 1 resubmissions due 3/1
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 8: Who is Trusted in Science? (3/3 &amp; 3/5)</b>		
Readings	Hoagland 2017 & Chavez 2022	

Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	Reflection Essay #7 due 3/8
<b>Week 9: Is science objective? When is science advocacy? (3/10 &amp; 3/12)</b>		
Readings	TBD	Reflection Essay #8 due 3/15
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	Misinformation Audit due 3/16
<b>Week 10: SPRING BREAK 3/17-3/19</b>		
<b>Week 11: Disproportionate impacts of env policy and mgmt (3/31 &amp; 4/2)</b>		
Readings	Murdock (skim) & Miller 2022	
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 12: Disproportionate impacts of env policy and mgmt Pt II (4/7 &amp; 4/9)</b>		
Readings	Schell 2020	Reflection Essay #9 due 4/12
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity Thursday: Student led discussion	First draft of term paper due 4/12
<b>Week 13: Participation in Conservation and the Outdoors I (4/14 &amp; 4/16)</b>		
Readings	Collins 2024 & Hussain et al. 2026	
Activities	Tuesday: Guest lecture Dr. Lameace Hussain Thursday: Student led discussion	
<b>Week 14: Participation in Conservation and the Outdoors II (4/21)</b>		
Readings	TBD	Reflection Essay #10 due 4/26
Activities	Tuesday: Lecture & Activity	Final Term Paper due 4/26

# III. Grading

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## 3. Statement on Attendance and Participation

### Attendance and Participation:

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Attendance: will be taken daily and recorded. You are allowed four “personal days” for the semester, after which each absence that does not meet university criteria for “excused” will result in a two-point deduction from your final grade.

Participation: Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate class participation is expected and will be evaluated using the rubric below.

NOTE: If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

### Participation Grading Rubric:

Informed: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work.			
Thoughtful: Shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised.			
Considerate: Takes the perspective others into account.			
Present: Shows evidence of regular attendance. (Reminder: you may have up to 4 excused absences)			
	<b>High Quality</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>

## 4. Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94.0 – 100% of possible points		C	74.0 – 76.9%
A-	90.0 – 93.9%		C-	70.0– 73.9%
B+	87.0 – 89.9%		D+	67.0 – 69.9%
B	84.0 – 86.9%		D	64.0 – 66.9%
B-	80.0 – 83.9%		D-	60.0 – 63.9%
C+	77.0 – 79.9%		E	<60

## IV. Required Policies

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### 5. Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### 6. UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### 7. 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.

### 8. Campus Resources

#### Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [counseling.ufl.edu/cwc](https://counseling.ufl.edu/cwc), and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)  
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or [police.ufl.edu](http://police.ufl.edu).

## Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu).

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

Library Support, Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

## Student Complaints

Residential Course:

[https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf)

Online Course:

<http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-proces>

## 9. The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

## 10. COVID Response Statements

We will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. [Find more information in the university attendance policies](#).