

Environmental Citizenship **In an Era of Rapid Climate Change**

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We do not know how long we have, but we do know that the fight just can't wait. And we know that just fighting isn't enough: 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? If you care about children, health, poverty, farmers, food, hunger, or the economy, you really have no choice but to care about climate change. But how in the world could 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 begins (as it must) with a sober assessment of the current crisis of the Earth and humanity—marked by economic insecurity, species loss, climate change, and loss of faith in political parties—ultimately, this course aims to train our ability to imagine another world.

Course requirements

Exam 1	20 %
Exam 2	20 %
Exam 3 (aka 'the final')	30 %
Paper	30 %

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. Three in-class exams (Sept. 29, Nov. 3, and Dec. 8) will require you to compose essays about our readings. The third of these is our final exam: it will last a little longer and is worth a bit more than the first two exams, but in every other respect it will be exactly like the first two exams. Your paper is due at the start of class on December 5: details follow. Attendance is required but will not be formally graded.

Course readings

Our course has four assigned books:

[1] Paul 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] Amitav Ghosh (2016) *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Website: <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/G/bo22265507.html>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Great-Derangement-Climate-Change-unthinkable/dp/0670089133>

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

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

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

[4] C. Bonneuil & J-B. Fressoz. *The shock of the Anthropocene*. NY: Verso.

Website: <https://www.versobooks.com/books/2388-the-shock-of-the-anthropocene>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Shock-Anthropocene-Earth-History-Us/dp/1784780790>

I encourage you to acquire these books as soon as possible. You can purchase them at the bookstore or online. You do not need to use these particular links. Please buy paper copies so that you can carry them with you to class (i.e. not digital versions).

Additionally, we will read selections from the following books, which you may also wish to purchase or check out from the library (but doing so is not required):

[5] Elizabeth 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>

[6] Roy Scranton, *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/1531889271>

[7] Joel Wainwright and Geoff Mann, *Climate Leviathan*. NY: Verso.

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

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Climate-Leviathan-Geoff-Mann/dp/1786634295>

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

Additional events and lectures

This Fall there are several high-profile speakers who will give public talks about climate change on campus. Here are three which I would strongly encourage you to attend (but doing so is not required): all three take place at 3:30-5:00 p.m. just down the hall in Room 1080 of Derby Hall.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 15, 2017

Steven Quiring, The Ohio State University

Drought and Land-Atmosphere Interactions in a Changing Climate

THURSDAY, OCT. 5, 2017*

Christopher Justice, University of Maryland

Global Agricultural Monitoring: Detecting the Impact of Extreme Climate Events

THURSDAY, NOV. 16, 2017*

Karen O'Brian, University of Oslo

Is the 1.5°C Target Possible? Exploring the Dynamics of Deliberate Social Transformations

* On Thursday, October 5, and Thursday, November 16, our class will end at 3:25 to allow everyone to move to Derby 1080 for these lectures.

The course plan at a glance

#	Day	Date	Topic	Reading assignment
1	Tuesday	22-Aug	Course introduction	No reading assignment
2	Thursday	24-Aug	Climate change: basic geophysical processes	IPCC AR5 WG 1 SPM
3	Tuesday	29-Aug	Climate change: carbon mitigation	IPCC AR5 WG 3 SPM
4	Thursday	31-Aug	Climate change: adaptation to a warmer world	IPCC AR5 WG 2 SPM
5	Tuesday	5-Sep	Population & ideology 1	Harvey, "Population, Resources, & the Ideology of Science"
6	Thursday	7-Sep	Population & ideology 2	Scranton, <i>Learning to Die in the Anthropocene</i>
7	Tuesday	12-Sep	The lawn, environmentalism & ideology 1	Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , cover to p. 71
8	Thursday	14-Sep	The lawn, environmentalism & ideology 2	Robbins, <i>Lawn people</i> , p. 72 to end
9	Tuesday	19-Sep	Climate change, capitalism & neoliberal ideology 1	Klein (2015), <i>This Changes Everything</i> , Intro & Part I
10	Thursday	21-Sep	Climate change, capitalism & neoliberal ideology 2	Klein (2015), <i>This Changes Everything</i> , Part II
11	Tuesday	27-Sep	Climate change, capitalism & neoliberal ideology 3	Klein (2015), <i>This Changes Everything</i> , Part III & Conclusion
12	Thursday	29-Sep	EXAM 1 ~ normal class time	
13	Tuesday	3-Oct	Historicizing the Anthropocene 1	Bonneuil & Fressoz (2016), <i>Shock of the Anthropocene</i> [†]
14	Thursday	5-Oct	Historicizing the Anthropocene 2 *	Bonneuil & Fressoz (2016), <i>Shock of the Anthropocene</i> [†]
15	Tuesday	10-Oct	Historicizing the Anthropocene 3	Bonneuil & Fressoz (2016), <i>Shock of the Anthropocene</i> [†]
	Thursday	12-Oct	Autumn Break: no classes	
16	Tuesday	17-Oct	Natural history & extinction	Kolbert (2014), <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> [†]
17	Thursday	19-Oct	Principles of climate change biology [Peter Curtis, guest]	Kolbert (2014), <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> [†]
18	Tuesday	24-Oct	Indigenous peoples & tropical forests: case of Belize 1	Wainwright (2015); Wainwright & Zempel (2018)
19	Thursday	26-Oct	Indigenous peoples & tropical forests: Bz 2 [Henry Peller, guest]	Wainwright, Jiang, et al. (2015); Wainwright, Peller, et al. (2017)
	Tuesday	31-Oct	No class: work on your papers	
	Thursday	2-Nov	No class: work on your papers	
20	Tuesday	7-Nov	EXAM 2 ~ normal class time	
21	Thursday	9-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 1	Oreskes & Conway, <i>The Collapse of Western Civilization</i>
22	Tuesday	14-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 2	Ghosh (2016) <i>The Great Derangement</i> , first half
23	Thursday	16-Nov	Climate change & our political imagination 3 *	Ghosh (2016) <i>The Great Derangement</i> , second half
24	Tuesday	21-Nov	Climate change & the question of China	Minqi Li, "Alternative Scenarios for the US, China & the World"
	Thursday	23-Nov	Thanksgiving break: no classes	
25	Tuesday	28-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 1	Wainwright & Mann (2017), <i>Climate Leviathan</i>
26	Thursday	30-Nov	Climate change, capitalism, & planetary sovereignty 2	Wainwright & Mann (2017), <i>Climate Leviathan</i>
27	Tuesday	5-Dec	Final class: where do we go from here?	Papers due: no reading assignment
28	Friday	8-Dec	Exam 3, classroom, 4:00-5:45 pm	
			* special lecture after class (3:30 - 5:00), 1080 Derby Hall	[†] reading assignments will be clarified in class

Your Paper

Please write an essay of up to five double-spaced pages (plus bibliography). This exciting final assignment is the place where you get to present your critical reflections upon what you have learned about climate justice and environmental citizenship.

Your paper is due at the beginning of our last class, Tuesday, December 5. Format guidelines are 1" margins all around, 12 point font, and double spacing. Please bring one paper copy of your paper to class on December 5. I would welcome early papers.

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Climate Justice: What is it and How Do We Create It?

Explore the evolution of the notion of climate justice over time, discussing at least three statements of what climate justice means, and provide your own vision of what climate justice involves and a future society based on climate justice would look like.

From this discussion, explore the paths to achieving climate justice, both in the United States and globally. How *do* we get climate justice? Who is the "we"? How do you see *your own* relationship to climate justice and future struggles for it?

Beyond Capitalism

Do you think capitalism can be *reformed and made sustainable*, or should it be *radically transformed and/or abolished*? Make an argument for either position. If you think capitalism must be transformed or abolished, make sure you analyze 1) the reasons you think this system is undesirable or ineffective in the pursuit of climate justice, or whatever other fatal flaws you identify, 2) a working idea of alternative systems that would better address climate justice and 3) a working idea of how this transformation can actually be attained, informed by historical example and informed predictions. If you think capitalism can or should be reformed and made sustainable, in line with climate justice, try to address roughly the same 3 questions of reasoning, the model to be attained, and how it would be achieved.

Write your own question!

I invite you to write your own question/topic for an essay, and after approval, you may write your essay on the agreed upon topic. To obtain a green light for your question, email me by Thursday, October 19, with a one-page draft title and abstract/proposal.

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The final paper, to recapitulate, should be turned in on paper (not via email) at the start of our last class. If you arrive late for class that day, 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 the paper 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.

Additional notes

Thanks to [John Foran at UCSB](#) for providing some of the excellent ideas and words in this syllabus.

Because many of us are easily distracted by use of cell phones, computers, 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.

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 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/>.

The University 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 so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slids@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slids.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

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!