

Carleton University
Winter 2026 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL 1700A: Climate Change and the Humanities

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

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***** This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change. A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term. *****

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. 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 discuss the link between reading, seeing, knowing, and acting to ask what role the humanities— literature, culture, history, philosophy, film, visual art— can play in our response to, and action on, environmental issues and climate change today. And perhaps, we will leave this class with hope that a new way forward is possible.

Learning Outcomes:

- **Examine** how climate change is represented in various media.
- **Explain** the role of the humanities in climate change studies through various media.
- **Discuss** the link between reading, seeing, and knowing, through assigned readings in class.
- **Practice** clear interdisciplinary speaking, writing, and thinking.

Texts:

Subject to change:

- Selections from *Octavia's Brood* by Imarisha, Walidah Imarisha and adrienne maree brown
- Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- Selections from *here: poems for the planet* by Elizabeth Coleman
- Selections from *Not Too Late* by Rebecca Solnit
- *The Overstory: A Novel* by Richard Powers
- *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* (Film)

Additional course materials will be available on Brightspace/ARES.

Evaluation:

Subject to change:

- *Close Reading #1 (15%)*
- *Close Reading #2 (15%)*
- *Close Reading #3(15%)*
- *Re-Reading (10%)*
- *Proposal (10%)*
- *Peer Review (15%)*
- *Final Project (20%)*