



Oregon State University
Ecampus

Course Name: Politics of Climate Change

Course Number: PS 455

Credits: 4

Instructor name: Brent S. Steel

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Course Description

Covers domestic and international political aspects of global climate change. Topics include local, state, and national activity as well as roles played by presidents, Congress, the Supreme Court, corporations and media. International focus on conventions and treaties, tensions between developed and developing nations and possible national security impacts.

Course Introduction:

This course will focus on the politics of climate change both domestic and international. We will examine the various legal, ethical, economic and technical aspects as well as look at international treaties and conventions that seek to build consensus toward mitigation. Climate change is possibly *the* most important environmental issue in the 21st century. Yet, some would say we are no closer to finding a policy solution now than we were over a decade ago. This course will explore the reasons for policy conflict and the challenges to finding policy solutions.

Consider this quote as we go through the course because underlying all climate change arguments is a basic concept that we are perhaps missing:

We just can't seem to stop burning up all those buried trees from way back in the carboniferous age, in the form of coal, and the remains of ancient plankton, in the form of oil and gas. If we could, we'd be home free climate wise. Instead, we're dumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere at a rate the Earth hasn't seen since the great climate catastrophes of the past, the ones that led to mass extinctions. We just can't seem to break our addiction to the kinds of fuel that will bring back a climate last seen by the dinosaurs, a climate that will drown our coastal cities and wreak havoc on the environment and our ability to feed ourselves. All the while, the glorious sun pours immaculate free energy down upon us, more than we will ever need. Why can't we summon the ingenuity and courage of the generations that came before us? The dinosaurs never saw that asteroid coming. What's our excuse? – Neil deGrasse Tyson

Communication

Please post all course-related questions in the Q&A Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please contact me privately for matters of a personal nature. I will reply to course-related questions within 24-48 hours. I will strive to

return your assignments and grades for course activities to you within five days of the due date.

Course Credits

This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

Technical Assistance

If you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact 24-7 Canvas Support through the Help link within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or need assistance logging into a course, contact the IS Service Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit the [IS Service Desk](#) online.

Learning Resources

Online at the OSU Valley Library or at the OSU Bookstore or other provider:

- Anthony Giddens, *The Politics of Climate Change* (MA: Polity Press, 2009).
- Schneider et al. (Eds.) *Climate Change Science and Policy* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2010)
- Additional readings will be available via Canvas.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to...

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of US and international climate change politics and policy and appraise past and present political policymaking processes (measured in all writing assignments).
- Explain the complex nature and interdependence of climate change policy from a political, economic, ethical and legal approach (measured in all writing assignments).
- Articulate in writing critical perspectives on climate change politics using evidence as support (measured through all writing assignments).

Evaluation of Student Performance

- ✓ You are expected submit five current event papers during the quarter using Canvas. (50 points total)
- ✓ There is a required Annotated Bibliography (50 points total)
- ✓ A final paper on climate change politics is required (100 points total)
- ✓ Finally, you are to present your final paper to the class (50 points total)

Climate Change Politics Final Papers

Each student is responsible for writing a final climate change politics and policy paper on a topic related to the course syllabus. Each paper should be double spaced, and a minimum of 6-8 pages long not including references, graphs, or tables. For the purposes of this class, the essential elements of the paper are defined as:

1. **Introduction:** Each paper should have an introduction that provides an overview of the topics covered, and a statement of how you will organize and approach the topics.
2. **Literature Review:** Papers should have a literature review with a minimum of 5 to 6 academic sources. Few of us think anything that is brand new and we need to acknowledge our intellectual debts. The literature review shows that you have immersed yourself in the subject and have drawn your ideas, concepts and arguments from a variety of sources. The length of the literature review will vary by subject.
3. **Analysis:** Each paper will have you think and write critically about the climate change politics and policy topic selected, preferably a topic related to the topics covered in the syllabus. You should identify the key institutions and policies that individuals and groups might encounter concerning your climate change topic.
4. **Brilliant Insights or Thoughts:** Category four is the only reason you should go over 6-8 pages. As to what you write here, well... hard to say: it should be brilliant though! (And no more than one additional page).
5. **Conclusion:** This summarizes your argument and shows how your work enhances our understanding of climate change politics and policy.
6. **Be sure to cite appropriately and include a reference page (this page will not be counted against your page limit).**

The following criteria will be used for evaluating written assignments and exams:
[Poor; Average; Good; Very Good; Excellent]

- COMMITMENT-did you cover all relevant materials/questions?
- AMBITION-did you take each issue to task?
- ENGAGEMENT-did you make connections between issues?
- CLARITY-was the paper readable and well organized?
- READINGS/COURSE MATERIALS-did you use appropriate reading and other course materials in your work? [Note: cite everything appropriately] You are also strongly encouraged to use additional resources: see "External Links" at this site.
- COMPARISON-in general, how did your work compare to the rest of the class?
- DIRECTIONS-Did you follow directions?

FINAL GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Letter Grade Percent of point's possible:

A [95-100%]	A- [90-94%]	B+ [87-89%]
B [83-86%]	B- [80-82%]	C+ [77-79%]
C [73-76%]	C- [70-72%]	D+ [67-69%]
D [63-66%]	D- [60-62%]	F [0-59%]

TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEKS 0-1 - Overview

- Review all course materials and post an introduction so we can get to know one another.
- Read Chapter 1 in *Climate Change Science and Policy*
- Read Anderegg et al., Expert Credibility in Climate Change
- Review Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report Summary for Policy Makers

WEEK 2 – Public Opinion Challenges

- Read *Egan and Mullin, Turning Personal Experience into Political Attitudes*
- Read Brulle, Carmichael and Jenkins, *Shifting Public Opinion on Climate Change*
- Read Keohane, *The Global Politics of Climate Change*
- Read Chapter 1 in *The Politics of Climate Change*
- Read Chapters 15 & 16 in *Climate Change Science and Policy*

WEEK 3– Corporations & The Media

- Read chapters 37-41 in *Climate Change Science and Policy*
- Read University of Michigan study "Network News Climate Change Stories Rarely Read "Study: CNN skimps on coverage during climate week" at <http://mediamatters.org/research/2014/09/30/study-cnn-skimps-on-coverage-during-climate-wee/200951>

WEEK 4 – Coordination Challenges and International Policy

- Read chapter 4 & 8, Giddens 2011 (textbook)
- Read Chapter 21, 22, Schneider et. al., 2010 (textbook)
- Read Hovi et al., 2009
- Review the Kyoto Protocol (links to external site)
- Review the site United Nations Framework for Climate Change (Links to external site).

WEEK 5– Economic Challenges

- Read chapter 13, 18 & 20 in *Climate Change Science and Policy*
- Read chapter 6 in *The Politics of Climate Change*
- Read Stern Review: *The Economics of Climate Change*

WEEK 6 – Developing Nations

- Read Chapters 23-26, Schneider et al. 2010 (textbook)
- Read *The Economist* "Developing Countries and Global Warming"
- Review *Climate Change: Vulnerabilities and Adaptation in Developing Countries*

WEEK 7 – Ethics/Justice of Climate Change

- Risse, *Who Should Shoulder the Burden? Global Climate Change and Common Ownership of the Earth*
- Weijers, Eng and Das, "Sharing the responsibility of dealing with climate change: Interpreting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities" (pp. 141 – 156 in *Public Policy: Why Things Matter*).

WEEK 8 – State and Local Mitigation

- Go to the site Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site., and look at state/local information
- Read chapters 33-36, Schneider et. al., 2010 (textbook)
- Review the EPA site on state and local actions (Links to an external site.) Note: The Trump Administration has currently removed this website.

WEEK 9 – National Security and Climate Change

- Read chapter 9 in *The Politics of Climate Change*
- Read Part Two: Climate Change and Global Security
- Read Climate Change and National Security

WEEK 10 – Looking Ahead...

- Read chapters 42-48 in *Climate Change Science and Policy*

Course Policies

Late Work Policy

- I will not accept late work unless advanced notice is given and discussed prior to the due date.
- Extra credit will not be allowed in this course.

Incompletes

Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 80% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final paper). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don't wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility. Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Unless indicated otherwise, please complete the readings and view other instructional materials for each week before participating in the discussion board.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.

- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a [vendor statement](#) certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Student Conduct Code](#). Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

- a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.
- b) It includes:
 - i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and

- texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
- ii) **FABRICATION** - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.
 - iii) **ASSISTING** - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
 - iv) **TAMPERING** - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.
 - v) **PLAGIARISM** - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.
- c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Tutoring and Writing Assistance

[NetTutor](#) is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the Tools button in your course menu.

The Oregon State [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) is also available for students enrolled in Ecampus courses.

TurnItIn

Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin, and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited. Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information, visit [Academic Integrity for Students: Turnitin – What is it?](#)

Student Evaluation of Courses

The online Student Evaluation of Teaching system opens to students during the week before finals and closes the Monday following the end of finals. Students receive notification, instructions and the link through their ONID. They may also log into the system via Online Services. Course evaluation results are extremely important and used to help improve courses and the online learning experience for future students. Responses are anonymous (unless a student chooses to "sign" their comments, agreeing to relinquish anonymity) and unavailable to instructors until after grades have been posted. The results of scaled questions and signed comments go to both the instructor and their unit head/supervisor. Anonymous (unsigned) comments go to the instructor only.

Basic Needs

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Human Services Resource Center (HSRC) for support (hsrc@oregonstate.edu, 541-737-3747). The HSRC has a [food pantry](#), a [textbook lending program](#) and other resources to help. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

Website: <https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/hsrc>

Getting Help

We all go through times in life when we need help. Learn about counseling and psychological resources for Ecampus students. If you are in immediate crisis, please contact the Crisis Text Line by texting OREGON to 741-741 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). There are additional resources if you are located near campus: Access counseling through [OSU Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#), where you can get group counseling, individual therapy, or relational counseling.