

Carleton University
Winter 2023
Department of English

ENGL 1700: Climate Change and the Humanities

W/F 2:35PM - 3:55PM
Location: ME 3269

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 1000 (no longer offered), ENGL 1100, ENGL 1200, ENGL 1300, ENGL 1400, ENGL 1600, FYSM 1004.

Instructor: Dr. Chris Eaket
Office: DT 1915

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(Note: Please include ENGL 1700 in the subject line of all emails)

Office Hours: TDB + by request

Important note:

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will look at how climate change has been portrayed in a variety of media, both fiction and non-fiction. Confronting the issue of climate change is not an easy task -- the scale of the problem is immense, the timescales involved are daunting, and the politics involved often seem monolithic. It is all too easy to give in to despair or apathy in the face of such an enormous challenge. However, as this class will suggest, "staying with the trouble" can help us orient and ground ourselves in relation to the problem, generate new actions that can be taken, imagine new ways of being for society, and perhaps give us hope that a new world is possible.

By examining the representation of climate change in various media, we can gain an appreciation for what stories get told, by whom, and for what purpose: certain connections and relationships will be emphasized while others ignored; certain images and archetypes will be foregrounded while others are minimized; particular topics will be broached while others are left by the wayside; and some solutions will be put forward while others get downplayed. Through close reading and discussion we will examine why these choices are made and how they contribute to our understanding of climate change and the options available to us.

Overall, we will look at how reading, seeing, knowing, and acting contribute to our understanding of

the world, and the role that the humanities can play in our responses to environmental and climate issues today.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester students in this course will be better able to:

- Understand the role of the humanities and social sciences in climate change studies
- Practice interdisciplinary research, writing, and thinking
- Offer clear, concise, and powerful communications in writing and speech and other media
- Contribute constructively to class discussion
- Notice things
- Critique the list above, the idea of learning outcomes in general, and their role in the neoliberal university

TEXTS

Duffy, Damian, et al. *Parable of the Sower: A Graphic Novel Adaptation*. Abrams ComicArts, 2021.

Robinson, Kim Stanley. *Ministry of the Future*. Orbit, 2020.

Burton, Nicole, et al. *The Beast: Making a Living on a Dying Planet*. Ad Astra, 2018.
(digital version also available)

Other readings and web links will be posted on BrightSpace throughout the semester.

Texts will be available at Haven Books @ 43 Seneca St, Ottawa.
Check havenbooks.ca for hours of operation.

RULES OF THE ROAD

- Be prepared and ready to engage with the materials. It really does make things more fruitful and insightful for everyone.
- Turn off all things that buzz, beep, or ping. Really.
- No texting in class. If you need to take a brief glance at alerts, fine. But in general, phones face down or in pockets.
- You're welcome to bring your computer to class to take notes. Try to avoid the temptation to multitask -- be attentive to the discussion at hand. Concentrated attention is different than surfing and multitasking.
- No one in this class is stupid. Ever. University requires thinking in different ways and that can take time. Just because someone hasn't acquired a skill yet or a mode of thinking yet doesn't

mean they're any better or worse than anyone else. Everyone has a unique skillset & set of contributions to make. Patience. Empathy. Everyone is a knowledge resource for everyone else.

- Be respectful of others with your presence, time, and attention.
- Get to know the ins & outs of the library. Online resources are great, but there's no substitute for the book and resource people there.
- Discrimination or disrespect of any type will not be tolerated. Full stop.
- Feel free to bring your own experiences, scholarship, and interests to bear on the work at hand. The more invested you are in it, the more interesting the end product will tend to be. Chances are, others will have had similar experiences to share that will be catalyzed by your contribution.
- Connect with others. Five intelligent people over coffee can teach you as much as any class -- five clever people with books & laptops, possibly even more so. Get to know one another. Share notes, ideas, skills and recommendations.

GRADING

Attendance and participation	10%
Short Responses (250-500wd x 4)	40%
Midterm Project/Paper	20%
Final Paper	30%

[ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS]

Full assignment details will be available on Brightspace.

Note: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ATTENDANCE

Students will be allowed three absences. Additional absences will impact the final grade. Absences and contributions to the class overall are taken into account when calculating the final participation grade. If you need to be absent from class due to unforeseen circumstances, email me *before* class to let me know you will not be attending and (in general) why. Try to get notes and materials from others to see what we've covered.

In cases where you are experiencing problems in class, or have circumstances outside of class that are affecting your academic work, the most important thing is to let me know. I don't need to have all the gritty details (and probably don't *want* to know) -- just keep me in the loop so that I know "where you're at" and hopefully alternative arrangements can be made. If you need some advice, guidance, a referral, assistance, or someone to listen, the door's always open.

Please note: If you vanish inexplicably for an extended period of time, there's a certain point at

*which it's out of my hands and I *can't* help you, due to the policies of the university. So don't do that.*

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>

- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

PANDEMIC MEASURES

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

FORMATTING AND CITATION

Papers should be typed/printed double-spaced on 8 ½ x 11" white paper. Please ensure a 1" margin on all sides of the page and use a 12 pt Times font or equivalent. Also, remember to keep backup copies of your papers, either hard copy or on a flash drive. E-mailing of papers is prohibited, unless one is given express permission of the professor.

Please use MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation style.

For examples, see:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

For formatting of Works Cited, see: <http://bibme.org> or <http://www.citationmachine.net/>

SYLLABUS

*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course;
deviations will be announced to the class by the instructor as necessary.*

See below.

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(Please note that some date and content may be subject to change.)

January

WEEK 1 **Intro to the Course**

WEEK 2 **Climate & Climate Change: Defining Our Terms**

Global Warming Reader (excerpts); Greta's Speech to the UN; TED: "Stubborn Optimism"

WEEK 3 **The Art of Noticing: Perceiving the Dynamic World**

*"Serious Noticing"; How to Do Nothing (excerpt); The House of Small Cubes;
Poetry (various)*

WEEK 4 **The Idea of "Nature": Past & Present**

*"What does 'nature' mean?"; The Concept of Nature; Koyaanisqatsi (sections);
Microcosmos*

February

WEEK 5 **Technology: Material and Cultural Ways of Doing + "Enframing"**

*Heidegger's "Question"; The Beast (Graphic Novel); "The History of Technology and the
Study of Material Culture" | Parable of the Sower*

WEEK 6 **The Anthropocene: How did we get here?**

What is the Anthropocene?; Anthropocene: The Human Epoch (film) | Parable of the Sower

Feb 20-24 WINTER BREAK

WEEK 7 **Deep Time & Global Scale: Rethinking our Place in Things**

*Powers of 10; "The Arrogance of the Anthropocene"; Timelapse of the Entire Universe
Sci-fi Short Stories (various)*

March

WEEK 8 "It ain't easy being green": Manifestos and Politics

Green, Deep Green, and Bright Green Manifestos; Post-Scarcity Anarchism

WEEK 9 "What is to be done?": Capitalism and Afterward

Capitalist Realism (excerpt); Four Futures (excerpt); "Immunity" from Blessed Unrest

WEEK 10 Storytelling: The Importance of New Imaginaries

Solarpunk Short Stories; Braiding Sweetgrass (excerpt); Another World is Possible (excerpt)

WEEK 11 Everyday Life: Or, Utopia in Your Own Backyard

The Practice of Everyday Life (excerpt); Tactical Urbanism, TAZ

April

WEEK 12 Intersections, Networks, & Totalities: Squaring the Circle

Web of Life (excerpt), Emergence (excerpt) Climate Justice (excerpt)| Ministry of the Future

WEEK 13 WRAP-UP

Ministry of the Future (cont'd)