

## Climate Justice

**Official course title: "Environmental Conservation"**

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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? To answer this question, we will study three core themes: planetary climate change; the interrelation of nature and society; and capitalist social relations. This is a broad and complex set of issues. To bring them into focus and organize our studies, we will consider them mainly by way of philosophical inquiry combined with critical political economy. We will also draw from case studies to examine how ideas about nature, climate change and conservation translate into concrete practices and policies.

### Course requirements

Exam 1	20 %
Exam 2 (aka 'the final')	30 %
Research project: mid-term assignment	15 %
Research project: final paper	35 %

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. 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 formally graded.)

Half of your grade is earned by two in-class exams (October 10 and December 14); each will require you to compose three essays. Half of your grade is earned from an original research paper. An abstract and annotated bibliography are due on October 12 and the final paper on December 7. In each case, your assignment is due at the start of class (paper copies, please).

## Course readings

Our course has four assigned books:

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](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](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. F. Magdoff and J. B. Foster (2011) *What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know about Capitalism: A Citizen's Guide to Capitalism and the Environment*. NY: Monthly Review.

Website:

[http://monthlyreview.org/product/what\\_every\\_environmentalist\\_needs\\_to\\_know\\_about\\_capitalism/](http://monthlyreview.org/product/what_every_environmentalist_needs_to_know_about_capitalism/)

Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/Every-Environmentalist-Needs-About-Capitalism/dp/1583672419/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1471636815&sr=1-1&keywords=Magdoff+and+Foster+what+every+environmentalist+needs+to+know](https://www.amazon.com/Every-Environmentalist-Needs-About-Capitalism/dp/1583672419/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1471636815&sr=1-1&keywords=Magdoff+and+Foster+what+every+environmentalist+needs+to+know)

3. E. Kolbert (2014) *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. NY: Henry Holt / Macmillan.

Website: <http://us.macmillan.com/thesixthextinction-1/elizabethkolbert>;

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Sixth-Extinction-Unnatural-History/dp/0805092994>

4. A. Malm (2016) *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*. NY: Verso.

Website: <https://www.versobooks.com/books/2002-fossil-capital>

Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/Fossil-Capital-Steam-Global-Warming/dp/1784781290/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1471636952&sr=1-1&keywords=malm+fossil+capital](https://www.amazon.com/Fossil-Capital-Steam-Global-Warming/dp/1784781290/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1471636952&sr=1-1&keywords=malm+fossil+capital)

Additional reading materials will be made available on-line. See the final column on the table on page 3, our Course Plan at a Glance.

## The course plan at a glance

Class	Lecture	Day	Date	Topic	Assigned reading	Source
				<b>UNIT ONE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEMS WE FACE</b>		
1		Weds.	24-Aug	Course outline	syllabus	online + paper copies in class
2	1	Friday	26-Aug	Climate change 1: the physical basis	IPCC AR5 WG1 SPM	text to be distributed online
3	2	Monday	29-Aug	Climate change 2: what are our options? A view from climate science	L. Thompson	text to be distributed online
4	3	Weds.	31-Aug	Climate change 3: from the physical science to carbon mitigation	IPCC AR5 WG3 SPM	text to be distributed online
5	4	Friday	2-Sep	Climate change 4: historicizing climate change	D. Jamieson, <i>Reason in a Dark Time</i> , ch 1	text to be distributed online
		Monday	5-Sep	no classes: Labor day	N/A	
6	5	Weds.	7-Sep	Species loss, Anthropocene, and natural history 1	Kolbert, <i>Sixth Extinction</i> , selections	students will purchase book
7	6	Friday	9-Sep	Species loss, Anthropocene, and natural history 2	Kolbert, <i>Sixth Extinction</i> , selections	students will purchase book
8	7	Monday	12-Sep	On your papers: asking questions, conducting research & making claims	Booth et al.	text to be distributed online
				<b>UNIT TWO: CAPITALISM, NATURE, AND IDEOLOGY</b>		
9	8	Weds.	14-Sep	On environment, science, & ideology 1: population	D. Harvey, "Population, resources, & ideology of science"	text to be distributed online
10	9	Friday	16-Sep	On environment, science, & ideology 2: <i>Lawn People</i> 1	P. Robbins, cover to p 71	students will purchase book
11	10	Monday	19-Sep	On environment, science, & ideology 3: <i>Lawn People</i> 2	P. Robbins, 72 to end	students will purchase book
12	11	Weds.	21-Sep	On environment, science, & ideology 4: review (and intro to capital)	TBD	
13	12	Friday	23-Sep	<i>What every environmentalist needs to know</i> 1	Magdoff & Foster, cover to p. 60	students will purchase book
14	13	Monday	26-Sep	<i>What every environmentalist needs to know</i> 2	Magdoff & Foster, pp. 61 to 122	students will purchase book
15	14	Weds.	28-Sep	<i>What every environmentalist needs to know</i> 3	Magdoff & Foster, pp. 123 to 158	students will purchase book
16	15	Friday	30-Sep	The value of nature 1	S. Bailey & D. Ricardo	text to be distributed online
17	16	Monday	3-Oct	The value of nature 2	K. Marx, <i>Capital</i> , ch 1	text to be distributed online
18	17	Weds.	5-Oct	The value of nature 3	K. Marx, <i>Capital</i> , ch 1	text to be distributed online
19	18	Friday	7-Oct	catch up day	N/A	
20		Monday	10-Oct	<b>Exam 1</b>	No reading assignment: exam	
21		Weds.	12-Oct	<b>assignment 1 due</b>	No reading assignment: finish your assignments	
		Friday	14-Oct	no classes: Fall break	N/A	
				<b>UNIT THREE: CLIMATE POLITICS TODAY</b>		
22	19	Monday	17-Oct	Climate politics 1: thinking through why we have failed	D. Jamieson, <i>Reason in a Dark Time</i> , ch 3	text to be distributed online
23	20	Weds.	19-Oct	Climate politics 2: Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> 1	Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> , selections	students will purchase book
24	21	Friday	21-Oct	Climate politics 3: Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> 2	Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> , selections	students will purchase book
25	22	Monday	24-Oct	Climate politics 4: Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> 3	Malm, <i>Fossil Capital</i> , selections	students will purchase book
26		Weds.	26-Oct	no class: work on research papers	N/A: focus on your research	
27		Friday	28-Oct	no class: work on research papers	N/A: focus on your research	
28		Monday	31-Oct	no class: work on research papers	N/A: focus on your research	
29	23	Weds.	2-Nov	Climate politics 5: guest lecture on climate justice	Naomi Klein, <i>This Changes Everything</i> , selections	text to be distributed online
30	24	Friday	4-Nov	Climate politics 6: whither Blockadia?	Naomi Klein, <i>This Changes Everything</i> , selections	text to be distributed online
31	25	Monday	7-Nov	Climate politics 7: perhaps geoengineering can save us?	D. Jamieson, <i>Reason in a Dark Time</i> , ch 7	text to be distributed online
32	26	Weds.	9-Nov	Climate politics 8: climate geopolitics I, IPCC, Kyoto, Paris	TBD	
33	27	Friday	11-Nov	Climate politics 9: climate geopolitics II, the politics of adaptation	Wainwright & Mann, "The politics of adaptation"	text to be distributed online
34	28	Monday	14-Nov	Climate politics 10: climate geopolitics III, the politics of adaptation	Li Minqi, China and climate change	text to be distributed online
35	29	Weds.	16-Nov	Climate politics 11: The world in 2050, I	Davis, "Who will build the ark?"	text to be distributed online
36	30	Friday	18-Nov	Climate politics 12: The world in 2050, II	Oreskes & Conway, "Collapse of Western Civilization"	text to be distributed online
37	31	Monday	21-Nov	Climate politics 13: learning to die?	Scranton, <i>Learning to Die in the Anthropocene</i> , selection	text to be distributed online
		Weds.	23-Nov	no class: Thanksgiving	N/A	
		Friday	25-Nov	no class: Thanksgiving	N/A	
38	32	Monday	28-Nov	Climate politics 14: confronting 'catastrophe'	I Stengers, <i>In Catastrophic Times</i> , selection	text to be distributed online
39	33	Weds.	30-Nov	Climate politics 15: 'Climate Leviathan'	Wainwright & Mann, "Climate Leviathan"	text to be distributed online
40	34	Friday	2-Dec	Climate politics 16: 'Climate X', or, prospects for climate justice	Wainwright & Mann, "Climate X"	text to be distributed in class
41	35	Monday	5-Dec	catch up day	TBD	
42	36	Weds.	7-Dec	<b>turn in research papers --&gt; review course material</b>	N/A	
		Weds.	14-Dec	<b>final exam: in our normal classroom, but at 2 PM</b>		

## The research paper

You will work independently to write an original research paper. Your papers will focus on the state of and strategies to address a particular environmental problem.

You should begin by narrowing down your topic by reading. Initially, read broadly in order to establish a critical overview of the literature. The purpose of such reading is to gather data, in a narrow sense, but more fundamentally to develop a grasp on the literature: the various ways your topic has been conceptualized; the key points of debate in the literature; and the strongest questions to define your research. This is the foundation for a strong research paper.

The mid-term assignment (due October 12 at the start of class). You will turn in (1) a one-page, ~400 word abstract that elaborates your central argument/claim, as well as (2) an annotated bibliography of 12-20 key sources for your research. The annotated bibliography should include the following for each key source: a full citation; a concise summary of the text; a statement on the utility of the text for your research. Criticism is encouraged.

Your principal sources should be peer-reviewed academic journals. You should also draw on texts by state and environmental agencies. Be sure to visit the on-line databases and libraries of the UNEP, IPCC, World Bank, and environmental NGOs.

The final paper (due December 7 at the start of class) is a research paper of 12-16 pages (~4,000 words, inclusive of cover page and non-annotated bibliography). Your paper should address the following four elements:

1. *Introduction to the problem.* A statement about the state of your ecological problem. Drawing from academic papers and texts by the UN, states, and NGOs, present a concise, synthetic, and critical statement of the conditions of your resource.
2. *History and geography.* Your paper should lay bare the history of the problem under examination. What factors or dynamics underlie the problem? Be sure to address the geographies of resource use and degradation. Who uses these resources or regions, and why? Who pays the costs of their use?
3. *Explanation.* Your paper must present an analytical argument on the reasons for the problem you study. That is, you must present a critical and coherent explanation for the environmental change/problem under examination.
4. *Conservation and sustainability.* Finally, your paper should conclude by presenting an argument for what might plausibly be considered to be a sustainable and just solution to the problem. Be sure to define what constitutes a solution (e.g. do not presume that 'sustainability' is obvious) and also identify the key barriers to this state. I.e. your paper should conclude by arguing for a path towards effective conservation of your resource or a strategy for addressing your environmental problem.

## **Additional notes**

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.

Late work loses ten percentage points per day (Saturday and Sunday count). For instance, a paper that is turned in six days late but would have otherwise received a score of 90/100 would be worth 30/100.

The mid-term assignment and final papers should be turned in on paper (not via email). They are due at the start of class. If you arrive late for class of the day they are due, and thereby turn in your paper at the end of class, your paper will be treated as one day late. If you wish to turn in work late, either [a] hand it to me in class or [b] have your paper time-stamped in the geography department office and place your paper in my mailbox.

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-,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 the instructor has made an arrangement with the student before the end of the quarter. If you wish to request an ‘I’, be prepared to explain (a) why an Incomplete is an appropriate grade option, and (b) how and 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 a useful statement on academic integrity (see next page). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

## **Ten 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. [...]

**9. PROTECT YOUR WORK AND THE WORK OF OTHERS:** The assignments that you complete as a student are your "intellectual property," and you should protect your intellectual property just as you would any of your other property. [...]

**10. READ THE COURSE SYLLABUS AND ASK QUESTIONS:** Many instructors prepare and distribute (or make available on a web site) a course syllabus. Read the course syllabus for every course you take!