

Geography 3597.03-10
Derby Hall 1080

Autumn semester 2021
Tuesday & Thursday, 9:35–10:55 AM

Environmental Citizenship In an Era of Rapid Climate Change

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Office hours: Immediately after class & by appointment

We do not know how long we have, but we do know that ... to succeed, we must simultaneously work for immediate changes *and* advance a vision of the world we want to build.

Ian Angus, *Facing the Anthropocene*

There is no more potent weapon in the battle against fossil fuels than the creation of real alternatives.

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*

This is a course on the politics of environmentalism at a time of planetary emergency. In the face of rapid climate change, what are our political prospects? How in the world might we confront the challenge? What sort of political strategy, or form of citizenship, could be adequate to the task? What would 'victory' look like?

In this course we will take up these questions by studying planetary climate change, political theory, and capitalist social relations. Underlying all these challenges is a crisis of imagination, including our imagination of what it means to be a citizen. The carbon profiteers hope you fail to connect the dots, or imagine the various futures we could make, or discover your conscience and voice, or ever picture how different it must be. So while this course starts—as it must—with a sober, scientific assessment of the current crisis of the Earth and humanity, marked by economic insecurity, a lack of faith in political parties, species loss, and climate change, ultimately, this course aims at cultivating the imagination.

Course requirements

Exam 1	30 %
Exam 2	30 %
Exam 3 (the final exam)	40 %

This is a lecture-led course. This means that I will combine lectures with in-class discussion of course material. For our discussions to be effective, you must come to class prepared. Our three in-class exams – September 28, October 28, and December 10 – will ask you to compose essays on the core questions and problems addressed by our course. To participate effectively in classroom discussions, and to do well on exams, you will need to carefully read the assigned texts. (Attendance is required, but will not be graded.)

Course readings

Our course has three assigned books. I encourage you to buy or otherwise acquire these three books as soon as possible. You do not need to use these particular links. (Note that if you purchase #2 and #3 directly from the Verso website, you get 20-30% off & free shipping.) Please buy paper copies—not digital—so that you can bring the books to our class discussions (i.e. without using your phone or iPad):

[1] P. Robbins (2008) *Lawn People: How Grasses, Weeds, and Chemicals Make Us Who We Are*. Philadelphia: Temple University.

Website: http://www.temple.edu/tempresstitles/1884_reg.html;

Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Lawn-People-Grasses-Weeds-Chemicals/dp/159213579X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1471636734&sr=1-1&keywords=robbins+lawn+people

[2] M. Lawrence & L. Laybourn-Langton (2021) *Planet on fire: A manifesto for the age of environmental breakdown*. NY: Verso.

Website: <https://www.versobooks.com/books/3702-planet-on-fire>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Barbarism-Manifesto-Planet-Fire/dp/1788738772>

[3] J. Wainwright and G. Mann (2018) *Climate Leviathan*. NY: Verso.

Website: <https://www.versobooks.com/books/2545-climate-leviathan>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Climate-Leviathan-Political-Theory-Planetary/dp/1786634295>

All additional reading materials will be made available on-line (via Carmen and/or email). See the final column on our Course Plan at a Glance.

The course plan at a glance

#	Day	Date	Topic	Reading assignment
1	Tuesday	24-Aug	Course introduction	
2	Thursday	26-Aug	Climate change basics 1: physical processes	IPCC AR6 WG 1 SPM
3	Tuesday	31-Aug	Climate change basics 2: carbon mitigation	IPCC AR5 WG 3 SPM + Tooze (2021)
4	Thursday	2-Sep	Climate change basics 3: climate adaptation	IPCC AR5 WG 2 SPM
5	Tuesday	7-Sep	Climate change basics 4: mass extinction	E Kolbert, <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> , selections
6	Thursday	9-Sep	Climate change basics 5: why didn't we act earlier?	N Rich, story from <i>NYT Magazine</i>
7	Tuesday	14-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 1: human population 1	Scranton, <i>Learning to die in the Anthropocene</i> , selections
8	Thursday	16-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 2: human population 2	D Harvey, Population, resources & science
9	Tuesday	21-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 3: consider the lawn 1	P Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , cover to p 71
10	Thursday	23-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 4: consider the lawn 2	P Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , cover to p 72 to end
11	Tuesday	28-Sep	Exam 1	
12	Thursday	30-Sep	The Paris Agreement	Paris Agreement (2015) text
13	Tuesday	5-Oct	Reflecting on political strategies for climate justice 1	<i>Planet on Fire</i> , cover to p 83 (i.e. to end of ch 3)
14	Thursday	7-Oct	Reflecting on political strategies for climate justice 2	<i>Planet on Fire</i> , pp 84-193 (Ch 4-7)
15	Tuesday	12-Oct	Reflecting on political strategies for climate justice 3	<i>Planet on Fire</i> , p 194-end (Ch 8-end)
	Thursday	14-Oct	Fall break: no classes	
16	Tuesday	19-Oct	Guest lecture 1: Andrea Chu, climate justice organizer	TBD
17	Thursday	21-Oct	Colonialism, forests & indigenous peoples: Belize 1	TBD
18	Tuesday	26-Oct	Guest lecture 2: Henry Peller; indigenous / Belize 2	TBD
19	Thursday	28-Oct	Exam 2	
20	Tuesday	2-Nov	film: "This Changes Everything"	
21	Thursday	4-Nov	Guest lecture 3: student career services	
22	Tuesday	9-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 1	Oreskes & Conway, <i>The Collapse of Western Civilization</i>
	Thursday	11-Nov	no class: Veteran's day	
23	Tuesday	16-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 2	M Li, Scenarios for the US, China & the World
24	Thursday	18-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 3	<i>White skins, Black fuel</i> (selections)
25	Tuesday	23-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 1	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , intro + Part I
	Thursday	25-Nov	Thanksgiving break: no classes	
26	Tuesday	30-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 2	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , Part II
27	Thursday	2-Dec	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 3	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , Part III
28	Tuesday	7-Dec	Last class: where do we go from here?	TBD
28	Friday	10-Dec	Final (Exam 3) 8:00 - 9:45 AM	

Accessibility

Ohio State strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately privately so that we can discuss your options; moreover, you are strongly encouraged to register with Student Life Disability Services (SLDS) to establish reasonable accommodations. Please make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

Among other services, SLDS offers in-person exam proctoring. Students who are registered with SLDS and whose accommodations include adjustments to exams (e.g. additional time) will only be able to schedule an exam in the SLDS database if there is a seat available. For this reason, **early scheduling of your exams – within the first two weeks of class – is strongly encouraged.** SLDS will work with you to try to find a space, but it is your responsibility to contact them early in the semester to initiate the process. The scheduling deadline is 1 week in advance. SLDS will allow students to schedule their exams within a 3-day window (class exam day + 2 days after).

Students are expected to schedule their exams as close as possible to the day and time the exam is given in class. In other words, you are strongly encouraged to take the exam on the same day, and overlapping in time, as the other students.

SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307;
slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave.

General Education goals & expected learning outcomes

GEOG 3597 fulfills the Cross-Disciplinary Seminar GE requirement. After taking this course, you should be able to demonstrate an understanding of a topic of interest—in this instance, planetary climate change—through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through your interactions with students from different majors. That is to say, one expected outcome of this course is that you will be able to synthesize different disciplinary perspectives in the study of the politics of climate change. We meet this goal in this course by reading, analyzing, and writing about climate change from multiple disciplinary perspectives—as well as by examining the limitations of those perspectives.

Additional notes

As of August 2, all students, faculty and staff are required to wear masks in classrooms and other shared indoor spaces, regardless of their vaccination status. Always wear a mask in class. Do not eat in classrooms. You may take an occasional drink, but remove your masks off only briefly.

For the University's covid absence policy, see [this link](#).

Moreover, as of August 24, Ohio State is requiring every student, faculty and staff member to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Because many of us are easily distracted by use of cell phones, computers, recording devices, and the like, such equipment should be turned off and placed out of sight during class. (I will say more about this at the start of the second class period.)

Because our exams are essay-based and unique to each course-group, they cannot be taken late or made up. Exceptions are rare—emergencies only—and up to my discretion. Arrangements for a make-up exam should be made before the exam is distributed.

Grading options for the course are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, E. Grading is not 'curved' and is based on the OSU standard scale. An 'I', or Incomplete, will only be given under special circumstances and where I have made an arrangement with the student before the end of the semester. If you wish to request an 'I', be prepared to explain (a) why an Incomplete is an appropriate grade and (b) when you will complete the incomplete.

Any academic misconduct will be reported to Ohio State's Office of Academic Affairs, Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). It is the responsibility of COAM to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. (The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed.) Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). COAM have prepared some useful suggestions to preserve academic integrity: see next page. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity

Ohio State Office of Academic Affairs, Committee on Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, students are expected to complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. The following suggestions will help you preserve academic integrity [...].

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOURCES THAT YOU USE WHEN COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS:** If you use another person's thoughts, ideas, or words in your work, you must acknowledge this fact. This applies regardless of whose thoughts, ideas, or words you use as well as the source of the information. If you do not acknowledge the work of others, you are implying that another person's work is your own, and such actions constitute plagiarism. Plagiarism is the theft of another's intellectual property [...].

2. **AVOID SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR:** Do not put yourself in a position where an instructor might suspect that you are cheating or that you have cheated. Even if you have not cheated, the mere suspicion of dishonesty might undermine an instructor's confidence in your work. Avoiding some of the most common types of suspicious behavior is simple. Before an examination, check your surroundings carefully and make sure that all of your notes are put away and your books are closed. An errant page of notes on the floor or an open book could be construed as a 'cheat sheet'. Keep your eyes on your own work. [...]

3. **DO NOT FABRICATE INFORMATION:** Never make-up data, literature citations, experimental results, or any other type of information that is used in an academic or scholarly assignment.

4. **DO NOT FALSIFY ANY TYPE OF RECORD:** Do not alter, misuse, produce, or reproduce any University form or document or other type of form or document. Do not sign another person's name to any form or record (University or otherwise), and do not sign your name to any form or record that contains inaccurate or fraudulent information. Once an assignment has been graded and returned to you, do not alter it and ask that it be graded again. [...]

5. **DO NOT GIVE IN TO PEER PRESSURE:** Friends can be a tremendous help to one another when studying for exams or completing course assignments. However, don't let your friendships with others jeopardize your college career. Before lending or giving any type of information to a friend or acquaintance, consider carefully what you are lending (giving), what your friend might do with it, and what the consequences might be if your friend misuses it. [...]

6. **DO NOT SUBMIT THE SAME WORK FOR CREDIT IN TWO COURSES:** Instructors do not give grades in a course, rather students earn their grades. Thus, instructors expect that students will earn their grades by completing all course requirements (assignments) while they are actually enrolled in the course. If a student uses his/her work from one course to satisfy the requirements of a different course, that student is not only violating the spirit of the assignment, but he/she is also putting other students in the course at a disadvantage. Even though it might be your own work, you are not permitted to turn in the same work to meet the requirements of more than one course. [...]

7. **DO YOUR OWN WORK:** When you turn in an assignment with only your name on it, then the work on that assignment should be yours and yours alone. This means that you should not copy any work done by or work together with another student (or other person). [...]

8. **MANAGE YOUR TIME:** Do not put off your assignments until the last minute. If you do, you might put yourself in a position where your only options are to turn in an incomplete (or no) assignment or to cheat. [...]