FOR 6005 – Conservation Behavior
University of Florida
Class 27577, Section 6785
Fall 2022
Wednesday periods 7-9; 1:55 – 4:55 p.m.
222 Newins Ziegler Hall
Professor: Martha C. Monroe, 846-0878, 347 NZ Hall, mcmonroe@ufl.edu (she, her)
Office Hours: On zoom, Tues 1-3 and on request
Teaching Assistant: Gabby Salazar, gabriellesalazar@ufl.edu
Office Hours: On zoom, on request

Stay Healthy
Stay informed of current Covid-19 policies. If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you should attend class. 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.

Course Introduction
Conservation behavior is becoming an increasingly important concept as natural resource managers, development officers, educators, politicians, regulators, and business leaders consider what it takes to nudge people toward sustainable behaviors. Most acknowledge that our behavior plays an important role in creating and resolving environmental challenges. This course will explore what we know about human behavior and apply it to the design of helpful education and communication tools.

A variety of disciplines have something to contribute to the field of conservation behavior. While this class will be firmly rooted in psychology, we will also explore other social sciences, such as anthropology, sociology, and communication.

While it is important to appreciate environmental issues, that is not the purpose of this course. Education and communication play essential roles in creating a sustainable future. We will explore the theoretical foundation and application of using education and communication strategies in our collective efforts to reach this goal, using original descriptions of key theories when possible. This course is geared toward those who will be conducting research on behavior change through work with the public in a variety of formal and informal settings to develop strategies that support responsible environmental behavior.

Course Overview:
Link theories of human behavior and change to education and communication research and strategies designed to move toward sustainability.

Course Objectives:
- Explain the models and theoretical frameworks that can be used to analyze the questions: Why do some people demonstrate environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB)? What are some psychological barriers to ERB?
encourages the formation and adoption of ERB? Students will identify the similarities and differences among these models and become comfortable using them.

- Increase familiarity with social science research designs and goals to discuss what we can learn from theories and models and how they add value to your research.
- Explain a range of education and communication strategies and identify the underlying theoretical assumptions about human behavior.
- Examine current programs that are working toward sustainability by identifying how the programs address change, the behaviors that are targeted, the strategies that are used, and the theoretical frameworks/assumptions that might drive the programs.
- Explore your own ideas and experiences regarding personal behavior change and develop a composite model of what you think works to support behavior change in a target audience.

**Required Readings:**

There is a pile of reading materials for this course. It is imperative that you read the materials before class, as much of our class time will be spent discussing the readings. The readings are available on electronic reserve at [https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ares/](https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ares/) and there is a link to them in the Canvas course at [https://elearning.ufl.edu](https://elearning.ufl.edu). Access from off campus is through the UF VPN client. For more information on downloading, installing and using the VPN client, please go to [http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/login/vpn.html](http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/login/vpn.html). For general information on course reserves, please contact the Course Reserves Unit at 352-273-2520, or email at [eres@uflib.ufl.edu](mailto:eres@uflib.ufl.edu).

To find readings, please use the tags. Required readings are tagged by the week they should be read (i.e., Week 3). Loads of goodies are tagged Optional and Background.

**Course Policies**

**Participation**

This course depends on active student engagement. You will read and discuss a number of models and research studies that contribute to our understanding of conservation behavior. The workload is heavy on theory and thinking in the first half of the course to give you a practical, working knowledge of this literature. The time you spend on reading probably correlates to your ability to engage in productive discussion and the amount you learn about each theory.

Students are expected to attend class, engage in discussion, submit assignments on time, and participate in group work. Absences will be excused if accompanied by advanced notice or appropriate paperwork. Non-excused absences will result in a deduction of .5 points from the participation score per week. Assignments should be uploaded to Canvas by midnight (Eastern time) on the day they are due. Late assignments will be deducted by .5 per day unless prior arrangements for an extension are made. If you are unable to
attend class meetings, you are expected to obtain notes from another student. All this may be modified if the class decides to move to an online format.

Diversity and Inclusion
As we work to recognize the opportunities and limits of privilege and change the outcomes of systemic injustice in the United States, it is important that we create a safe environment in this class to explore sensitive topics and help each other grow in our ability to respect all people and help them thrive. We can begin to do so by using inclusive and preferred language, acknowledging assumptions, considering the consequences and limitations of research findings, and seeking research that challenges the status quo.

Academic Honesty
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.” 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 (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/scrr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obliged 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. Please also refer to the UF guidelines on plagiarism at http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/mlsl/07b/instructorplagiarism.html and plan on avoiding all types of plagiarism: stealing, misquoting, insufficient paraphrasing, and duplication.

Technology
For issues with technical difficulties for e-learning in Canvas, please post your question to the Technical Help Discussion in your course, or contact the UF Help Desk at:
- Learning-support@ufl.edu | (352) 392-HELP - select option 2 | http://elearning.ufl.edu
- Library Help Desk support http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask
- SFRC Academic Hub https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/303721

Computer or other hardware failures, except failure of the UF e-Learning system, will not excuse students for missing assignments. Any late submissions due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Helpdesk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request consideration.

Class Recordings
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.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

UF Campus Resources
Resources are available on campus for students having concerns or challenges related to their personal life, their academic progress, or their future that might interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 3921575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

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

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

Academic Resources E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.
http://www.crc.ufl.edu/

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask. 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. [http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/](http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/)


Student Complaints Campus: [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf)

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.

Disabilities
The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. 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. 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

Students with disabilities have an equal right to use and benefit from resources at the George A. Smathers Libraries, including (but not limited to) Course Reserves materials. To ensure this right, students with disabilities:

- Have the responsibility to identify themselves as needing appropriate, reasonable accommodations for their disabilities
- Have the responsibility for making their needs known in a timely manner
- Have the same obligation as any library user to comply with library policies and procedures

The George A. Smathers Libraries Course Reserves Unit will work with patrons needing assistance or accommodations to access course reserves materials. Please contact the Course Reserves Unit at 352-273-2520, or email at eres@uflib.ufl.edu for information or assistance. We also encourage students to contact and register with the University of Florida Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565 or at accessuf@dso.ufl.edu.

Our website provides additional information for you and students at [https://accesssupport.uflib.ufl.edu/course-reserves/](https://accesssupport.uflib.ufl.edu/course-reserves/)
Course Evaluation
At the end of the semester, 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/.

Grades
Your grade will be determined from the level and frequency of participation, presentations, attendance, and 8 assignments that total 100 points. The following scale will be used:

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<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.67 – 4.00</td>
<td>93 – 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.33 – 3.66</td>
<td>90 – 92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.00 – 3.32</td>
<td>87 – 89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.67 – 2.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.33 – 2.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.00 – 2.32</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>1.67 – 1.99</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>1.33 – 1.66</td>
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<td>1.00 – 1.32</td>
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<td>0.67 – 0.99</td>
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<td>0.33 – 0.66</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>0.00 – 0.32</td>
<td>59% or below</td>
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Course Schedule

Aug 24  Wk 1. Introduction, General Framework, Getting Started
Assignments and Comparison Chart
Thinking behind the course design
Discuss ideas for personal habitual behavior changes

Section 1: Exploring Theories

Aug 31  Wk 2. Intuitive and traditional models of human behavior
Due: Assignment 1: Post your barriers and motives for personal behavior. Pick a Behavior Buddy to stay in touch with.
Every week: Comparison Chart and Behavior Update


https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2019.00055


**Sept 7**  **Wk 3. Motives, values, attitudes and behavior change**
Due: Assignment 2a


Ed Deci video on motivation
Dan Ariely video on motivation

**Sept 14**  **Wk 4. Perceptions: hope, identity, optimism and connection to nature**
Due: Assignment 2b


**Sept 21**  
**Wk 5. Major models of behavior from psychology**  
Due: Assignment 3a


**Sept 28**  
**Wk 6. Major models influencing behavior from communication**  
Due: Assignment 3b


**Oct 5**  
**Wk 7. Social Marketing**


**And:** Use the Community-based Social Marketing website (cbsm.com) to explore examples for social marketing tools or read his book: *Fostering Sustainable Behavior* by Doug McKenzie-Mohr
Upload presentations and handouts by midnight Sunday October 9, though you can upload it any time prior to this, of course. Instead of class on Wednesday, watch all the presentations on Voice Thread and comment on them in Canvas. This reading provides an overview of many of our theories:


**Section 2: Apply Theories**

**Oct 19 ** Wk 9. Critique and Expansion of Social Marketing

We will discuss your mid-term Application Exercise (Assignment 6) as we expand social marketing ideas.


**Oct 26 ** Wk 10. Nudge – the government’s version of social marketing?

Assignment 4a is due


Videos: Nudge
Nov 2 Wk 11. Discuss your cases (Assignment 7)
Bring your posters to class. To accompany your cases, we have just a few readings that may shed light on these real world examples.


Section 3: Broaden Application

Nov 9 Wk 12. Moral and worldview contributions to behavior
Assignment 4b is due


Videos: Haidt

Nov 16 Wk 13. Change at the Community Level
Assignment 4c is due


Nov 23 No Class Thanksgiving Break

Section 4: Synthesis

Nov 30 Wk 14. Ramping Up Behavior Change


Dec 7 Wk 15. Putting it All Together

Assignment 8 due.
Submit your synthesis paper and model. Present your experiences with your Behavior Buddies to compare what worked and why to change your behavior. Organize a joint model with others who have selected a similar set of theories, discuss and draw a model. Present on your joint model.

Assignments

1. Barriers and motives for personal behavior August 31 5 points
Throughout this semester you will use readings and class discussions to change a personal behavior that you select. To give yourself the most fodder for contemplation,
please select a behavior that you do frequently that relates to food, transportation, consumption, waste reduction, or energy.

For this first assignment, you will 1) define the behavior you wish to change, 2) explain why you think this is an important behavior to change, 3) explain why you haven’t changed it yet, 4) describe the barriers you experience to making this change, 5) describe your motivations for wanting to change it, and 6) develop a plan to record your efforts and results. Aim for 2 pages, single spaced.

Then, throughout the semester you will keep a journal that records your attempts and measures your success, try different strategies to adopt a new behavior, discuss your efforts with “behavior buddy” and analyze your efforts in the context of the theories we discuss in this course. Aim to record evidence of your attempts, in addition to your thoughts about your behavior, and to reflect on your progress with your Behavior Buddy periodically during class.

2, 3, and 4. Three research articles on theories 10 points each
For each assignment, select one theory/paper from class that you are interested in and find a research-based article that explores this theory with a topic of interest to you. Please avoid any assigned reading for the course (you will have to check ahead in the syllabus). Read the article, write a 1-2 page paper in which you summarize the findings and reflect on the theory you selected, and come to class prepared to discuss how the theory we read has or has not worked in this case. Submit your paper on the day we discuss the theory.

- **Assignment 2:** If you select Cognitive Dissonance, motives, or any of the theories listed in the Dietz review, or Self Determination this is due Sept 7. If you select 7 hope, or connection to nature, it is due Sept 14.
- **Assignment 3:** Use TPB or Stern’s Coherent Theory for a paper due Sept 21, or use ELM or Diffusion for a paper due Sept 28.
- **Assignment 4:** Use Nudge for a paper due October 26; Moral Foundations (Haidt) for a paper due Nov 9, or social identity, social learning, or deliberation for a paper due Nov 16. You have three choices this time!

Please note that these authors have written about many things – aim to find articles that reference these theories. In addition, some authors talk about someone else’s theory – please hunt for research articles that test and explore the theory. To find cited works, go to www.uflib.ufl.edu and follow these steps: Click on Find, then Databases, then Project Starters and Databases, scroll down to Web of Science, and click on Cited Reference Search. Type in the Author and Year of the work whose citations you are seeking – this is the Cited Author. Note the variety of ways the same paper may be listed. Pick the one that has the most citations and click on the number of citations to bring up those papers. Read the abstracts to find the best one for this assignment.

5. Present another behavior change theory Oct 9, 12 10 pts
Using Vining’s overview of behavior change theories (and others), identify one that we have not yet covered and become an expert on it. You may work in pairs on this
assignment if you wish. You will explain the theory (finding a good explanation in the literature; some are in course reserves), find at least one article per person that use the theory, and explain it, too. Some may not have been applied to conservation topics yet. What can we learn from these authors? Prepare a 1-2 page handout for the class to accompany your short (5-10 minute) ppt presentation that will help everyone complete their Comparison Charts. Upload your handout and presentation to Voice Thread by Sunday October 9 and narrate the presentation in Voice Thread. Comment on others’ theories and ask questions by Oct 12. Respond to all comments and questions in Canvas by Friday October 14.

Bandura                      Self efficacy and outcome expectancy
Brehm and Brehm              Reactance
Chawla                       Significant Life Experience
Fazio                        Attitudes and Behavior
Hungerford and Volk          Environmental Citizen Model (see Hines)
Kahneman and Tversky         Decision Heuristics
Kaiser and Shimoda           Personal Responsibility
Kals, Schumacher, Montada   Emotional Affinity
Kaplan and Kaplan            Reasonable Person Model
Krasny                      Civic Ecology Education
Millar and Millar            Direct Experience, Information
Pretty; Adler & Kwon         Social Capital
Prochaska                    Stages of Change
Sansone                     Self Regulation
Schwartz                     Norm Activation
Seguin & Pelletier           Environmental activism
Tuan                         Sense of Place (see Jorgensen and Stedman)

6. Application of Theories    Oct 26     5 points
Complete a “take home quiz” that asks you to apply these theories to potential survey questions. Submit your responses prior to class, and we will discuss on October 26. You’ll be able to submit a revised version and new reflections after class discussion.

7. Case study of a program/project    Nov 2     15 points
Identify a program or project that is designed to encourage people to engage in or change environmental behavior. Create a poster that describes the program, critiques the degree to which the program is successful, and suggests which theories are or are not working. Print the poster (on-campus printers are cheap, but busy) and bring to class! We’ll discuss similarities, differences, and the ways theories could have been more helpful on Wednesday.

8. Reflection & Model of Personal Behavior Change    Dec 7     15 points
Throughout the semester you have worked on changing a personal behavior that you selected. Return to your first assignment and reflect on your initial ideas about motivations and barriers. Review your journal that noted your attempts to alter your behavior and the evidence of your effort. Reflect on what worked and why. What
incentives did you try? Did commitment work? To what extent is perceived control or subjective norm a relevant factor? Summarize your experience in the language we used in the course (identifying variables, barriers, theories, etc.) in about 2 single spaced pages.

Then, using what did or did not work for you, develop and describe an all-encompassing synthesis model that explains your behavior change using at least four of the theories and models that resonate most strongly with your experience. You should consider and define the context in which this model might hold true – all behaviors, just personal behavior, just public behavior; any behavior or only self-selected behaviors; only when motivated by a class assignment, with peer support, etc. Then describe how you could use this model to design communication or education programs to change other people’s personal behaviors. The model description should be about 3-4 pages, and a diagram could be very useful.

**Participation points from participation, questions, attendance  20 points**

Asking questions, providing answers, facilitating conversation, attending class, and engaging in small group work are important components of this class. Points will based on quality of participation in discussion.

**Specific theories and papers to help with Assignment 5**


**Suggested background to support conservation behavior**

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**Optional readings that support class discussions**


