

Geography 3597.03-10  
Derby Hall 1080

Autumn semester 2019  
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

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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 and their politicians are hoping you don't connect the dots, or imagine the various futures we could make or they could destroy, or grasp the remarkably beautiful and complex ways the natural world has worked to our benefit and is now being sabotaged, 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 24, October 24, and December 6 – 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 four assigned books. I encourage you to buy or otherwise acquire these four books as soon as possible. You do not need to use these particular links. Please buy paper copies (not digital) so that you can bring and discuss them during class (i.e. without using your phone or iPad):

[1] R. Scranton (2015) *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*. NY: City Lights.

Website: <http://www.citylights.com/book/?GCOI=87286100064510>

Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/Learning-Die-Anthropocene-Reflections-Civilization/dp/0872866696/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1534963690&sr=1-1&keywords=learning+to+die+in+the+anthropocene](https://www.amazon.com/Learning-Die-Anthropocene-Reflections-Civilization/dp/0872866696/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1534963690&sr=1-1&keywords=learning+to+die+in+the+anthropocene)

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

Website: [http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/1884\\_reg.html](http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/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)

[3] Naomi Klein (2014) *This Changes Everything: Capitalism v the Climate*. NY: S&S.

Website: <https://thischangeseverything.org/book/>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/This-Changes-Everything-Capitalism-Climate/dp/1451697392>

[4] 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>

We will also read selections from the following book, which you may also wish to purchase or check out from the library (but doing so is *not* required); it is very good:

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

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

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

Additional reading materials will be made available on-line (via Carmen and/or email). See the final column on the table on page 4, our Course Plan at a Glance.

### **General Education goals & expected learning outcomes**

GEOG 3597 fulfills GE requirements in Writing and Communication (level 2), through [a] close reading and critical analysis of complex texts, and [b] practice in composition of essays (in class and through exams). Through this course, students will demonstrate the ability to read carefully, critically, and analytically, and to apply written communications skills to the challenges of geography.

GEOG 3597 also fulfills GE requirements in Social Science, particularly concerning Human, Natural, and Economic Resources. More narrowly, students who complete the course will be expected to understand theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the challenge of climate change; students will be able to comprehend and assess the physical, economic, and political sustainability of our social arrangements in the face of climate change.

## The course plan at a glance

#	Day	Date	Topic	Reading assignment
1	Tuesday	20-Aug	Course introduction	
2	Thursday	22-Aug	Climate change basics 1: physical processes	IPCC AR5 WG 1 SPM
3	Tuesday	27-Aug	Climate change basics 2: carbon mitigation	IPCC AR5 WG 3 SPM
4	Thursday	29-Aug	Climate change basics 3: climate adaptation	IPCC AR5 WG 2 SPM
5	Tuesday	3-Sep	Climate change basics 4: mass extinction	E Kolbert, <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> , selected ch
6	Thursday	5-Sep	Climate change basics 5: why didn't we act earlier?	N Rich, NYT magazine story
7	Tuesday	10-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 1: human population 1	Scranton, <i>Learning to die in the Anthropocene</i>
8	Thursday	12-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 2: human population 2	D Harvey, Population, resources & science
9	Tuesday	17-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 3: consider the lawn 1	P Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , cover to p 71
10	Thursday	19-Sep	Environmentalism & ideology 4: consider the lawn 2	P Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , cover to p 72 to end
11	Tuesday	24-Sep	<b>Exam 1</b>	
12	Thursday	26-Sep	On colonialism & climate change	Ghosh (2016) <i>The Great Derangement</i> (selection)
13	Tuesday	1-Oct	Tropical forests & indigenous peoples: Belize 1	Wainwright et al. (2015)
14	Thursday	3-Oct	Tropical forests & indigenous peoples: Belize 2	Wainwright & Zempel (2017)
15	Tuesday	8-Oct	The Paris Agreement	Paris Agreement text + Clemencon (2016)
	Thursday	10-Oct	Fall break: no classes	
16	Tuesday	15-Oct	Capitalism & climate change 1	N Klein, <i>This changes everything</i> , Intro & Part I
17	Thursday	17-Oct	Capitalism & climate change 2	N Klein, <i>This changes everything</i> , Part II
18	Tuesday	22-Oct	Capitalism & climate change 3	N Klein, <i>This changes everything</i> , Part III & concl.
19	Thursday	24-Oct	<b>Exam 2</b>	
20	Tuesday	29-Oct	Climate change & our political imagination 1	Oreskes & Conway, <i>Collapse of Western Civilization</i>
21	Thursday	31-Oct	Climate change & our political imagination 2	M Li, Scenarios for the US, China & the World
22	Tuesday	5-Nov	film 1: "This Changes Everything"	
23	Thursday	7-Nov	Guest lecture: student career services	
24	Tuesday	12-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 3	Davis, Who will build the ark?
25	Thursday	14-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 1	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , intro + Part I
26	Tuesday	19-Nov	film 2: "Climate Refugees" or "Merchants of Doubt"	
	Thursday	21-Nov	Thanksgiving break: no classes	
25	Tuesday	26-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 2	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , Part II
26	Thursday	28-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 3	<i>Climate Leviathan</i> , Part III
27	Tuesday	3-Dec	Last class: where do we go from here?	
28	Friday	6-Dec	<b>Final (Exam 3) 8:00 - 9:45 AM</b>	

## 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. (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 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!