# PSYCHOLOGY OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

**EAS 561 / ENV 361 / PSYCH 362 – Winter 2023 – Mon and Wed 1:00 – 2:20 pm**

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## RESOURCES
All required and extra readings and course materials are available on Canvas.

## ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Project</td>
<td>StoryCorps interview</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>January 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>February 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>April 17</td>
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<td>Team Project</td>
<td>Part 1 – Site, strategy, and behavior</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Part 2 – Behavior change model</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Part 3 – Interventions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Part 4 – Draft of presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part 5 – Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>April 10 and 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>(attendance, engagement, quizzes, etc.)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Throughout term</td>
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## SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Mondays</th>
<th>Wednesdays</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Frugality and well-being</td>
<td>1/4 Premise, types of behavior, and behavior change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>MLK DAY – NO CLASS</td>
<td>1/11 Envisioning, stories, prospection, and StoryCorps</td>
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<td>1/23</td>
<td>Evaluation metrics</td>
<td>1/18 Team-based (collective action) models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/30</td>
<td><strong>Project day: Site, strategy, and behavior</strong></td>
<td>1/25 Information processing-based models (SEE)</td>
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<td>2/6</td>
<td>Self-regulated behavior change model (SRBC)</td>
<td>2/1 Norm-based models (NAM, VBN)</td>
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<td>2/13</td>
<td>Rational actor models (TRA, TPB)</td>
<td>2/8 Education-based models (R&amp;R, Hines et al.)</td>
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<td>2/20</td>
<td><strong>Project day: Behavior change model</strong></td>
<td>2/15 Clarity-based model, Diffusion of innovation &amp; small exper</td>
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<td>2/27</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
<td>2/22 EXAM 1</td>
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<td>3/6</td>
<td>Self-interest, Moral judgement and Values</td>
<td>3/1 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
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<td>3/13</td>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>3/8 Minimum justification and Commitment</td>
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<td>Feedback and Goal setting</td>
<td>3/15 Norms and Modeling</td>
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<td>3/27</td>
<td><strong>Project day: Interventions</strong></td>
<td>3/22 Knowledge and Attitudes</td>
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<td>4/3</td>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>3/29 Framing and Fear</td>
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<td>Presentations – 1</td>
<td>4/5 Project day: Draft of presentation</td>
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<td>4/17</td>
<td>EXAM 2</td>
<td>4/12 Presentations – 2</td>
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*Psychology of Environmental Stewardship* (Syllabus version 12-31-22)
BIOPHYSICAL PREMISE

Consider the premise below carefully. It provides the biophysical grounding for all of our work. We will return to it frequently as we review existing behavior change models and craft modified versions adequate to the task of responding well to energy descent and the climate crisis. (References are at the end of this syllabus).

This course foresees a drawn-out but relentless descent in both surplus energy and the availability of cheap, high-quality resources (Bardi 2011, Murphy et al. 2021, Herrington 2021, Turner 2014). It accepts that we created a social-economic system that requires the impossible: perpetual energy and material growth on a finite planet (Rhodes 2021). It also accepts global heating noting that profound changes have occurred and are accelerating (IPCC 2021). The climate crisis is unraveling the ecosystems that support life. In the present, this crisis is disrupting the lives of hundreds of millions of people due to flooding, droughts, storms, wildfires, food insecurity, and unrest. In the future, the issue is existential. Industrial civilization never could have green consumed its way to sustainability (Monbiot 2015). But having squandered decades by ignoring that fact, it now faces the issue of its ability to thrive (Bradshaw et al. 2021, Bologna & Aquino 2020, Lenton et al. 2019). This is certainly not the future that we were expecting nor the one for which we are preparing.

While recognizing that global negotiations are responding to the climate crisis, there is nonetheless a disturbing silence about declining surplus energy. The field of biophysical economics makes it clear that the economy is an energy system, not a financial system (Hall & Klitgaard 2011; Morgan 2023). Unfortunately, the persistent decline in the surplus energy required for running techno-industrial society has only recently received attention (Daly & Farley 2010, Hall 2017, Jackson & Jackson 2021, Rye & Jackson 2018, Sherwood et al. 2020). It will be a defining aspect of our future.

Thus, this course gives attention to that latter issue. However, this is a nuanced story. People must become familiar with the behavioral consequences of energy descent and global heating, but they must not dwell on those issues. Instead, the focus must be on making an urgent transition to a low-material-throughput pattern of living at individual, collective, and institutional levels. However, intentionally, and against the dominant social norm, this course frames this new reality as an opportunity to emphasize behaviors that increase well-being (De Young 2019). It foresees a shift toward tangible, pragmatic, small-scale initiatives aimed at building neighborhood resilience, with communities following Brooks’ (2019) advice to emphasize “…individualism less and relationalism more,” resulting in an unexpected increase in well-being.

While this behavioral transition has begun, often hidden in plain sight, it is and will remain a hard process. The wondrous comforts and conveniences afforded by techno-industrial society are unlikely to be possible under the premise. Thus, the focus of this course is on helping citizens of such societies change their behavior to a more frugal existence. But it is reasonable to ask, if given the choice, why not wait until the last possible moment to change our behavior? One reason is to gain now, rather than later, the intrinsic satisfactions embedded in a frugal existence. In short, why delay the intrinsic rewards awaiting us. Thus, rather than containing a dismal forecast, this course points out that despite the lean times ahead (and, in fact, likely because of them) overall psychological well-being will improve. This idea is not commonly appreciated – that an austere, rather than an affluent, existence is much better matched to the functional capabilities of the human mind and that such an existence enhances psychological well-being. The fields of conservation and environmental psychology explore this idea and Brooks (2016) has offered a compelling, if astounding and easily ignored, historical example. The course discusses these embedded psychological benefits, foreshadowed below.

Outward benefits - Some may view a voluntarily simple life and frugal existence as a form of sacrifice. It may be just that, especially if we understand that the root of that word is “to make sacred.” The vision here is of a place well cared for, a community intact and resilient, and individuals whole and well. These benefits derive from taking meaningful action. That is, behaviors adopted for their ability to heal the planet and fortify community resilience.

Inward benefits – Berry (1987) argues industrialization destroys the aesthetic and wholesome qualities of everyday life. As a remedy, he observes that non-industrial work quickens those qualities, and cites Gill (1983) on the higher calling of manual work where “…every [one] is called to give love to the work of [their] hands. Every [one] is called to be an artist.” Berry offers small-scale communities with provisioning economies as examples of artistic enterprise focused on beauty, resilience, resourcefulness, and well-being. Perhaps, as we first restore and then maintain the planet, everyone will become an artist, an idea consistent with Seligman’s (1999) notion that authentic happiness comes from “living life as a work of art.” Intrinsic satisfactions are the principal motives of this life pattern.
EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

Evaluation will involve a combination of numeric and qualitative assessments. The assignments all assume that the premise and intention of the course are fully accepted, even if only for the duration of the term. An exploratory yet affirmative approach should be used in all engagement, discussions, and writings. Our goal is to build upon, not critique, the many models and theories of behavior change and, through our discussions and the assignments, apply their insights to changing behavior at the individual, family, and neighborhood scale.

1. EXAMS: Two exams test comprehension of material covered in lectures, discussions, and assigned readings and will likely include short answer, fill-in-the-blank, matching, labeling, essay, and/or multiple choice questions. Make-up exams are only given upon receipt of written or other formal evidence of emergencies (e.g., absence outside control, serious illness) and notification within 48 hours of missed exam.

2. INDIVIDUAL STORY-BASED PROJECT: Involves recording an interview using the StoryCorps app and then uploading it to the course’s StoryCorps Archive (archive.storycorps.org/communities/resilient-ann-arbor). The premise involves imagining it is 2030 and that you have successfully responded to the energy descent and climate crisis. The conversation focuses on one change you made that was very difficult, deep, and impactful and, most importantly, a change that most people would have thought impossible to adopt. Another course member (i.e., someone on your term project team) conducts the interview. More details on this assignment will be handed out and discussed.

3. TEAM-BASED PROJECT: The term projects will explore behavior change interventions at a site (e.g., city, county, state), focused on a strategy area (e.g., food, transportation, materials and waste, water, buildings) within one of the climate action plans, resilience hub plans, or energy descent action plans (see readings for the first Project Day below). With prior approval, alternative sites are permitted. The premise involves imagining it is 2030, and the strategy is implemented and successful. Furthermore, the behavior changes adopted helped the community adapt well to the massive changes that the climate and energy descent crisis caused in the everyday lived experiences of residents. The project tells an optimistic story about how it happened, citing specific behavior change models, and relevant literature covered in the course. More details on the project will be handed out and discussed.

4. PARTICIPATION: Active, thoughtful and continuous engagement is essential. This includes, but is not limited to, attending all lectures and all discussion sections, taking part in all activities and all team-based meetings, asking questions, completing occasional quizzes, and contributing constructively to all discussions.

READINGS

The readings below are the foundation of the course. They should be completed well in advance of the session during which they are discussed so as to give ample time for consideration of their content. Thoughtful, multi-day reflection on the content of the readings is essential. Doing this reflection in a study group is highly recommended.

General advice: The purpose of the readings is not to memorize facts. Rather, they are a means of understanding the models and strategies for encouraging pro-environmental behavior.

- Explore: Treat the readings as an exploration, an active process of making sense, of developing insight into the various factors that influence human behavior particularly with respect to its durability and the spillover of change. There are several resources available on Canvas about Active Reading that may aid this process.
- Build: Often authors are not writing for a course like this one. They likely would have framed things differently had you been their intended audience. Do not waste time criticizing their work and pointing out faults; that is not the purpose of this course. Instead, build up their ideas; reinterpret their work to serve our purpose.
- Note: As you read, notice your own reactions, especially things that counter a dismal view of human nature. Pay attention to passages that provide you with optimism (while perhaps contradicting previous understanding, another reading, or conventional wisdom). Be sure to share these thoughts during your weekly discussions.
- Share: Forming a study group is one the most useful ways of fully understanding topics and being able to effectively use this material in your future career.
THE CONSERVATION PSYCHOLOGY LITERATURE

The conservation psychology literature is rapidly expanding. The syllabus provides a framework for reviewing behavior change theories, models, and interventions. Three categories of readings are below.

1. REQUIRED READINGS – organized below by topic and available on Canvas in the Modules section.

2. EXTRA READINGS – listed below as [Extra] and available on Canvas. These optional readings provide a deeper understanding of the topics covered. While not required, these readings are highly recommended.

3. NEWLY RELEASED MATERIAL – Newly published and/or posted material is available from numerous sources. These optional readings have not been reviewed by the course instructors but are tentatively recommended.

Two excellent sources are:


b. Virtual Community on Sustainability and Consumption (2023) Newsletter. Subscribe at vcscssustainability@gmail.com

ALL REQUIRED AND EXTRA READINGS

BIOPHYSICAL PREMISE, CONTEXT, and TYPES OF BEHAVIOR

BIOPHYSICAL PREMISE, TYPES OF BEHAVIOR, AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE 1-4-23

Psychology of Environmental Stewardship (2023) Syllabus. (this document).

Biophysical premise


Types of behavior: Systemic de-growth


Types of behavior: Individual change


Behavior change


Frugality


Psychological Well-being


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**ENVISIONING, STORIES, PROSPECTION, AND STORYCORPS**

### Envisioning


### Stories


### Prospection


StoryCorps

Review the following:
(1) Resilient Ann Arbor interviews (2021 and 2022), listen to a few stories from previous years: https://archive.storycorps.org/communities/resilient-ann-arbor
(Extra) StoryCorps (2023) Homepage: https://storycorps.org
(Extra) StoryCorps (2023) Best practices for conducting an interview: https://youtu.be/PHs5UvwhKD0

Install, activate, and test the following:
(1) For remote interviewing use the StoryCorps Connect service: https://storycorps.org/introducing-storycorps-connect-a-new-way-to-come-together-through-remote-conversations
(2) For in-person interviewing use the StoryCorps App: https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-app

BEHAVIOR CHANGE MODELS and THEORIES

TEAM-BASED (COLLECTIVE ACTION) MODELS


**INFORMATION PROCESSING-BASED MODELS (SEE)**


Neighborhoods


Climate Action Plans

Coordinating with your research team which *scale/entity* you will focus on, then review the relevant documents looking for *behavior change* opportunities focused on individuals, families, small groups, and neighborhoods.

1. Ann Arbor: Office of Sustainability and Innovation (OSI):
   (https://www.a2gov.org/departments/sustainability/Carbon-Neutrality/Pages/default.aspx)


   - **Executive summary** – Note in particular pages 6-9.
   - **Introduction** – Note in particular pages 12-18.
   - **Strategy 4** – Reduce the miles we travel – Note in particular pages 69-81.
   - **Strategy 5** – Change the way we use, reuse, & dispose of materials – Note in particular pages 85-98.
   - **Strategy 6** – Enhance the resilience of our people and our place – Note in particular pages 99-111.


Scan the following Office of Sustainability and Innovation (OSI) webpages and documents:

   - OSI home page (2023) https://www.a2gov.org/departments/sustainability/Pages/default.aspx
   - *Sustainability and Me* (2023) https://www.a2gov.org/departments/sustainability/Sustainability-Me/Pages/default.aspx

2. Washtenaw County:
   (https://www.washtenaw.org/3465/Resilient-Washtenaw)


   (https://www.michigan.gov/egle/about/organization/climate-and-energy)


4. University of Michigan:
   (https://planetblue.umich.edu/campus/)

   U-M Emissions Reduction Dashboard. From: https://planetblue.umich.edu/campus/goals/carbonneutrality/
   U-M Sustainability Cultural Indicators Program Materials. From: https://graham.umich.edu/scip/materials
   U-M Sustainability Goals. From: https://ocs.umich.edu/sustainability-goals/
   U-M Planet Blue Ambassador blog. From: https://pba.umich.edu/blog/
   Voices for Carbon Neutrality. From: https://www.voicesforcarbonneutrality.org/

Resilience Hub Plans

   Faber, G., D. Kirwan, T. McCarty and P. Porter (2021) *Enhancing community resilience through the use of a resilience hub in Ypsilanti, MI*. From: https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/167216
   A2Zero (2023) *Bryant and Northside Community Center resilience hubs*. From: https://www.a2gov.org/departments/Parks-Recreation/parks-places/Bryant-Northside-Community-Centers/Pages/default.aspx

Energy Descent Action Plans

   These are older plans, which may mean that they have made more progress, and/or are in need of updating.

   Bloomington - Energy Descent Action Plan.
   Bay area - Community Resilience Toolkit v1.0.

NORM-BASED MODELS (NAM, VBN)

   2-1-23


SELF-REGULATED BEHAVIOR CHANGE MODEL (SRBC)

   2-6-23


**EDUCATION-BASED MODELS (Ramsey and Rickson, Hines et al.)**


**RATIONAL ACTOR MODELS (TRA, TPB)**


**CLARITY-BASED MODEL (CBDM), DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION, and SMALL EXPERIMENTS**

Clarity-based Mode


Small Experiments


**PROJECT DAY: BEHAVIOR CHANGE MODEL**

Environmental Psychology Lab (2023) *Behavior change models and constructs chart*.

**EXAM 1**

**SPRING BREAK**

**BEHAVIOR CHANGE INTERVENTIONS**

**SELF-INTEREST, MORAL JUDGEMENT, VALUES, and MOTIVATION SURVEY RESULTS**

Self Interest

Moral Judgement


Values


MINIMUM JUSTIFICATION AND COMMITMENT 3-8-23


INTRINSIC MOTIVATION 3-13-23


[Extra] Sharpe, E. et al. (2022) Corporate environmental responsibility leads to more pro-environmental behavior at work by strengthening intrinsic pro-environmental motivation. *One Earth*, 5(7), 825-835. From: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2022.06.006


**NORMS AND MODELING**

**Norms**


**Modeling**


**FEEDBACK AND GOAL SETTING**

**Feedback**


**Goal setting**


**KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES** 3-22-23


**PROJECT DAY: INTERVENTIONS** 3-27-23

**FRAMING AND FEAR** 3-29-23


EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION


(http://www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1001509107)


PROJECT DAY: DRAFT OF PRESENTATION

Presentation template (2023).

PRESENTATIONS

4-10-23 and 4-12-23

OPTIONAL MATERIAL – RECOMMENDED BUT NOT COVERED IN THE COURSE

A number of topics regularly come up during discussions. Suggested readings for these topics are below. These are not required readings but may be of interest and/or prove useful for the term projects.

GENERAL OVERVIEW


AFFECT


AFFORDANCES


COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING (CBSM)


DOMINANT VERSUS VARIANT INTERVENTIONS


DURABLE BEHAVIOR CHANGE


EFFICACY


ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL (ELM)


EMOTION-BEHAVIOR INTERACTIONS

GAMIFICATION


HABITS


MINDFULNESS AND CONSERVATION BEHAVIOR


NUDGES


PATTERN LANGUAGE


- "A Pattern Language" (pp. ix-xvii)
- "Summary of the Language" (pp. xviii-xxxiv)
- "The Poetry of the Language" (pp. xli-xliv)

PROMPTS


**SEGMENTATION MODELS**


**SETTLEMENTS**


**SOCIAL INFLUENCERS**


**VOLUNTEERING**


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**GRADING SCHEME**

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**CLASS POLICIES**

**MUTUAL RESPECT:** There are expectations for respectful and appropriate behavior. Be polite of others in class. Every effort will be made to create and maintain an open atmosphere for discussion, and any effort to disrespect or demean others will not be tolerated. Please be aware of your own behavior and how it affects the atmosphere of the classroom. Perhaps the most significant contribution one can make is demonstrating to one another that you are an attentive and alert participant. Students who cannot control themselves will be asked to leave. Among our most important goals is maintaining an atmosphere that encourages intellectual curiosity and discourse. In particular:

1. **Leaving class:** Try to avoid stepping out of the classroom during the class period to go to the bathroom, take a phone call, etc. These activities disturb and distract the instructor and students from our focus on the matters at hand; they demonstrate a lack of consideration for others. Take care of these activities prior to the start of class. If you have a health issue, please speak with the instructors before the start of class.

2. **Electronic equipment policy:** Laptops, tablets, and smartphones are wonderful devices, but they often get in the way of listening to others and sharing our thoughts. Research in psychology, education, and other fields has consistently indicated that these devices can interfere with our ability to learn and process new information. **Given this, tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices are permitted ONLY for note-taking during class (both lecture and discussion).** Those using tablets and laptops must sit towards the back of the lecture hall and in the wings to minimize distraction to other students. Those who use devices for activities other than taking notes will first get a warning from their GSI, and then points will be docked from their participation grade if they continue to use devices for non-class related purposes. Exceptions will be made for medical and learning accommodations.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Late assignments will be deducted 5% for each day late, and after 5 days will be given a grade of 0 (zero), unless a legitimate reason for lateness is given within 48 hours or prior arrangements were made with the instructor. Students having difficulty completing assignments should contact their GSI before assignment due dates to discuss any issues that may be affecting their ability to complete work.

**GRADE GRIEVANCE POLICY:** You may request a re-grade of your exam or assignment if you feel there was a problem with the way it was graded. Requests will be honored only if a request is submitted in writing within 15 days from the posting of the grade. The request for a re-grade must include a detailed, cited, and clearly written explanation of why your answer is correct. The instructors will be happy to discuss your re-grade with you only after receiving your written request.
REGISTRATION and SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS: Standard LSA and SEAS guidelines will be followed without exception for dropping/adding of this course, disabilities, etc. If students need special accommodations for exams or assignments, appropriate documentation must be provided in advance.

CHEATING and PLAGIARISM: Cheating, plagiarizing, and/or unacceptable collaboration results in a grade of 0 (zero) for the entire assignment and sent to the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs. Academic misconduct has serious consequences and you should be conscious of it, especially when writing exams or papers. The LSA website (www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.htm) states that academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Cheating: Cheating is committing fraud and/or deception on a record, report, paper, computer assignment, examination, or any other course requirement. Examples of cheating include:
- Obtaining work or information from someone else and submitting it under one’s own name.
- Using unauthorized notes, study aids, or information from another student or their paper on an examination.
- Communicating answers with another person during an exam.
- Altering graded work after it has been returned, and then submitting the work for regrading.
- Allowing another person to do one’s work and submitting it under one’s own name.
- Preprogramming a calculator to contain answers or other unauthorized information for exams.
- Submitting substantially the same paper for two or more classes in the same or different terms without the expressed approval of each instructor.
- Taking an exam for another person or having someone take an exam for you.
- Fabricating data not gathered in accordance with the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data and failing to include a substantially accurate account of the method by which the data were gathered or collected.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is representing someone else’s ideas, words, statements, or other work as one’s own without proper acknowledgment or citation. Examples of plagiarism include:
- Copying word for word or lifting phrases or a special term from a source or reference, whether oral, printed, or on the internet, without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing - using another person’s written words or ideas, albeit in one’s own words, as if they were one’s own work.
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, or other illustrative material without proper reference, unless the information is common knowledge, in common public use.

UNACCEPTABLE COLLABORATION: Collaboration is unacceptable when a student works with another or others on a project and then submits written work which is represented explicitly or implicitly as the student’s own individual work. Using answers, solutions, or ideas that are the result of collaboration without citing the fact of collaboration is improper. Students also engage in unacceptable collaboration when they expressly have been instructed to do their own work and have not been given prior approval by the instructor to collaborate.

NOTE: The LSA website has further examples including aiding and abetting dishonesty, classroom disturbances, tampering with computers, and falsification of data/records/official documents.

COPYRIGHT/PRIVACY INFORMATION

Course materials, including this syllabus, are copyrighted. Lectures may be audio/video recorded. These materials are not to be shared outside of the course. Recordings will only be available to registered students to protect the privacy of both instructors and students. As part of your participation in this course, you will be asked to consent to be recorded for the purpose of sharing the recording with your classmates. If you do not wish to be recorded, please contact your GSI the first week of class (or as soon as you enroll in the course, whichever is latest).

Under U-M rules, students are prohibited from recording/distributing class activity without written permission from the instructor, except as needed for U-M approved accommodation for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student’s own private use. Here is a link to the ITS Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ: https://safecomputing.umich.edu/be-aware/privacy/privacy-u-m/videoconferencing/recording-privacy-concerns-faq

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have an accommodation for a disability, please let your GSI know as soon as possible. Some aspects of this course, assignments, or activities can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make your GSI
aware of your situation, they can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) provides accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Information you provide is private and confidential.

REFERENCES (for the Premise section on page 2)