Detailed Course Syllabus

Academic year: 2026/2027	**Semester:** Winter semester
Year of study: 1	**Study Program:** Psihologija (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Povijest (dvopredmetni) (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Povijest (dvopredmetni nastavnički) (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Komunikologija - Interkulturalna komunikacija i novinarstvo (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Komunikologija - Znanstveno istraživanje medija i odnosi s javnošću (R) (Diplomski) Sociologija - Upravljanje i javne politike (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Povijest (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Sestrinstvo (R) (elective) (Diplomski) Sestrinstvo (I) (elective) (Diplomski)

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Name: Religion, Society, and the Climate Crisis: Values, Communication, and Public Engagement

Abbreviation: IZBD283

ECTS: 6	**Code:** 280684

Prerequisites: No

Total Course Workload

Teaching Mode	**Total Hours**
Lecture	30
Exercise	15
Seminar	15

Class Time and Place: HKS - according to the published schedule

II. TEACHING STAFF

Course Holder

Name and Surname: Turza Zoran

Academic Degree:	**Professional Title:** izvanredni profesor
Contact E-mail: zoran.turza@unicath.hr	**Telephone:**

Office Hours: According to the published schedule

Course Assistant

III. DETAILED COURSE INFORMATION

Teaching Language: English

Course Description	This multidisciplinary elective course is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills to critically examine religion's role in environmental challenges and climate communication. Drawing on theological, sociological, and communicative perspectives, the course introduces key religious concepts such as creation, stewardship, and the sacred. It explores how these ideas shape ecological ethics across various religious traditions. Special attention is given to the Catholic concept of integral ecology as articulated in Pope Francis' documents Laudato si' and Laudate Deum. Students will analyze official environmental statements from Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist, and other communities and interpret them within their broader cultural and political contexts. By comparing these sources, students will develop the ability to identify tensions and convergences within and between religious traditions concerning environmental responsibility. The course also introduces key principles of climate communication, enabling students to evaluate how ecological messages are framed and received within religious communities and broader public discourse. Particular focus is placed on understanding how political orientation can influence environmental attitudes, often more than religious affiliation, and what this means for the effectiveness of religious messaging. Through close reading, discussion, and comparative analysis, students will develop the capacity to engage with theological and ethical discourses, assess the public role of religious actors in climate debates, and reflect on the societal implications of religious engagement with ecological sustainability. These competencies will prepare students to analyze the intersection of religion, communication, and sustainable development in academic and professional contexts.
Educational Outcomes	1. Identify and explain key religious and ethical concepts related to the environment. 2. Analyze the role of religion as a cultural and social force in shaping environmental values and public engagement. 3. Compare how diverse religious communities frame environmental responsibility in their public communication. 4. Apply principles of climate communication to analyze how religious actors convey messages on ecological issues. 5. Evaluate the connection of political identity, media framing, and religious attitude towards the ecological crisis. 6. Reflect on tensions, conflicts, and ambivalences within and between religious communities regarding ecological engagement. 7. Develop a multidisciplinary understanding of how religious values contribute to or challenge sustainability goals. 8. Critically assess how religion functions as a social and communicative force in shaping responses to the climate crisis.
Textbooks and Materials	
Required	1. Christie, I., Gunton, R. M., & Hejnowicz, A. P. (2019). Sustainability and the common good: Catholic Social Teaching and 'integral ecology' as contributions to a framework of social values for sustainability transitions. Sustainability Science, 14, 1343–1354. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00691-y 2. Francis. (2015). Laudato si': On care for our common home. Vatican Publishing House. (chapter 3, 4 and 5) https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html 3. Francis. (2023). Laudate Deum: To all people of good will on the climate crisis. Vatican Publishing House. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html 4. Köhrsen, J., Blanc, J., & Huber, F. (Eds.). (2022). Religious environmental activism: Emerging conflicts and tensions in Earth stewardship (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003017967 (p. 1-27; 112-132; 268-282; 303-322. 5. Taylor, B. (2011). The greening of religion hypothesis. Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, 5(3), 253–266. 6. White, L. (1967). The historical roots of our ecologic crisis. Science, 155(3767), 1203–1207.
Supplementary	

1. Ejaz, W., Mukherjee, M., & Fletcher, R. (2023). Climate Change News Audiences: Analysis of News Use and Attitudes in Eight Countries. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford. https://doi.org/10.60625/risj-dt2t-dm19

2. Klein, N. (2015). This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate. Simon & Schuster.

3. Renger, A.-B., Stork, J., & Öhlmann, P. (Eds.). (2024). Religion and ecology: Perspectives on environment and sustainability across religious traditions. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. https://doi.org/10.13109/9783666500763

4. Turza, Z., & Brgles, M. M. (Eds.). (2023). Five years after Laudato Si'. Where are we now? Catholic University of Croatia; Veritas – Glasnik sv. Antuna Padovanskoga.

5. Wallace-Wells, D. (2019). The uninhabitable Earth: Life after warming. Tim Duggan Books.

Examination and Grading

To Be Passed DA	**Exclusively Continuous Assessment** NE	**Included in Average Grade** DA

Prerequisites to Obtain Signature and Take Final Exam

1. Regular attendance – Active participation and presence in at least 70% of class sessions is required.

2. Analytical portfolio – Students will continuously develop an individual portfolio that includes short written reflections on selected readings, comments on religious environmental declarations, and responses to case studies and in-class discussions. At the end, the portfolio should have 20-30 pages. (20%)

3. Mini Research Project: Proposal and Protocol – Students will design a small-scale interdisciplinary research project related to the course themes. The proposal (2-3 pages) includes a clear research question, theoretical grounding, methodological framework, and ethical considerations. (10%)

4. Textual Analysis and Critical Commentary – Each student will complete a short academic paper (2 pages) based on the close reading and analysis of an official religious environmental document, focusing on its theological, ethical, and communicative aspects. (10%)

5. Video Reflection (Individual or in Pairs)—Students will simulate presenting a selected topic for a broader audience by preparing a short video segment, individually (2-4 minutes) or in pairs (6-8 minutes). (10%)

6. Design of a Faith-Based Climate Communication Strategy– In small groups (3-4 students), students will simulate developing a communication strategy for a faith-based or interfaith climate initiative, demonstrating their ability to apply course knowledge in a practical and context-sensitive way. (10%)

7. Final Reflective Essay – At the end of the course, each student submits a reflective essay (2-3 pages) in which they articulate how their understanding of the intersection between religion, society, and the climate crisis has evolved, and how they might apply this insight in their future academic or professional work. (10%)

Examination Manner

Grading Scale: Failure (1) – 0 do 49,9% Satisfactory (2) – 50 do 64,9% Good (3) – 65 do 79,9% Very Good (4) – 80 do 89,9% Excellent (5) – 90 do 100%

Grading Manner

Final Exam (oral) (30%)

Detailed Overview of Grading within ECTS

ACTIVITY TYPE	ECTS Student Workload Coefficient	GRADE PERCENTAGE (%)
Class Attendance	2	0

Analytical Portfolio	0.8	20
Mini Research Project: Proposal and Protocol	0.4	10
Textual Analysis and Critical Commentary	0.4	10
Video Reflection (Individual or in Pairs)	0.4	10
Design of a Faith-Based Climate Communication Strategy	0.4	10
Final Reflective Essay	0.4	10
Total in Class		
Final Exam	1.2	30
TOTAL ECTS **(Classes + Final Exam)**	**6**	**100**

IV. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE